A COMPREHENSIVE CHRISTIAN STUDY OF

THE WHOLE BIBLE

Genesis to Revelation

Book by Book • Chapter by Chapter • Cross-Referenced

Introduction, authorship, date and structure of every book

Chapter-by-chapter analysis

Prophecies, types and fulfillment in Christ

Major doctrines and practical lessons

Full cross-references: how every book links to the others

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable" 2 Timothy 3:16

Complete Edition: All 66 Books

All Scripture quotations from the King James Version

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Part One: The Bible as One Book

One Story, One Author, One Saviour

The Bible is 66 books written by about 40 human authors over roughly 1,500 years, in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek), on three continents, by kings, shepherds, fishermen, priests, a physician, a tax collector and a tentmaker. Yet it tells one story with one theme, because it has one Author: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16), and "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

That theme is the redemption of fallen man through Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself said of the Old Testament, "they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39), and on the road to Emmaus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). The Old Testament is Christ concealed; the New Testament is Christ revealed.

> *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*
>
> **John 5:39**

The Storyline in Seven Movements

- **Creation (Genesis 1-2).** God makes all things good and places man in fellowship with Him.
- **Fall (Genesis 3).** Man sins, death enters, and God promises a Seed to crush the serpent (3:15).
- **Promise (Genesis 12 - Deuteronomy).** God chooses Abraham, promises land, seed and blessing to all nations, redeems Israel from Egypt, and gives the law and the tabernacle.
- **Kingdom and Exile (Joshua - Malachi).** Israel enters the land, gets a king, receives the covenant with David, falls into idolatry, goes into exile, and returns. The prophets point forward to a Messiah and a new covenant.
- **Christ (Matthew - John).** The promised Seed, Son of David and Suffering Servant is born, lives sinlessly, dies as a substitute, and rises again.
- **Church (Acts - Jude).** The Spirit is poured out, the gospel goes to all nations, and the apostles explain and apply the work of Christ.
- **Consummation (Revelation).** Christ returns, judges, reigns, and makes all things new. What was lost in Genesis is restored and surpassed.

How the Bible Is Arranged

Division	Books	Count	Focus
Law (Pentateuch)	Genesis - Deuteronomy	5	Foundations: creation, covenant, law
History	Joshua - Esther	12	Israel in the land, exile and return
Poetry and Wisdom	Job - Song of Solomon	5	Worship, wisdom and the inner life

Division	Books	Count	Focus
Major Prophets	Isaiah - Daniel	5	Longer prophetic books
Minor Prophets	Hosea - Malachi	12	Shorter prophetic books
Gospels	Matthew - John	4	The life, death and resurrection of Christ
History	Acts	1	The birth and spread of the church
Pauline Epistles	Romans - Philemon	13	Doctrine and practice for churches and leaders
General Epistles	Hebrews - Jude	8	Letters to the wider church
Prophecy	Revelation	1	The return of Christ and the new creation

The Old Testament has 39 books; the New Testament has 27. Between Malachi and Matthew lie about 400 years of prophetic silence, during which Persia, Greece and Rome rose in turn, exactly as Daniel foretold (Daniel 2; 7; 8), the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) was produced, and the synagogue spread. When the New Testament opens, the "fulness of the time" had come (Galatians 4:4).

How to Read Each Entry

Every book in Parts Two and Three has the same layout: author, date and chapter count; the theme; a key verse (KJV); a short outline; "Christ in the Book," which shows where Jesus appears in prophecy, type or person; and "Links," which lists the other books it connects to and why. Each link names the connecting book first, so you can follow any thread across the Bible. Part Four draws all those links together into a single map.

Dates follow conservative, Bible-believing scholarship (for example, an early Exodus around 1446 BC and traditional authorship of the books). Where a date or author is uncertain, it is marked as such.

The Old Testament

The 39 books of the Old Testament, from creation to the last of the prophets.

Genesis

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Moses • Date: c. 1445-1405 BC • Chapters: 50

> *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
>
> **Genesis 3:15**

Part One: Introduction to Genesis

The Name

"Genesis" comes from the Greek Septuagint title, meaning "origin" or "beginning." The Hebrew title is Bereshith, "In the beginning," the book's first word. Genesis is the seed-plot of the Bible: almost every major doctrine of Scripture begins here, including God, creation, man, marriage, sin, death, judgment, grace, faith, sacrifice, covenant, the nations and Israel. A reader who does not understand Genesis cannot fully understand the rest of the Bible, and Revelation especially cannot be understood without it.

Author

Moses wrote Genesis, along with the rest of the Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy).

- **Jesus attributed the books of Moses to Moses.** "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Compare Mark 12:26 and Luke 24:27, 44.
- **The rest of Scripture calls them "the book of Moses" and "the law of Moses"** (Joshua 8:31; 2 Chronicles 25:4; Nehemiah 13:1; Acts 15:1).
- **Moses was uniquely qualified.** He was trained "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22), and he spoke with God "face to face" (Exodus 33:11).
- **Sources and revelation.** The events of Genesis happened before Moses was born. He likely drew on family records preserved from the patriarchs, combined with direct revelation from God. Creation itself could only be known by revelation.

Critical scholars since the 19th century have proposed the "Documentary Hypothesis" (JEDP), claiming Genesis was stitched together centuries later from four sources. It rests on assumptions, not manuscript evidence, and contradicts the testimony of Christ.

Date and Setting

Moses wrote during the wilderness years, about 1445-1405 BC. The book covers more time than the rest of the Bible combined: from creation to the death of Joseph in Egypt, about 1805 BC by conservative chronology. Chapters 1-11 cover the primeval history of the whole human race. Chapters 12-50 cover about 300 years in the lives of four men: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

The Structure: "These Are the Generations"

Genesis is organised by the Hebrew phrase toledoth, "these are the generations of," which marks ten sections (eleven counting the repeat at 36:9):

Toledoth	Reference	Content
Prologue: Creation	1:1-2:3	The six days and the seventh day
The heavens and the earth	2:4	Eden, the fall, Cain and Abel
Adam	5:1	Genealogy from Adam to Noah
Noah	6:9	The flood and the covenant

Toledoth	Reference	Content
The sons of Noah	10:1	The table of nations and Babel
Shem	11:10	The line from Shem to Terah
Terah	11:27	Abraham's story
Ishmael	25:12	Ishmael's descendants
Isaac	25:19	Jacob and Esau
Esau	36:1, 9	Edom's descendants
Jacob	37:2	Joseph and his brothers

The book narrows as it goes: from the universe to the earth, to mankind, to the nations, to Abraham's family, to Israel's twelve sons. Each time, the line of promise is followed in detail while the side lines (Cain, Ishmael, Esau) are briefly recorded and set aside. The purpose is to trace the promised Seed of 3:15.

Outline of Genesis

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Primeval History: Four Events	1-11	
Creation	1-2	God makes all things good
The Fall	3-5	Sin and death enter; the promise of the Seed
The Flood	6-9	Judgment and grace; covenant with Noah
The Nations and Babel	10-11	Rebellion and scattering
II. Patriarchal History: Four People	12-50	
Abraham	12-25	Faith: the call, the covenant, the test
Isaac	21-27	Sonship: the promised son and his family
Jacob	25-36	Grace transforming a schemer into Israel
Joseph	37-50	Providence: suffering, exaltation and salvation

Genesis as History

The New Testament treats Genesis as literal history throughout. Jesus based His teaching on marriage on the creation of one man and one woman "from the beginning" (Matthew 19:4-6). He spoke of Abel as a real man (Luke 11:51) and of Noah's flood as a real worldwide event (Matthew 24:37-39). Paul builds the doctrine of sin and salvation on a historical Adam (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45). Luke traces Jesus' genealogy back to "Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke 3:38). If Genesis 1-11 is myth, the gospel loses its foundation: no real Adam means no real fall, and no real fall means no need for a real Saviour.

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Creation (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — The Six Days of Creation

> *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*
>
> **Genesis 1:1**

The first verse answers the greatest questions: there was a beginning; there is a God; He is the Creator; and the universe is His. It refutes atheism (there is a God), pantheism (God is distinct from creation), polytheism (one God), materialism (matter is not eternal) and evolutionism (all things were created). The Hebrew word for God here, Elohim, is plural in form but used with a singular verb, an early hint of the Trinity confirmed in 1:26, "Let **us** make man." The Spirit of God moved upon the waters (1:2), and God created by His Word, "And God said" (ten times in the chapter). John 1:1-3 reveals that the Word through whom all things were made is Christ (also Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2).

Day	Forming (Days 1-3)	Day	Filling (Days 4-6)
1	Light; day and night (1:3-5)	4	Sun, moon and stars (1:14-19)
2	Firmament: waters above and below (1:6-8)	5	Birds and sea creatures (1:20-23)
3	Dry land and plants (1:9-13)	6	Land animals and man (1:24-31)

Each living thing reproduces "after his kind" (ten times), establishing fixed created kinds. On day six God makes man in His own image (1:26-27), male and female, gives him dominion over the earth (1:28; Psalm 8:6), and provides plants for food (1:29). The chapter ends: "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (1:31). There was no death, suffering or sin in God's original creation.

The days of creation. The plain reading, held by most Bible-believing Christians through history, is six literal days. Each is defined by "evening and morning" and a number. God Himself grounds the weekly Sabbath on it: "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day" (Exodus 20:11). Some 19th- and 20th-century conservatives proposed a "gap" of ages between 1:1 and 1:2, but this is not required by the text. Romans 5:12 and 8:20-22 teach that death and the groaning of creation entered through Adam's sin, which does not fit millions of years of death before man.

Chapter 2 — The Seventh Day, Eden and Marriage

God rested on the seventh day, blessed it and sanctified it (2:1-3). Hebrews 4:4-10 uses this rest as a picture of the believer's rest in Christ. Chapter 2 is not a second creation account; it zooms in on day six and the creation of man. "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (2:7). Man is both dust and divine breath: physical and spiritual. Paul contrasts this "first man Adam" with Christ, "the last Adam... a quickening spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45).

God plants a garden in Eden with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:8-9). Four rivers flow out of it (2:10-14). Man is given work (to dress and keep the garden, 2:15) and one prohibition with a warning of death (2:16-17). God declares, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (2:18). Adam names the animals and finds no partner (2:19-20). God forms the woman from his side while he sleeps and brings her to him (2:21-22).

> *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*
>
> **Genesis 2:24**

God's design for marriage is one man and one woman for life. Jesus quotes this as binding (Matthew 19:4-6), and Paul calls it "a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32). As Adam's bride came from his opened side while he slept, so the church is born from the pierced side of the last Adam in His death (John 19:34).

Section II: The Fall and Its Consequences (Chapters 3-5)

Chapter 3 — The Fall of Man and the First Gospel Promise

The serpent, more subtle than any beast, is the instrument of Satan, "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 12:9). His method has never changed:

- **Doubt God's Word:** "Yea, hath God said...?" (3:1)
- **Deny God's Word:** "Ye shall not surely die" (3:4)
- **Defame God's character and offer godhood:** "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (3:5)

Eve saw the tree was good for food, pleasant to the eyes and desired to make one wise (3:6), the same three-part temptation as "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). Christ faced the same three and conquered (Luke 4:1-13). Eve was deceived; Adam sinned knowingly (1 Timothy 2:14), and as head of the race he brought sin and death on all (Romans 5:12).

The immediate results: shame (3:7), fig-leaf self-covering, hiding from God (3:8), fear (3:10) and blame-shifting (3:12-13). God seeks the sinner: "Where art thou?" (3:9). Then come the judgments: on the serpent (3:14), on the woman (pain in childbirth, 3:16), on the man (cursed ground, toil, death, 3:17-19). Into this darkness God speaks the first gospel promise, the protevangelium:

> *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
>
> **Genesis 3:15**

The Redeemer will be the seed of the **woman** (not of a man), pointing to the virgin birth (Galatians 4:4). He will be wounded (a bruised heel, the cross), but He will deal a fatal blow to Satan (a crushed head) (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Romans 16:20). The rest of the Bible traces this Seed.

God then made "coats of skins, and clothed them" (3:21). An animal died so that sinners could be covered: the first sacrifice, and a picture of the righteousness of Christ that covers the believer (Isaiah 61:10). Man was driven from the garden, and cherubim with a flaming sword guarded the way to the

tree of life (3:22-24). In Revelation 22:2, 14, the way is open again through Christ.

Chapter 4 — Cain and Abel

Cain brought the fruit of the ground; Abel brought a firstling of his flock (4:3-4). God accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's. Hebrews 11:4 explains: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice." Abel came God's way, with blood; Cain came his own way, with the work of his hands. Cain, angry, murdered his brother: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (4:9). "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (4:10). Hebrews 12:24 contrasts this with "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Abel's blood cried for vengeance; Christ's blood cries for mercy.

Cain went out from the presence of the LORD (4:16). His line built a city and developed music and metalworking (4:17-22), but also produced Lamech, the first polygamist and a boastful killer (4:19, 23-24). Civilisation without God. Then God gave Seth in place of Abel, "and then began men to call upon the name of the LORD" (4:25-26). The "way of Cain" (Jude 11) is religion without blood and life without God. Cain was "of that wicked one" (1 John 3:12). Jesus calls Abel the first martyr (Matthew 23:35).

Chapter 5 — From Adam to Noah

The genealogy of Seth's line, with the refrain "and he died" eight times: proof that God's warning in 2:17 came true. One man broke the pattern: "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (5:24). Enoch was translated without dying (Hebrews 11:5), a picture of believers caught up at the Lord's coming (1 Thessalonians 4:17). He also prophesied of the Lord's coming in judgment (Jude 14-15). Methuselah lived 969 years, the longest life recorded. Lamech names his son Noah, hoping he will bring "comfort" from the curse (5:29). This genealogy, with exact ages, gives a chronological backbone from creation to the flood (about 1,656 years by the Hebrew text).

Section III: The Flood (Chapters 6-9)

Chapter 6 — Corruption and Grace

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (6:2). Interpreters differ: many hold these were the godly line of Seth intermarrying with Cain's line; others, noting that "sons of God" refers to angels in Job 1:6 and 38:7, and comparing Jude 6-7 and 2 Peter 2:4-5, hold they were fallen angels. Either way, the result was total moral corruption:

> *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*
>
> **Genesis 6:5**

God was grieved and determined to destroy the earth, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (6:8). This is the first mention of grace in the Bible. Grace came first; then "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (6:9). God commanded the ark: about 450 feet long, 75 wide and 45 high (300 x 50 x 30 cubits), pitched within and without (6:14-16). The word "pitch" (kaphar) is the same root as "atonement." The ark had one door (6:16), as Christ is the one door

(John 10:9). God established His covenant with Noah (6:18), and "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (6:22).

Chapter 7 — The Flood Comes

God called Noah and his family to "Come thou... into the ark" (7:1), along with the animals by pairs (and clean animals by sevens). For 120 years Noah had been "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 6:3). Then "the LORD shut him in" (7:16): salvation and security are God's work. "The fountains of the great deep" broke up and "the windows of heaven were opened" (7:11). The waters covered all the high hills under the whole heaven by fifteen cubits (7:19-20), and every land creature outside the ark died (7:21-23). The language is plainly universal, and Peter treats it as a global judgment that is a pattern for the coming fiery judgment (2 Peter 3:5-7).

Chapter 8 — The Waters Recede

"And God remembered Noah" (8:1). The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (8:4). Noah sent out a raven and then a dove; the dove returned with an olive leaf (8:11). After over a year in the ark, Noah came out and built an altar, offering clean animals; God smelled a sweet savour (8:20-21; compare Ephesians 5:2). God promised: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (8:22).

Chapter 9 — The Noahic Covenant

God renewed the creation mandate to be fruitful and fill the earth (9:1), permitted meat to be eaten but not blood (9:3-4; compare Acts 15:20), and instituted human government with capital punishment: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (9:6; compare Romans 13:4). God made an everlasting covenant never again to destroy the earth by a flood, sealed by the rainbow (9:8-17). The rainbow appears again around God's throne (Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 4:3). The chapter ends with Noah's drunkenness, Ham's dishonour, and Noah's prophecy over his sons: Canaan cursed, Shem blessed ("Blessed be the LORD God of Shem," 9:26), Japheth enlarged and dwelling in the tents of Shem (9:25-27). The Messiah would come through Shem (Luke 3:36).

Section IV: The Nations and Babel (Chapters 10-11)

Chapter 10 — The Table of Nations

Seventy nations descend from Noah's three sons: Japheth (generally Europe and northern Asia), Ham (Africa, Canaan and parts of Mesopotamia) and Shem (the Semitic peoples of the Middle East). Nimrod, "a mighty hunter before the LORD," founded Babel and Nineveh (10:8-12), the beginnings of the two great enemy empires of Israel. Paul declares that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:26). There is one human race.

Chapter 11 — The Tower of Babel and the Line of Shem

United in one language, men said, "let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered" (11:4). This was open defiance of God's command to fill the earth, and self-glory instead of God's glory. God came down, confounded their language and scattered them (11:5-9). Babel (Babylon) becomes the Bible's symbol of organised rebellion against God, climaxing in "Babylon the great" (Revelation 17-18). At Pentecost, God reversed Babel in grace: men of every nation heard the gospel in their own tongue (Acts 2:5-11). The chapter closes with the line from Shem to Terah and Abram (11:10-32), and Sarai's barrenness (11:30), setting the stage for a miracle.

Section V: Abraham — The Life of Faith (Chapters 12-25)

Chapter 12 — The Call of Abram

> *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
>
> **Genesis 12:1-3**

The Abrahamic Covenant is the foundation of the rest of the Bible. Its promises are a land, a seed (a great nation), and blessing (to Abraham, through him to all families of the earth). Paul calls the last promise "the gospel" preached beforehand to Abraham (Galatians 3:8). Abram left Ur (and later Haran) by faith, "not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8). In Canaan he built altars (12:7-8). Then famine drove him to Egypt, where he lied about Sarai being his sister (12:10-20). The man of faith stumbled, but God protected the promise.

Chapter 13 — Abram and Lot Separate

Strife between their herdsmen led Abram to give Lot the first choice (13:8-9). Lot chose the well-watered plain and "pitched his tent toward Sodom" (13:12), whose men "were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" (13:13). Abram, choosing by faith rather than sight, received God's renewed promise of all the land he could see and seed as the dust of the earth (13:14-17).

Chapter 14 — The War of the Kings and Melchizedek

Four eastern kings defeated five kings of the plain and captured Lot. Abram, with 318 trained servants, rescued him (14:14-16). Then a mysterious figure appears:

> *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.*
>
> **Genesis 14:18**

He blessed Abram, and Abram gave him tithes of all (14:19-20), the first mention of the tithe. Abram refused the king of Sodom's riches (14:22-23). Psalm 110:4 declares that the Messiah is "a priest for

ever after the order of Melchizedek," and Hebrews 7 explains: Melchizedek is "king of righteousness" and "king of peace" (Salem), appearing without recorded genealogy, beginning or end, "made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:1-3). His priesthood is greater than Levi's, since Levi, in Abraham's loins, paid tithes to him (7:9-10). He is a type of Christ, the eternal Priest-King. The bread and wine anticipate the Lord's Supper.

Chapter 15 — The Covenant Confirmed: Justification by Faith

"Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (15:1). Abram, still childless, is shown the stars: "So shall thy seed be" (15:5).

> *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*
>
> **Genesis 15:6**

This is one of the most important verses in the Bible. Abram was declared righteous by faith alone, before circumcision (Romans 4:9-11) and centuries before the law (Galatians 3:17). Paul builds the doctrine of justification on it (Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6), as does James (James 2:23). God then ratified the covenant with a ceremony: animals were cut in two, and God alone, as a smoking furnace and burning lamp, passed between the pieces while Abram slept (15:9-17). The covenant was unconditional, depending on God alone. God also foretold Israel's 400 years of affliction in a foreign land and their exodus "with great substance" (15:13-16), fulfilled in Egypt (Exodus 12:40-41). The land grant runs "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (15:18).

Chapter 16 — Hagar and Ishmael

Sarai, still barren after ten years in Canaan, gave her Egyptian maid Hagar to Abram (16:1-3), a fleshly attempt to fulfil God's promise. Conflict followed, Hagar fled, and the Angel of the LORD met her in the wilderness (16:7-13). She called Him "Thou God seest me" (El Roi, 16:13). Ishmael would be "a wild man; his hand will be against every man" (16:12). Paul uses Hagar and Sarah as an allegory of the two covenants: law (bondage) and promise (freedom) (Galatians 4:21-31).

Chapter 17 — Circumcision and New Names

After 13 years of silence, God appeared to Abram at 99: "I am the Almighty God (El Shaddai); walk before me, and be thou perfect" (17:1). Abram ("exalted father") becomes Abraham ("father of a multitude," 17:5; Romans 4:17), and Sarai becomes Sarah ("princess"). Circumcision is given as the covenant sign (17:10-14). Romans 4:11 calls it "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." Its New Testament counterpart is circumcision of the heart (Romans 2:28-29; Colossians 2:11). God promises a son through Sarah, to be named Isaac ("laughter"), and declares the covenant is with Isaac, not Ishmael (17:19-21).

Chapter 18 — The LORD Visits; Intercession for Sodom

The LORD appeared to Abraham with two angels as three men (18:1-2). Many see this as a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ. Sarah laughed at the promise of a son at her age, and the LORD asked, "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" (18:14). Abraham is called the "friend of God" (2 Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23), and God revealed His plan to destroy Sodom (18:17-21). Abraham interceded, bargaining from fifty righteous down to ten: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (18:25). A model of persevering intercessory prayer.

Chapter 19 — The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

The two angels found Lot sitting in Sodom's gate (19:1), a sign he had become a leader there. The men of the city demanded to "know" the visitors, revealing the city's homosexual wickedness (19:4-5; Jude 7). The angels struck them blind and urged Lot to flee. His sons-in-law thought he was joking (19:14). Lot lingered, and the angels dragged him out "the LORD being merciful unto him" (19:16). Fire and brimstone fell from the LORD out of heaven (19:24). Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt (19:26). Jesus warned, "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32) and compared the end times to the days of Lot (Luke 17:28-30). Peter calls Lot "just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked" (2 Peter 2:7-8), saved but with a ruined testimony. Lot's daughters' incest produced Moab and Ammon (19:30-38), later enemies of Israel.

Chapter 20 — Abraham and Abimelech

Abraham repeated the sister lie in Gerar (20:2). God protected Sarah, warning Abimelech in a dream (20:3-7). Even after great revelations, believers can fall into old sins. God was faithful to protect the line of promise right before Isaac's birth.

Chapter 21 — The Birth of Isaac

"And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said... For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time" (21:1-2). Isaac was born by divine power to a woman past age (Romans 4:19; Hebrews 11:11), a miraculous birth foreshadowing Christ's virgin birth. When Ishmael mocked, Sarah said, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son" (21:10), and God confirmed it: "in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (21:12; Romans 9:7; Galatians 4:30). God cared for Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness (21:14-21). Abraham made a covenant at Beersheba (21:22-34).

Chapter 22 — The Offering of Isaac on Mount Moriah

The supreme test of Abraham's faith and the clearest picture of the cross in Genesis.

> *Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*
>
> **Genesis 22:2**

This is the first use of "love" in the Bible: a father's love for his only son, about to be offered. Abraham rose early, travelled three days, and told his servants, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (22:5). Hebrews 11:17-19 explains that Abraham believed God could raise Isaac from the dead, and "from whence also he received him in a figure." Isaac carried the wood up the mountain (22:6), as Christ carried His cross (John 19:17). Isaac asked, "where is the lamb?" and

Abraham answered:

> *My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering*
>
> **Genesis 22:8**

At the last moment, the Angel of the LORD stopped Abraham, and a ram caught in a thicket was offered "in the stead of his son" (22:13): substitution. Abraham named the place Jehovah-jireh, "In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen" (22:14). Mount Moriah is where Solomon later built the temple (2 Chronicles 3:1), and the region where Christ was crucified nearly 2,000 years after Abraham. God swore by Himself to bless Abraham (22:16; Hebrews 6:13-18): "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (22:18; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16). James 2:21-23 cites this event as faith proven by works.

Chapter 23 — The Death and Burial of Sarah

Sarah died at 127, and Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah at Hebron from the Hittites as a burial place (23:1-20). This was the only piece of the promised land he ever owned, a statement of faith that God would give the rest. Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah and Jacob would also be buried there (49:29-32; 50:13).

Chapter 24 — A Bride for Isaac

The longest chapter in Genesis. Abraham sent his eldest servant (traditionally Eliezer) to his kindred to find a bride for Isaac (24:1-4). The servant prayed for guidance, and Rebekah appeared, offering water to his camels (24:12-27). She agreed to go: "I will go" (24:58). The chapter is a beautiful picture: the father (Abraham) sends his unnamed servant (the Holy Spirit, who does not speak of himself, John 16:13) to call a bride (the church) for the son who had been "offered" and "received back" (Isaac, a picture of the risen Christ). The servant gives her gifts from the son's riches (24:53; compare Ephesians 1:13-14), and she travels to meet a bridegroom she has not seen (1 Peter 1:8). Isaac "loved her" (24:67).

Chapter 25 — Abraham's Death; Jacob and Esau

Abraham married Keturah and had other sons, whom he sent away with gifts, while giving all he had to Isaac (25:1-6). He died "in a good old age... and was gathered to his people" (25:8), aged 175. Ishmael's line is recorded (25:12-18). Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren, and Isaac prayed for her (25:21). Twins struggled in her womb, and God said: "Two nations are in thy womb... and the elder shall serve the younger" (25:23). Paul uses this to teach God's sovereign election by grace, "not of works, but of him that calleth" (Romans 9:10-13). Esau, a hunter, sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of red lentil stew: "thus Esau despised his birthright" (25:34). Hebrews 12:16-17 warns believers not to be "profane... as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."

Section VI: Isaac — The Son of Promise (Chapters 26-27)

Chapter 26 — Isaac in Gerar

Famine came again, and God told Isaac not to go to Egypt, renewing the Abrahamic Covenant to him: "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; Because that Abraham obeyed my voice" (26:3-5). Isaac repeated his father's sin, calling Rebekah his sister (26:7). The Philistines envied his prosperity and stopped up Abraham's wells; Isaac patiently re-dug them and moved on rather than fight (26:15-22). At Beersheba God appeared: "Fear not, for I am with thee" (26:24). Isaac's life is quiet and ordinary compared to Abraham and Jacob; he was a man who kept the wells of his father open. Esau married two Hittite women, "a grief of mind" to his parents (26:34-35).

Chapter 27 — Jacob Steals the Blessing

Isaac, old and nearly blind, intended to bless Esau despite God's word that the elder would serve the younger (25:23). Rebekah and Jacob deceived him with goatskins and Esau's clothing (27:5-29). Jacob received the blessing of dominion and fruitfulness. Esau, discovering it, "cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry" (27:34) and received a lesser blessing (27:39-40). Hebrews 12:17 says Esau "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." He regretted the loss, but did not repent of his profane heart. Esau planned to kill Jacob (27:41), and Rebekah sent Jacob away to her brother Laban. She never saw him again. God's purpose stood, but the sinful methods of every person involved brought years of sorrow.

Section VII: Jacob — Grace Transforming a Schemer (Chapters 28-36)

Chapter 28 — Jacob's Ladder at Bethel

Isaac sent Jacob away with the blessing of Abraham (28:3-4). On the journey, alone and fleeing, Jacob dreamed of a ladder set on the earth reaching to heaven, with "the angels of God ascending and descending on it" and the LORD standing above it (28:12-13). God gave him, a deceiver, the full covenant promise unconditionally: land, seed, and blessing to all families, and "behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest" (28:13-15). Jacob named the place Bethel, "the house of God" (28:19), and vowed to give a tenth (28:22).

Jesus applied this ladder to Himself: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1:51). Christ is the only way between heaven and earth (John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5).

Chapter 29 — Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

At a well, Jacob met Rachel and loved her (29:10-11, 18). He served Laban seven years for her, "and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (29:20). On the wedding night Laban substituted Leah, and the deceiver was deceived (29:23-25). Jacob served seven more years for Rachel. Leah, unloved, was given children by the LORD (29:31): Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Judah, "praise," would be the royal line of David and Christ (29:35). God chose the unloved wife to carry the Messianic line.

Chapter 30 — The Birth of Jacob's Children

Rivalry between the sisters led to children through their maids Bilhah and Zilpah, and then more sons for Leah, a daughter (Dinah), and finally Joseph born to Rachel (30:22-24). Jacob prospered with Laban's flocks through a combination of his own schemes and God's blessing (30:25-43; compare 31:10-12, where God reveals He was the real cause).

Chapter 31 — Jacob Leaves Laban

God told Jacob to return to his homeland (31:3). He fled secretly; Rachel stole her father's household idols (teraphim) (31:19). Laban pursued, but God warned him in a dream not to harm Jacob (31:24). They made a covenant at Mizpah: "The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another" (31:49), originally a guarded truce, not a blessing.

Chapter 32 — Jacob Wrestles with God at Peniel

Facing Esau and 400 men, Jacob prayed his first recorded humble prayer: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies" (32:10). Alone at the brook Jabbok, "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day" (32:24). The man touched Jacob's thigh and crippled him. Jacob, now clinging rather than fighting, said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (32:26).

> *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.*
>
> **Genesis 32:28**

Jacob called the place Peniel: "for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (32:30). Hosea 12:3-4 says he wrestled with "the angel" and "wept, and made supplication." This was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ. Jacob ("supplanter, heel-grabber") became Israel ("prince with God") by being broken. God blesses those who stop striving and cling to Him in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

Chapter 33 — Jacob and Esau Reconciled

Esau ran to meet Jacob, embraced him and wept (33:4). God had changed Esau's heart in answer to prayer. Jacob settled at Shechem and built an altar called El-elohe-Israel, "God, the God of Israel" (33:20).

Chapter 34 — The Defiling of Dinah

Shechem, a Hivite prince, defiled Jacob's daughter Dinah (34:2). Simeon and Levi deceived the men of the city into circumcision and then massacred them (34:25). Jacob's compromise in settling near Shechem had brought disaster, and the sons' violence brought shame. Jacob later cursed their anger (49:5-7).

Chapter 35 — Return to Bethel

God called Jacob back to Bethel. Jacob ordered his household: "Put away the strange gods... and be clean, and change your garments" (35:2), a call to revival. God reaffirmed the name Israel and the covenant (35:9-12). Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin, near Bethlehem (35:16-19), and Matthew 2:18 recalls Rachel weeping at Bethlehem. Isaac died at 180 and was buried by Esau and Jacob together (35:28-29).

Chapter 36 — The Generations of Esau (Edom)

Esau's descendants became the nation of Edom in Mount Seir. Among them was Amalek (36:12), whose people would attack Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 17). Kings reigned in Edom "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (36:31): the worldly line develops quickly, while the line of promise waits on God's timing. Edom's long hostility toward Israel continues through Numbers, the Psalms (137:7), Obadiah and Malachi, and the Herods of the New Testament were Idumeans (Edomites).

Section VIII: Joseph — Suffering, Providence and Salvation (Chapters 37-50)

Chapter 37 — Joseph Sold by His Brothers

Jacob loved Joseph more than his brothers and gave him a coat of many colours (37:3). Joseph dreamed that his brothers' sheaves and the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed to him (37:5-11). His brothers "hated him yet the more for his dreams" (37:8). Sent by his father to check on them, he was conspired against (37:18), stripped of his coat, cast into a pit, and sold to Ishmaelite traders for twenty pieces of silver (37:28). The brothers dipped his coat in goat's blood and deceived their father, who mourned him as dead (37:31-35). Joseph was carried to Egypt and sold to Potiphar.

Chapter 38 — Judah and Tamar

An apparent interruption that is vital to the Messianic line. Judah left his brothers and married a Canaanite. His sons Er and Onan were wicked and the LORD slew them (38:7-10). Judah withheld his third son from Tamar, the widow. Tamar disguised herself as a harlot, and Judah lay with her (38:14-18). Confronted with his pledge, Judah confessed, "She hath been more righteous than I" (38:26). Tamar bore twins, Pharez and Zarah (38:27-30). Pharez is in the line of David and Christ (Ruth 4:18-22; Matthew 1:3). God's grace works through deeply flawed people; Tamar is one of four women named in Christ's genealogy, alongside Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba.

Chapter 39 — Joseph in Potiphar's House and Prison

"And the LORD was with Joseph" (39:2, 21, 23). He prospered as overseer of Potiphar's house. When Potiphar's wife tempted him day after day, he refused: "how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (39:9). He fled, leaving his garment (39:12; compare 2 Timothy 2:22). Falsely accused, he was thrown in prison, but even there God gave him favour. Joseph's purity contrasts sharply with Judah's sin in chapter 38.

Chapter 40 — The Butler and the Baker

In prison Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (40:8). One would be restored, the other hanged, within three days (40:12-22). Joseph asked the butler to remember him, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him" (40:23). Two more years passed. Some note the parallel with Christ crucified between two criminals, one of whom was saved and one lost (Luke 23:39-43).

Chapter 41 — Joseph Exalted Over Egypt

Pharaoh dreamed of seven fat and seven lean cattle, and seven full and seven thin ears of corn (41:1-7). The butler finally remembered Joseph, who was brought from the dungeon (41:14). Joseph gave God the credit ("It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace," 41:16) and interpreted: seven years of plenty, then seven of famine (41:25-32). Pharaoh said, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" (41:38). At thirty years old (41:46; compare Luke 3:23), Joseph was made ruler over all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. Men cried before him, "Bow the knee" (41:43; compare Philippians 2:10). Pharaoh gave him the name Zaphnath-paaneah and a Gentile bride, Asenath (41:45). He stored grain in the years of plenty, and "all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn" (41:57).

Chapter 42 — The Brothers' First Journey

Famine drove Jacob's sons to Egypt. Joseph recognised them, but they did not recognise him (42:8). He tested them, accused them of spying, and kept Simeon as a hostage. Their consciences awoke: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother" (42:21). Joseph turned aside and wept (42:24).

Chapter 43 — The Second Journey with Benjamin

Judah pledged himself as surety for Benjamin (43:8-9), the first sign of his transformation. Joseph feasted with his brothers, seating them in birth order to their astonishment, and gave Benjamin five times as much (43:33-34).

Chapter 44 — The Silver Cup and Judah's Plea

Joseph planted his silver cup in Benjamin's sack and had them arrested (44:1-13). Judah's speech is one of the greatest in Scripture: he offers himself as a slave in Benjamin's place so his father will not die of grief (44:18-34). The man who once sold one brother into slavery now offers to become a slave to save another. Substitutionary love has been born in Judah, the tribe of the coming Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5), who would give Himself for His brethren.

Chapter 45 — Joseph Reveals Himself

Joseph could no longer refrain: "I am Joseph" (45:3). His brothers were terrified, but he said:

> *Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*
>
> **Genesis 45:5**

Joseph kissed his brothers and wept on them (45:15). He sent for his father, and Jacob, hearing that Joseph was alive, revived: "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die" (45:28). Many see a picture of Christ revealing Himself to Israel at His second coming: "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn" (Zechariah 12:10).

Chapter 46 — Jacob Goes Down to Egypt

At Beersheba, God told Jacob, "fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation... I will also surely bring thee up again" (46:3-4). The family numbered seventy (46:27). In Egypt, separated in the land of Goshen (46:34), the family could grow into a nation without being absorbed by the Canaanites.

Chapter 47 — Jacob Before Pharaoh

Jacob blessed Pharaoh (47:7, 10). The lesser is blessed by the greater (Hebrews 7:7); the pilgrim patriarch is spiritually greater than the king of Egypt. Jacob described his life: "few and evil have the days of the years of my life been" (47:9). Joseph's administration saved Egypt as the famine deepened, and the people said, "Thou hast saved our lives" (47:25). Jacob made Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan, and "bowed himself upon the bed's head" (47:31; Hebrews 11:21).

Chapter 48 — Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons as his own, giving Joseph a double portion (48:5; 1 Chronicles 5:1-2). Crossing his hands, he gave the younger, Ephraim, the greater blessing (48:14-20), again showing God's sovereign choice of the younger. He spoke of "the Angel which redeemed me from all evil" (48:16). Hebrews 11:21 names this as an act of faith.

Chapter 49 — Jacob's Prophecy Over His Sons

Jacob called his sons to tell them "that which shall befall you in the last days" (49:1). His words are prophetic for each tribe: Reuben loses the firstborn rights for his sin (49:3-4); Simeon and Levi are scattered (49:5-7), fulfilled as Levi received no territory but cities throughout Israel, and Simeon was absorbed into Judah; Zebulun dwells at the haven of the sea (49:13); Dan judges and is "a serpent by the way" (49:16-17); and Joseph is a fruitful bough (49:22-26). The centre is Judah:

> *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*
>
> **Genesis 49:10**

Judah is pictured as a lion (49:9), and Christ is "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Revelation 5:5). The royal sceptre would stay with Judah until Shiloh (traditionally understood as "he whose it is," or "the peace-bringer") came. Jewish interpreters (the Targums) applied this to the Messiah. Judah retained a measure of rule until shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and Christ came while the sceptre was still in Judah. He "washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes" (49:11; compare Isaiah 63:2-3; Revelation 19:13). Jacob died, "gathered unto his people" (49:33).

Chapter 50 — Burial and the Promise of Return

Joseph and Egypt mourned seventy days, and a great procession buried Jacob at Machpelah (50:1-13). Afterward the brothers feared revenge. Joseph wept and answered:

> *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*
>
> **Genesis 50:20**

This is the Old Testament's great statement of providence (compare Romans 8:28), and the clearest picture of the cross: men intended evil, God intended salvation (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28). Joseph died at 110, saying, "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land," and made them swear to carry his bones to Canaan (50:24-25). Moses took them in the Exodus (Exodus 13:19), and they were buried at Shechem (Joshua 24:32). Hebrews 11:22 cites this as faith. Genesis begins with life in a garden and ends with "a coffin in Egypt" (50:26), showing the need for the redemption that Exodus begins to unfold.

Part Three: Christ in Genesis

Messianic Prophecies

Genesis	Prophecy	Fulfillment
3:15	Seed of the woman crushes the serpent	Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 20:10
9:26	The Messiah from the line of Shem	Luke 3:36
12:3; 18:18; 22:18	All nations blessed in Abraham's seed	Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:8, 16
17:19; 21:12	The line through Isaac	Romans 9:7; Hebrews 11:18; Matthew 1:2
28:14	The line through Jacob	Luke 3:34; Matthew 1:2
49:10	The sceptre from Judah until Shiloh	Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5; Luke 1:32-33
14:18-20	Priest-king after Melchizedek	Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5-7
22:8, 14	God will provide Himself a lamb on the mount	John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19-20

Types and Pictures of Christ

A "type" is a real historical person, event or object that God designed to foreshadow Christ. The New Testament confirms many of the types in Genesis.

Type	Genesis	How It Points to Christ
Adam	1-3	Head of a race; "the figure of him that was to come" (Romans 5:14); the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45)
Adam's bride from his side	2:21-24	The church born of Christ's pierced side (Ephesians 5:30-32; John 19:34)
Coats of skin	3:21	Sinners covered through the death of a substitute
Abel	4	Innocent shepherd slain by his brother; his blood speaks (Hebrews 12:24)
Seth	4:25	Appointed "instead of" the slain one; resurrection life
Enoch	5:24	Taken up to God without death (Hebrews 11:5)
The ark	6-8	Safety from judgment in Christ; one door (1 Peter 3:20-21; John 10:9)
Melchizedek	14	King of righteousness and peace; eternal priest (Hebrews 7)
Isaac	21-22	Promised son, miraculous birth, offered by his father, received back "in a figure" (Hebrews 11:19)
The ram	22:13	A substitute dying in the place of the son
Jacob's ladder	28	The one Mediator between heaven and earth (John 1:51)
Judah	44	Offers himself as surety for his brother
Joseph	37-50	The most complete type of Christ in the Old Testament (see below)

Joseph and Jesus: Over Twenty Parallels

Joseph	Genesis	Jesus	New Testament
Beloved of his father	37:3	The beloved Son	Matthew 3:17
A shepherd	37:2	The Good Shepherd	John 10:11
Sent by the father to his brothers	37:13-14	Sent by the Father to His own	John 3:17; 1:11
Hated for his words	37:8	Hated without a cause	John 15:25
His claims to future rule rejected	37:8	"We will not have this man to reign"	Luke 19:14
Conspired against	37:18	The council plotted against Him	Matthew 26:3-4
Stripped of his robe	37:23	Stripped of His garments	Matthew 27:28; John 19:23
Sold for pieces of silver	37:28	Sold for thirty pieces of silver	Matthew 26:15
Went down into Egypt	37:28	Taken to Egypt as a child	Matthew 2:14-15
Tempted and did not sin	39:7-12	Tempted, yet without sin	Hebrews 4:15
Falsely accused	39:14-18	Falsely accused	Matthew 26:59-61
Numbered with transgressors (two prisoners)	40:1-3	Crucified between two thieves	Luke 23:32-33
One prisoner saved, one condemned	40:21-22	One thief saved, one lost	Luke 23:39-43
Raised from the dungeon to the throne	41:14, 40	Raised from the dead and exalted	Philippians 2:9
Thirty years old at the start of his ministry	41:46	About thirty at the start of His ministry	Luke 3:23
All bow the knee to him	41:43	Every knee shall bow	Philippians 2:10
Given a Gentile bride while rejected by his brothers	41:45	The church, largely Gentile, during Israel's unbelief	Romans 11:25; Ephesians 3:6
The only source of bread for a starving world	41:55-57	The bread of life	John 6:35
Not recognised by his brothers at first	42:8	His own received Him not	John 1:10-11
Revealed himself to his brothers the second time	45:1-3	Revealed to Israel at His return	Acts 7:13; Zechariah 12:10
Forgave those who wronged him	45:5; 50:20	"Father, forgive them"	Luke 23:34
What men meant for evil, God meant for good	50:20	Delivered by God's determinate counsel	Acts 2:23
Saviour of the world (Zaphnath-paaneah)	41:45; 47:25	The Saviour of the world	John 4:42

Stephen draws on the Joseph story to show Israel's pattern of rejecting God's deliverers (Acts 7:9-14), and notes that "at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren" (7:13).

Appearances of the Angel of the LORD

The Angel of the LORD speaks as God, is called God, and accepts worship, yet is distinguished from the LORD. Many Bible teachers identify Him as the pre-incarnate Son: to Hagar (16:7-13), to Abraham at Mamre (18), at Moriah (22:11-18), to Jacob at Peniel (32:24-30; Hosea 12:3-5), and "the Angel which redeemed me" (48:16).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies in Genesis

Genesis	Prophecy	Fulfillment
2:17; 3:19	Man will die	Genesis 5 ("and he died"); Romans 5:12
6:3	120 years until judgment	The flood (Genesis 7)
9:25-27	Canaan subject to Shem	Israel's conquest of Canaan (Joshua)
12:2	Abram a great nation	Israel (Exodus 1:7; Deuteronomy 10:22)
15:13-14	400 years of affliction; exodus with great substance	Exodus 12:35-41; Acts 7:6
15:16	Return in the fourth generation	Exodus 6:16-20 (Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses)
16:12; 17:20	Ishmael a great nation of twelve princes, hostile to others	Genesis 25:13-18
17:6	Kings shall come out of thee	The kings of Israel and Judah
25:23	The elder serves the younger; two nations	2 Samuel 8:14 (David subdues Edom); Romans 9:12
27:40	Esau will break Jacob's yoke	2 Kings 8:20-22
37:5-11	Joseph's brothers bow to him	Genesis 42:6; 43:26; 50:18
40:12-22	Butler restored, baker hanged	Genesis 40:20-22
41:25-32	Seven years of plenty, seven of famine	Genesis 41:47-57
46:4	God will bring Israel up again	The Exodus
48:19	Ephraim greater than Manasseh	Ephraim became the leading northern tribe (Isaiah 7:2)
49:5-7	Simeon and Levi scattered	Joshua 19:1-9; 21
49:10	Royal line from Judah	David and his dynasty (2 Samuel 7); Christ
50:24-25	God will visit Israel and they will carry Joseph's bones	Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Genesis 1:1 — The Foundation of Everything

The first verse of the Bible is its most fundamental. If it is true, God is the owner of all things and man is accountable to Him (Psalm 24:1; Revelation 4:11). The rest of Scripture repeatedly grounds worship in creation: "Thou art worthy, O Lord... for thou hast created all things" (Revelation 4:11). Paul tells pagan philosophers to begin with "God that made the world and all things therein" (Acts 17:24). The same God who said "Let there be light" shines in believers' hearts in salvation (2 Corinthians 4:6): the new creation mirrors the first (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Genesis 3:15 — The First Gospel

- **"Enmity."** God Himself puts hostility between Satan's kingdom and the woman's seed. History is a conflict between two seeds: Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Pharaoh and Israel, Herod and the Christ-child (Revelation 12:1-5).
- **"Her seed."** Seed is normally spoken of men; this is the seed of a woman. It points to the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14; Galatians 4:4).
- **"It shall bruise thy head."** The Hebrew pronoun is masculine singular, "he," pointing to one individual Deliverer.
- **"Thou shalt bruise his heel."** A painful but not final wound: the cross, followed by resurrection.
- **Fulfillment.** "Through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20). Final fulfillment comes when the devil is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

Genesis 15:6 — Justified by Faith

Paul's argument in Romans 4 and Galatians 3 rests on this verse. Abraham was declared righteous (1) by believing God's promise, (2) before circumcision (Romans 4:10), (3) 430 years before the law (Galatians 3:17), and (4) apart from works (Romans 4:4-5). The word "counted" (reckoned, imputed) means righteousness was credited to his account. "Now it was not written for his sake alone... But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:23-24). James 2:23 quotes the same verse and shows that the faith that justifies is a living faith, proven years later on Moriah.

Genesis 22 — The Mountain of Sacrifice

Genesis 22	The Cross
"Thine only son... whom thou lovest" (22:2)	"His only begotten Son" (John 3:16)
The father offers the son (22:2)	"He that spared not his own Son" (Romans 8:32)
Three days' journey; Isaac "dead" in Abraham's mind (22:4)	Three days, then resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:4)
The son carries the wood up the hill (22:6)	Christ bore His cross (John 19:17)

Genesis 22	The Cross
The son is willing and submissive (22:9)	"Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42)
"God will provide himself a lamb" (22:8)	"Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29)
The ram dies in Isaac's place (22:13)	Christ died for us (1 Peter 3:18)
"In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen" (22:14)	Calvary near Jerusalem, on the Moriah range (2 Chronicles 3:1)
Received back "in a figure" from the dead (Hebrews 11:19)	Raised from the dead (Romans 4:24-25)
The oath of blessing to all nations follows (22:16-18)	The gospel to all nations (Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:8)

Note that Abraham said "God will provide **himself** a lamb." At Moriah God provided a ram; at Calvary God provided Himself, in the person of His Son.

Genesis 49:10 — Until Shiloh Come

The prophecy guaranteed that the tribe of Judah would hold the right to rule until the Messiah came. David, from Judah, began the royal line about 1000 BC. Even after the exile, Judah kept its identity and a measure of self-government. The Romans gradually removed Judea's independent authority in the time of Christ, and in AD 70 Jerusalem and the temple, along with the genealogical records, were destroyed. Since then no Messiah could arise who could prove descent from Judah and David. The Messiah had to come before the sceptre departed. Jesus, "our Lord sprang out of Juda" (Hebrews 7:14), came at exactly that time.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Genesis

1. God the Creator

God is eternal, existing "in the beginning" before all things; all-powerful, creating by His Word (Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3); personal, speaking and walking with man; and triune ("Let us," 1:26; 3:22; 11:7). His names in Genesis reveal Him: Elohim (the mighty Creator), Jehovah/LORD (the covenant-keeping God, 2:4), El Elyon (God Most High, 14:18-22), El Roi (the God who sees, 16:13), El Shaddai (God Almighty, 17:1), El Olam (the everlasting God, 21:33), and Jehovah-jireh (the LORD will provide, 22:14).

2. Man in the Image of God

Man is not an evolved animal but a special creation, made in God's image (1:26-27), with dignity, moral responsibility and the capacity for fellowship with God. This is the basis of the sanctity of life (9:6; James 3:9). Man was created male and female (1:27), a distinction Jesus affirmed (Matthew 19:4).

3. Marriage and Family

Marriage is God's institution, not a human invention: one man and one woman, leaving parents, cleaving, one flesh (2:24). Genesis shows the damage done when the pattern is broken: polygamy brings rivalry (Abraham, Jacob), favouritism destroys families (Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Joseph), and parental sin is repeated by children (Abraham's and Isaac's lies).

4. Sin and Its Consequences

Sin begins with doubting God's Word (3:1) and results in shame, fear, separation, blame, pain, toil and death. It spreads from one act (3) to murder (4) to universal corruption (6:5) to organised rebellion (11). Genesis teaches the doctrine of original sin: "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12). Every human after Adam is born a sinner (Psalm 51:5).

5. Judgment

God judges sin: in Eden, at the flood, at Babel and at Sodom. These judgments are presented in the New Testament as warnings of the final judgment (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-32; 2 Peter 2:4-9; 3:5-7; Jude 7). God is patient (120 years in Noah's day, 15:16 "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full"), but His judgment surely comes.

6. Grace

Grace runs through Genesis alongside judgment: the promise in 3:15, the coats of skin (3:21), the mark on Cain (4:15), Noah finding grace (6:8), the call of Abram from an idolatrous family (Joshua 24:2), the choice of Jacob before he was born (25:23), and Joseph's forgiveness. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (Romans 5:20).

7. Faith

Abraham is "the father of all them that believe" (Romans 4:11). His faith: obeyed the call to leave (12:1-4), trusted for the impossible son (15:6; Romans 4:18-21), and offered that son, believing in resurrection (22; Hebrews 11:17-19). Genesis provides eight of the heroes in Hebrews 11: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

8. Covenant

God binds Himself by covenant: with Noah (never another flood, 9:8-17), and with Abraham (land, seed and blessing, 12:1-3; 15; 17). The Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, ratified by God alone (15:17), and is the root of the Davidic Covenant, the New Covenant, and God's continuing purpose for Israel (Romans 11:28-29).

9. Election and Sovereign Choice

God repeatedly chooses the younger or the unexpected: Abel and Seth over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Judah and Joseph over Reuben, Ephraim over Manasseh, Perez over Zerah. Paul uses this to show that salvation is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9:16).

10. Providence

God governs all things for His purposes, even sinful choices of men, without being the author of sin. Joseph's story is the great illustration: "God meant it unto good" (50:20). God was "with Joseph" in the pit, the house and the prison.

11. Sacrifice and Worship

The way to God is by sacrifice: the coats of skin (3:21), Abel's lamb (4:4), Noah's altar (8:20), Abraham's altars (12:7-8; 13:18), and the ram on Moriah (22:13). True worship is by faith and by God's appointed way, not man's (Cain).

12. The Two Lines and Separation

Genesis contrasts the line of faith with the line of the world: Seth and Cain, Shem and Ham, Abraham and Lot, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. Lot shows the danger of moving "toward Sodom" (13:12), and Esau of trading eternal things for immediate appetite (25:34; Hebrews 12:16).

Part Seven: Connections — How Genesis Links to the Rest of the Bible

Genesis is the foundation on which every other book of the Bible is built. This section traces its links in both directions.

Genesis Quoted and Cited in the New Testament

Genesis	New Testament	Use
1:1	John 1:1-3; Hebrews 11:3	Creation by the Word
1:3	2 Corinthians 4:6	Light in the heart, the new creation
1:26-27	Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6; James 3:9; Colossians 3:10	Man in God's image; male and female
2:2	Hebrews 4:4	God's rest, picture of salvation rest
2:7	1 Corinthians 15:45	First Adam a living soul; last Adam a quickening spirit
2:24	Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31	Marriage; Christ and the church
3:1-6	2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14	The serpent's deception
3 (the fall)	Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22	Sin and death through Adam; life through Christ
3:15	Romans 16:20; Galatians 4:4; Revelation 12	The Seed and the serpent
3:17-19	Romans 8:20-22	Creation's groaning under the curse
4 (Cain and Abel)	Matthew 23:35; Hebrews 11:4; 12:24; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11	Faith, sacrifice, the way of Cain
5:24	Hebrews 11:5; Jude 14-15	Enoch translated; his prophecy
6-9 (Noah)	Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:5-6	Judgment and salvation; the end times
10-11 (nations, Babel)	Acts 17:26; Acts 2	One blood; the reversal of Babel
12:1	Acts 7:2-4; Hebrews 11:8	The call of Abraham
12:3	Galatians 3:8	The gospel preached to Abraham
14 (Melchizedek)	Hebrews 5:6-10; 6:20-7:17	The eternal priesthood of Christ
15:5	Romans 4:18	So shall thy seed be
15:6	Romans 4:3, 9, 22; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23	Justification by faith
15:13-14	Acts 7:6-7	400 years in Egypt
16; 21 (Hagar, Sarah)	Galatians 4:21-31	The two covenants
17:5	Romans 4:17	Father of many nations

Genesis	New Testament	Use
17:10-11	Romans 4:11; Acts 7:8	Circumcision as a seal
18:10, 14	Romans 9:9	The promised son
18-19 (Sodom)	Luke 17:28-32; 2 Peter 2:6-8; Jude 7	Judgment and the days of Lot
21:10	Galatians 4:30	Cast out the bondwoman
21:12	Romans 9:7; Hebrews 11:18	In Isaac shall thy seed be called
22	Hebrews 11:17-19; James 2:21-23	Abraham's offering of Isaac
22:16-17	Hebrews 6:13-14	God's oath
22:18	Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16	The Seed is Christ
25:23	Romans 9:10-12	Election: the elder shall serve the younger
25:29-34; 27	Hebrews 12:16-17	Esau's profanity
28:12	John 1:51	Jacob's ladder fulfilled in Christ
33:19; 48:22	John 4:5-6	Jacob's well at Sychar
37-50 (Joseph)	Acts 7:9-16; Hebrews 11:22	Joseph's story and faith
47:31	Hebrews 11:21	Jacob's worship
48:15-20	Hebrews 11:20-21	Isaac and Jacob's blessings by faith

Genesis in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	Direct continuation: Jacob's family becomes a nation (Exodus 1:1-7); God remembers His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (2:24); Joseph's bones carried out (13:19)
Leviticus	The sacrificial system develops the altar worship of Genesis 4, 8 and 22
Numbers	Balaam's oracles echo Genesis 12:3 and 49:9 (Numbers 24:9, 17)
Deuteronomy	"A Syrian ready to perish was my father" (26:5); the land sworn to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (1:8; 34:4)
Joshua	Conquest of the land promised in Genesis 15:18; Joseph's bones buried (24:32); Joshua's recap of the patriarchs (24:2-4)
Ruth	"Like Rachel and like Leah" and "like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah" (4:11-12)
1 Chronicles	Genealogies from Adam through the patriarchs (1-2); the birthright to Joseph (5:1-2)
2 Chronicles	Solomon builds the temple on Mount Moriah (3:1), the place of Genesis 22
Nehemiah	God chose Abram and made a covenant to give the land (9:7-8)
Job	Set in the patriarchal age
Psalms	Creation (8, 19, 104); Melchizedek (110:4); the covenant with Abraham and the Joseph story (105:6-22)
Isaiah	"Look unto Abraham your father" (51:2); "the waters of Noah" (54:9); new heavens and new earth (65:17)

Book	Link
Jeremiah	The covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (33:26); creation ordinances as guarantee (31:35-36)
Ezekiel	Eden, the garden of God (28:13; 31:8-9); Noah as righteous (14:14)
Hosea	Jacob took his brother by the heel and wrestled with the Angel (12:3-4)
Obadiah	The judgment of Esau (Edom)
Micah	"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham" (7:20)
Malachi	"I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau" (1:2-3)

Genesis and Revelation: Beginning and End

Genesis begins with paradise lost; Revelation ends with paradise restored. The tree of life, the river, the absence of curse and death, the bride, the serpent's defeat and the presence of God all appear at both ends of the Bible. (See the full comparison in the Link Map.)

Themes That Start in Genesis and Run Through Scripture

Theme	Starts in Genesis	Developed	Fulfilled
The Seed	3:15; 12:7; 22:18	2 Samuel 7:12; Isaiah 7:14	Galatians 3:16; Revelation 12:5
Substitution	3:21; 22:13	Leviticus 16; Isaiah 53:5-6	2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24
The Lamb	4:4; 22:8	Exodus 12; Isaiah 53:7	John 1:29; Revelation 5:6-12
Justification by faith	15:6	Habakkuk 2:4	Romans 4; Galatians 3
Covenant	9:9; 15:18; 17:7	Exodus 24; 2 Samuel 7; Jeremiah 31:31	Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8
Israel	12:2; 32:28	Exodus to Malachi	Romans 9-11; Revelation 7; 21:12
Blessing to the nations	12:3	Psalm 67; Isaiah 49:6	Acts 1:8; Revelation 7:9
Babylon	10:10; 11	2 Kings 25; Isaiah 13; Daniel	Revelation 17-18
Sabbath rest	2:2-3	Exodus 20:8-11	Hebrews 4:9-11
Marriage	2:24	Hosea; Song of Solomon; Isaiah 54:5	Ephesians 5:32; Revelation 19:7
The tree of life	2:9; 3:24	Proverbs 3:18	Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14
Death	2:17; 5	Psalm 90; Ecclesiastes	1 Corinthians 15:26, 54; Revelation 21:4

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Believe God's Word over every voice that questions it.** The fall began with "Yea, hath God said?" (3:1).
- **Come to God His way.** Abel was accepted and Cain rejected because of how they approached God (4:3-5; Hebrews 11:4).
- **Walk with God.** Enoch and Noah walked with God in corrupt generations (5:24; 6:9).
- **Obey even when you cannot see the end.** Abraham "went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8).
- **Do not pitch your tent toward Sodom.** Lot's gradual drift cost him his family and testimony (13:12; 19).
- **Wait on God's timing.** Hagar and Ishmael came from trying to help God's promise along (16).
- **Hold nothing back from God.** Abraham offered Isaac; God provided (22).
- **Do not despise eternal things for present appetites.** Esau sold his birthright for one meal (25:34; Hebrews 12:16).
- **God breaks to bless.** Jacob became Israel by being crippled and clinging (32).
- **Flee temptation.** Joseph ran (39:12; 2 Timothy 2:22).
- **Trust God's providence in suffering.** Pit, prison and betrayal were God's road to the throne (50:20; Romans 8:28).
- **Forgive.** Joseph forgave those who wronged him, as Christ forgave us (Ephesians 4:32).
- **Favouritism and deceit wreck families.** Rebekah's and Jacob's schemes brought decades of sorrow (27; 37).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:1	In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
1:27	So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
2:24	Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
3:15	And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.
6:8	But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.
12:3	And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.
15:6	And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.
18:14	Is any thing too hard for the LORD?
18:25	Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
22:8	My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering
28:15	And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest
50:20	But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good

Conclusion

Genesis answers the questions every person asks: Where did we come from? Why is the world broken? Why do we die? Is there any hope? God created all things good; man rebelled and brought sin and death; God judged sin, but at every step He showed grace and promised a Seed who would undo the serpent's work. That promise narrowed to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah, and it was pictured in the ark, the ram on Moriah, the ladder at Bethel and the life of Joseph. The book ends with a coffin in Egypt, but also with faith that "God will surely visit you" (50:24). The visiting came in Exodus, and the final visiting came in Christ, "the dayspring from on high" (Luke 1:78).

> *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
>
> **Genesis 3:15**

Exodus

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Moses • Date: c. 1445-1405 BC • Chapters: 40

> *And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you*
>
> **Exodus 12:13**

Part One: Introduction to Exodus

The Name

"Exodus" comes from the Greek Septuagint title meaning "going out" or "departure," taken from 19:1 and the theme of the book. The Hebrew title is Ve'eleh Shemoth, "And these are the names," from its opening words. The opening "And" ties Exodus directly to Genesis: the seventy souls who went down to Egypt (Genesis 46:27) have become a nation. Exodus is the book of **redemption**. Genesis shows man ruined by sin; Exodus shows God redeeming a people by blood and by power, and then coming to live among them.

Author

Moses wrote Exodus. The book itself says so: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD" (24:4); "Write this for a memorial in a book" (17:14); "Write thou these words" (34:27). Jesus quoted Exodus 3:6 as "the book of Moses" (Mark 12:26) and spoke of what "Moses gave you" in the law (John 7:19). Moses was an eyewitness of every event from chapter 2 onward, trained in Egypt's royal court (Acts 7:22), and familiar with Egyptian life, which shows throughout the book.

Date and Historical Setting

The Bible dates the Exodus precisely. 1 Kings 6:1 says Solomon began the temple "in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt," in the fourth year of his reign (about 966 BC). That places the Exodus around 1446 BC, during Egypt's powerful 18th Dynasty. Jephthah's statement that Israel had been in the land 300 years by his day (Judges 11:26) fits this early date. The Merneptah Stele (c. 1208 BC), an Egyptian inscription, already names "Israel" as a people in Canaan.

- **The sojourn.** "The sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years" (12:40-41; compare Genesis 15:13; Galatians 3:17).
- **The numbers.** About 600,000 men on foot, besides women and children (12:37), suggesting a total of around two million people, plus "a mixed multitude" (12:38).
- **The span of the book.** From Joseph's death (about 1805 BC) and the rise of oppression, through Moses' 80 years, to the setting up of the tabernacle on the first day of the second year after the Exodus (40:17). Chapters 19-40 cover less than one year at Mount Sinai.

Purpose and Theme

Exodus answers three questions: How does God save? (By the blood of the lamb and the power of His arm, chapters 1-18.) How should a redeemed people live? (By His law, chapters 19-24.) How can a holy God live among sinful people? (In the tabernacle, by sacrifice and priesthood, chapters 25-40.) The book moves from slavery to Pharaoh to service of God, and from God's glory unseen to God's glory filling the tabernacle (40:34).

> *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*

> **Exodus 25:8**

Outline of Exodus

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Redemption from Egypt	1-18	God delivers His people
Bondage in Egypt	1	Israel multiplied and oppressed
The deliverer prepared	2-4	Moses' birth, flight and call; "I AM"
The confrontation	5-11	Moses and Pharaoh; nine plagues
The Passover	12-13	The blood of the lamb; death of the firstborn
The Red Sea	14-15	Deliverance and the Song of Moses
The wilderness journey	16-18	Manna, water from the rock, Amalek, Jethro
II. Revelation at Sinai	19-24	God gives His law
The covenant offered	19	A kingdom of priests
The Ten Commandments	20	The moral law
The Book of the Covenant	21-23	Civil and ceremonial laws
The covenant ratified	24	The blood of the covenant
III. Residence of God: the Tabernacle	25-40	God dwells among His people
Instructions for the tabernacle	25-31	Ark, furniture, priesthood
Rebellion and restoration	32-34	The golden calf and covenant renewal
Construction of the tabernacle	35-40	Built and filled with glory

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Bondage and the Deliverer (Chapters 1-4)

Chapter 1 — Israel Oppressed

Jacob's family of seventy "were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them" (1:7), fulfilling God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:5; 46:3). "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (1:8). Fearing their numbers, Pharaoh enslaved them with hard labour building the store cities Pithom and Raamses (1:11), "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied" (1:12). When slavery failed, he ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill the baby boys. Shiphrah and Puah "feared God" and refused (1:17), and God blessed them (1:20-21). Pharaoh then commanded all Egypt to throw every Hebrew son into the river (1:22). This is Satan's war against the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15): an attempt to destroy the nation through which Messiah would come, repeated later by Haman (Esther 3) and Herod (Matthew 2:16).

Chapter 2 — The Birth and Flight of Moses

A Levite couple, Amram and Jochebed (6:20), hid their "goodly child" three months (2:2). Hebrews 11:23 says this was "by faith... and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." She placed him in an ark of bulrushes daubed with pitch on the Nile (2:3). The word for "ark" (tebah) is used only here and of Noah's ark: in both, God saves through judgment-waters. Pharaoh's daughter found him, his own mother was hired to nurse him, and he was named Moses, "Because I drew him out of the water" (2:10). God turned Pharaoh's own house into the deliverer's training ground.

At forty (Acts 7:23), Moses chose his people: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" (Hebrews 11:24-26). He killed an Egyptian beating a Hebrew (2:12), but when he tried to make peace between two Hebrews, they rejected him: "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" (2:14). Stephen comments: "he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" (Acts 7:25). Moses fled to Midian, rested by a well (as Jacob had), married Zipporah, the daughter of the priest Reuel (Jethro), and named his son Gershom, "a stranger" (2:15-22). The chapter ends with God's response to Israel's cry:

> *And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.*
>
> **Exodus 2:24**

Chapter 3 — The Burning Bush and the Name of God

After forty years in the wilderness as a shepherd (Acts 7:30), Moses saw a bush that burned with fire and was not consumed (3:2). "The angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire," and from the bush God spoke (3:2-4). The Angel of the LORD is God Himself, the pre-incarnate Son. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (3:5). God identified Himself: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (3:6). Jesus used this verse to prove the resurrection: God "is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32).

God had seen, heard and known His people's sorrows, and had "come down to deliver them" (3:7-8). When Moses asked His name, God answered:

> *And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*
>
> **Exodus 3:14**

This name reveals God as self-existent, eternal, unchanging and dependent on nothing. From the same Hebrew verb comes the covenant name YHWH (Jehovah, "the LORD," 3:15). Jesus claimed this name: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), and the Jews took up stones to stone Him for blasphemy, understanding exactly what He meant. His seven "I am" sayings in John build on this verse. God promised that Pharaoh would not let them go "but by a mighty hand" (3:19), and that Israel would not go out empty (3:21-22), fulfilling Genesis 15:14.

Chapter 4 — Moses' Excuses and God's Signs

Moses raised objections: Who am I? (3:11). What is Your name? (3:13). They will not believe me (4:1). I am not eloquent (4:10). Send someone else (4:13). God gave three signs: the rod becoming a serpent, the leprous hand, and water turned to blood (4:2-9). To the excuse about his speech, God replied, "Who hath made man's mouth?... have not I the LORD?" (4:11). God's anger was kindled at the final refusal, but He appointed Aaron as spokesman (4:14-16). God told Pharaoh through Moses, "Israel is my son, even my firstborn... Let my son go... if thou refuse... I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn" (4:22-23). Hosea 11:1 builds on this ("I... called my son out of Egypt"), and Matthew 2:15 applies it to Jesus, the true Son. On the journey, God sought to kill Moses because his son was uncircumcised; Zipporah circumcised the boy (4:24-26). The leader must obey the covenant before he leads others. The elders believed and worshipped (4:31).

Section II: The Confrontation with Pharaoh (Chapters 5-11)

Chapter 5 — "Who Is the LORD?"

Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to let Israel go to hold a feast in the wilderness. Pharaoh's answer sets the theme of the plagues:

> *Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.*
>
> **Exodus 5:2**

By the end of the plagues, Pharaoh and all Egypt would know exactly who the LORD is (7:5; 14:4, 18). Pharaoh increased the burden: straw was no longer supplied, but the quota of bricks stayed the same (5:7-8). The Israelite officers blamed Moses (5:21), and Moses complained to God (5:22-23). Things often get worse before deliverance comes.

Chapter 6 — The Seven "I Will"s of Redemption

God answered Moses by revealing Himself as Jehovah, the covenant-keeping God, known in a fuller way than the patriarchs knew Him (6:2-3). He made seven great promises (6:6-8):

- "**I will bring you out** from under the burdens of the Egyptians"
- "**I will rid you** out of their bondage"
- "**I will redeem you** with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments"
- "**I will take you** to me for a people"
- "**I will be to you** a God"
- "**I will bring you in** unto the land"
- "**I will give it you** for an heritage: I am the LORD"

This is a picture of full salvation: deliverance, freedom, redemption, adoption, relationship, guidance and inheritance (compare Ephesians 1:3-14). The people would not listen "for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage" (6:9). A genealogy shows Moses and Aaron descending from Levi through Kohath and Amram (6:14-27), the fourth generation promised in Genesis 15:16.

Chapter 7 — The First Plague: Water to Blood

God said, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders" (7:3), so "the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD" (7:5). Moses was 80 and Aaron 83 (7:7). Aaron's rod became a serpent and swallowed the magicians' rods (7:10-12). Paul names the magicians as Jannes and Jambres (2 Timothy 3:8). The Nile, Egypt's source of life and worshipped as a god, was turned to blood, and the fish died (7:17-21). The magicians copied it, and Pharaoh's heart was hardened (7:22). Revelation's second trumpet and second and third bowls turn the sea and rivers to blood (Revelation 8:8; 16:3-4). Contrast Jesus' first miracle, turning water into wine (John 2:1-11): law brings death, grace brings joy (2 Corinthians 3:6).

Chapter 8 — Plagues Two to Four: Frogs, Lice, Flies

Frogs covered the land (8:1-15); the magicians copied this too. Pharaoh asked Moses to pray, but when there was respite, he hardened his heart (8:15). **Lice** (or gnats) came from the dust (8:16-19), and the magicians failed: "This is the finger of God" (8:19). Jesus later said, "if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you" (Luke 11:20). **Flies** swarmed (8:20-32), but from this plague on, God "put a division between my people and thy people" (8:22-23): Goshen was spared. Pharaoh offered compromises: sacrifice "in the land" (8:25), or go "not very far away" (8:28). Satan's strategy is to keep God's people close to Egypt.

Chapter 9 — Plagues Five to Seven: Murrain, Boils, Hail

Murrain (cattle disease) killed Egypt's livestock but not Israel's (9:1-7). **Boils** broke out on man and beast; the magicians could not even stand before Moses (9:8-12). This is the first time Scripture says "the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh" (9:12), after Pharaoh had repeatedly hardened his own heart. God then declared His purpose:

> *And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.*
>
> **Exodus 9:16**

Paul quotes this in Romans 9:17 on God's sovereignty. **Hail** mixed with fire destroyed crops and anything left in the fields (9:13-35). Some of Pharaoh's servants "feared the word of the LORD" and brought their servants and cattle inside (9:20): even in Egypt, faith saved those who believed. Pharaoh confessed, "I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous" (9:27), but hardened his heart again once the hail stopped (9:34).

Chapter 10 — Plagues Eight and Nine: Locusts and Darkness

God's purpose: "that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt... that ye may know how that I am the LORD" (10:2). Pharaoh offered to let only the men go (10:11). **Locusts** covered the earth and ate everything the hail had left (10:12-15; compare Joel 1-2; Revelation 9:3). **Darkness** that could be felt covered Egypt for three days, "but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings" (10:21-23; compare Revelation 16:10). This struck at Ra, the sun god, the chief god of Egypt. Pharaoh's last compromise: go, but leave your flocks (10:24). Moses answered, "there shall not an hoof be left behind" (10:26). Pharaoh threatened Moses with death if he saw his face again, and Moses agreed: "I will see thy face again no more" (10:28-29).

Chapter 11 — The Final Plague Announced

God announced one more plague: the death of every firstborn in Egypt, "from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant" and of beasts (11:4-5). There would be a great cry such as never was (11:6), "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" (11:7). Moses left Pharaoh "in a great anger" (11:8).

The Ten Plagues: A Summary

God declared, "against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD" (12:12; Numbers 33:4). Each plague humiliated Egypt's gods and showed the LORD's power over creation.

Plague	Reference	Egyptian Deity Commonly Associated	Revelation Parallel
1. Water to blood	7:14-25	Hapi (the Nile); Osiris	Second trumpet; second and third bowls (8:8-9; 16:3-6)
2. Frogs	8:1-15	Heqet (frog-headed goddess of fertility)	Unclean spirits like frogs (16:13)

Plague	Reference	Egyptian Deity Commonly Associated	Revelation Parallel
3. Lice	8:16-19	Geb (god of the earth)	
4. Flies	8:20-32	Khepri and other insect-related deities	
5. Murrain on cattle	9:1-7	Apis (sacred bull); Hathor (cow goddess)	
6. Boils	9:8-12	Sekhmet and Imhotep (gods of healing)	First bowl: sores (16:2)
7. Hail and fire	9:13-35	Nut (sky goddess); Seth (storms)	First trumpet; seventh bowl (8:7; 16:21)
8. Locusts	10:1-20	Gods of the crops and fields	Fifth trumpet (9:1-11)
9. Darkness	10:21-29	Ra (the sun god)	Fourth trumpet; fifth bowl (8:12; 16:10)
10. Death of the firstborn	11; 12:29-30	Pharaoh, regarded as a god; his heir	

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The text describes it three ways: Pharaoh hardened his own heart (8:15, 32; 9:34), his heart "was hardened" (7:13, 22; 8:19), and the LORD hardened it (9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:8). God announced it in advance (4:21; 7:3), and He confirmed Pharaoh in the stubbornness Pharaoh chose. Paul uses Pharaoh to teach that God is sovereign in mercy and in judgment: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Romans 9:17-18). Pharaoh was fully responsible; God was fully sovereign. Hebrews 3:7-8 warns believers: "To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts."

Section III: The Passover and the Exodus (Chapters 12-15)

Chapter 12 — The Passover

The month of deliverance became "the beginning of months" (12:2): redemption is a new beginning (2 Corinthians 5:17). Each household was to take a lamb on the tenth day, "without blemish, a male of the first year" (12:5), keep it until the fourteenth day, kill it at evening, and put its blood on the two side posts and the upper door post (12:6-7). They were to eat it roasted with fire, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, dressed and ready to leave (12:8-11).

> *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*
>
> **Exodus 12:13**

Note that God said "when I see the blood," not "when I see your good works." Safety depended not on how the people felt inside the house but on the blood outside it. The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed for seven days, with all leaven removed (12:15-20); leaven pictures sin (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). The Passover was to be kept forever as a memorial, explained to the children (12:24-27).

At midnight the LORD struck every firstborn in Egypt, "and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead" (12:29-30). Pharaoh finally said, "Rise up... go, serve the LORD" (12:31-32). The Egyptians gave Israel silver, gold and clothing (12:35-36), and Israel left

with "a mixed multitude" after exactly 430 years, "even the selfsame day" (12:38-41). The rules for the Passover required that strangers be circumcised to eat it, and "neither shall ye break a bone thereof" (12:43-49). John 19:36 cites this when Jesus' legs were not broken on the cross: "A bone of him shall not be broken."

Chapter 13 — The Firstborn Sanctified; the Pillar of Cloud

Because God spared Israel's firstborn, every firstborn belonged to Him and had to be redeemed (13:1-2, 11-16). Jesus was presented in the temple under this law (Luke 2:22-23). Israel was to remember the day "with a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place" (13:3). God led them by the way of the wilderness rather than the short route through Philistine land, "Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war" (13:17). Moses carried Joseph's bones, fulfilling Genesis 50:25 (13:19). God led them visibly:

> *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light*
>
> **Exodus 13:21**

Chapter 14 — The Crossing of the Red Sea

God deliberately led Israel to camp by the sea, so Pharaoh would think them trapped and pursue them (14:1-4). Pharaoh's 600 chosen chariots came after them (14:7). The people panicked and turned on Moses: "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (14:11). Moses answered:

> *Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day... The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*
>
> **Exodus 14:13-14**

The Angel of God and the pillar of cloud moved behind Israel, giving darkness to the Egyptians and light to Israel (14:19-20). Moses stretched out his hand, a strong east wind blew all night, and the waters were divided; Israel went through "upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" (14:21-22). When the Egyptians followed, God troubled their army and took off their chariot wheels, and the sea returned and covered them; not one remained (14:23-28). "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day" (14:30). "And the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses" (14:31).

Paul says Israel "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Corinthians 10:1-2): the crossing pictures the believer's identification with Christ in death to the old life and resurrection to the new (Romans 6:3-4). Hebrews 11:29 says they passed through "by faith." The Red Sea became the Old Testament's great model of salvation, recalled throughout the Psalms and prophets (Psalm 106:9-11; 136:13-15; Isaiah 51:10; 63:11-13).

Chapter 15 — The Song of Moses and the Bitter Waters of Marah

The first recorded song in the Bible celebrates redemption:

> *The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.*
>
> **Exodus 15:2**

"The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name" (15:3). "Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (15:11). The song looks back to the sea and forward to the conquest of Canaan and the sanctuary (15:13-17), ending "The LORD shall reign for ever and ever" (15:18). Miriam led the women with timbrels (15:20-21). In Revelation, the victors over the beast stand on a sea of glass and sing "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" (Revelation 15:2-4).

Three days later, the water at Marah was bitter, and the people murmured (15:22-24). God showed Moses a tree; when cast into the waters, they were made sweet (15:25). Many see the cross here, which turns life's bitterness to sweetness. God revealed Himself as Jehovah-rapha: "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (15:26). Then He led them to Elim, with twelve wells and seventy palm trees (15:27).

Section IV: The Wilderness Journey (Chapters 16-18)

Chapter 16 — Manna from Heaven

A month after leaving Egypt, the whole congregation murmured for food: "Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots" (16:3). God answered grace with grace: "I will rain bread from heaven for you" (16:4). Quail came in the evening, and in the morning a small round thing lay on the ground. The people said "It is manna" ("What is it?"), for they did not know what it was (16:13-15). Each gathered an omer per person; "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (16:18; quoted by Paul on generosity in 2 Corinthians 8:15). Manna kept overnight bred worms, except on the Sabbath, when a double portion was given on the sixth day (16:19-30). This is the first mention of the Sabbath as a command to Israel, before Sinai. A pot of manna was kept "before the Testimony" for future generations (16:32-34; Hebrews 9:4). The manna fell for forty years until they reached Canaan (16:35; Joshua 5:12).

Jesus applied the manna to Himself: "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger" (John 6:32-35). Like manna, Christ came down from heaven, was freely given, must be received personally, sustains daily, and is sufficient for all. Revelation 2:17 promises "the hidden manna" to the overcomer. Deuteronomy 8:3 explains the lesson: "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD," the verse Jesus used against Satan (Matthew 4:4).

Chapter 17 — Water from the Rock; Victory over Amalek

At Rephidim there was no water, and the people "chode" (strove) with Moses and tempted the LORD: "Is the LORD among us, or not?" (17:2, 7). God said, "I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it" (17:6). The place was named Massah ("temptation") and Meribah ("strife") (17:7; Psalm 95:8; Hebrews 3:8).

> *And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 10:4**

The rock was struck once, and life-giving water flowed for all, as Christ was smitten once on the cross and the Spirit flows to all who believe (John 7:37-39). Later, Moses was told to speak to the rock but struck it twice, and was barred from Canaan (Numbers 20:8-12), because Christ is to be smitten only once (Hebrews 9:28).

Amalek attacked Israel (17:8), striking the weak and weary at the rear (Deuteronomy 25:17-18). Joshua fought below while Moses held up the rod of God on the hill. When his hands were raised Israel prevailed; when they fell Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur held up his hands until sunset (17:10-13): a picture of intercessory prayer and of supporting God's leaders. This is the first mention of Joshua. God promised to "utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek" (17:14), and Moses built an altar called Jehovah-nissi, "The LORD is my banner" (17:15). Amalek reappears in Saul's disobedience (1 Samuel 15) and in Haman the Agagite (Esther 3:1).

Chapter 18 — Jethro's Counsel

Jethro brought Zipporah and Moses' two sons to Moses at the mount of God (18:1-6). Hearing all God had done, Jethro rejoiced and said, "Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods" (18:11), and offered sacrifices. Watching Moses judge the people from morning to evening, Jethro said, "The thing that thou doest is not good... thou art not able to perform it thyself alone" (18:17-18). He advised Moses to teach the people God's laws and appoint "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness" as rulers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens (18:21). Moses took the advice. This is a principle of delegated leadership, echoed in the appointment of the seven in Acts 6:1-6 and the qualifications for elders (1 Timothy 3).

Section V: The Covenant at Sinai (Chapters 19-24)

Chapter 19 — The Covenant Offered

In the third month Israel camped before Mount Sinai (19:1-2), where they stayed for about a year. God spoke from the mountain:

> *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*
>
> **Exodus 19:4-6**

Notice the order: God first redeemed them (grace), then gave the law. The law was never the way to become God's people; it was the way for the redeemed to live as God's people. Peter applies this calling to the church: "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6). The people answered, "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do" (19:8), a confident promise they would break within weeks. They were to sanctify themselves, wash their clothes, and keep away from the mountain on pain of death (19:10-15). On the third day there were thunders, lightnings, a thick cloud, a very loud trumpet, fire and smoke, and the whole mountain quaked (19:16-19). Hebrews 12:18-24 contrasts this terrifying mount with "mount Sion... and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

Chapter 20 — The Ten Commandments

> *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
>
> **Exodus 20:2-3**

God spoke the Ten Commandments audibly to the whole nation (20:1; Deuteronomy 5:22) and later wrote them on stone with His own finger (31:18). The first four concern love to God; the last six concern love to neighbour (Matthew 22:37-40). See Part Five for each commandment and its New Testament treatment. The people, terrified, begged Moses to speak instead: "let not God speak with us, lest we die" (20:19). Moses said God came "to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not" (20:20). The chapter closes with instructions for a simple altar of earth or uncut stone, without steps (20:24-26): man must not add his own work to God's way of approach.

The purpose of the law. The law reveals God's holy character, defines sin ("by the law is the knowledge of sin," Romans 3:20; 7:7), restrains evil, and acts as a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). It was never given as a means of salvation: "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" (Romans 3:20). It "was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come" (Galatians 3:19).

Chapters 21-23 — The Book of the Covenant

These chapters apply the Ten Commandments to daily life in Israel: laws on servants, violence, property, restitution, justice, the poor, the stranger, and the sabbatical year.

- **The Hebrew servant (21:1-6).** A Hebrew servant went free in the seventh year. If he said, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free," his ear was bored with an awl at the door, and he served for ever. Psalm 40:6-8 ("mine ears hast thou opened") is applied to Christ in Hebrews 10:5-7: Christ became the willing Servant out of love (Philippians 2:7).
- **Capital crimes (21:12-17).** Murder, kidnapping and cursing parents. Jesus quoted 21:17 against the Pharisees' traditions (Matthew 15:4).
- **"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (21:23-25).** This "law of retaliation" limited punishment to fit the crime in the courts. Jesus forbade using it as a principle of personal revenge (Matthew 5:38-39).
- **Justice for the vulnerable (22:21-27; 23:6-9).** God defends the stranger, widow and fatherless: "for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (22:21).

- **"Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people" (22:28).** Paul quoted this when he unknowingly rebuked the high priest (Acts 23:5).
- **The three annual feasts (23:14-17).** Unleavened Bread, Harvest (Pentecost) and Ingathering (Tabernacles). See Leviticus 23 for the full calendar.
- **"Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk" (23:19).**
- **The Angel of God's presence (23:20-23).** "Behold, I send an Angel before thee... obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him." An Angel who forgives sins and bears God's name is God Himself: the pre-incarnate Christ.

Chapter 24 — The Covenant Ratified with Blood

Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, built an altar with twelve pillars, offered sacrifices, and read the book of the covenant. The people said, "All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient" (24:7). Moses sprinkled half the blood on the altar and half on the people:

> *Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.*
>
> **Exodus 24:8**

At the Last Supper Jesus said, "this is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:18-22). Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy elders "saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone" (24:10), and they ate and drank before Him (24:11). Moses went up into the cloud for forty days and forty nights (24:18).

Section VI: The Tabernacle Instructions (Chapters 25-31)

Chapter 25 — The Offering, the Ark, the Table and the Candlestick

God asked for a freewill offering "of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart" (25:2) and gave the purpose:

> *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle*
>
> **Exodus 25:8-9**

Everything was to be made exactly "after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (25:40; Hebrews 8:5), because the earthly tabernacle was a copy of heavenly realities (Hebrews 9:23-24). God began with the furniture of the Holy of Holies and worked outward, as God comes to man.

- **The ark of the covenant (25:10-22).** A chest of acacia (shittim) wood overlaid with gold, holding the tablets of the law (and later the manna and Aaron's rod, Hebrews 9:4). Acacia wood and gold picture Christ's humanity and deity in one Person.
- **The mercy seat (25:17-22).** A solid gold lid with two cherubim facing it. "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat" (25:22). On the Day of Atonement, blood was sprinkled on it, covering the broken law beneath (Leviticus 16:14). Romans 3:25 uses the

same Greek word (hilasterion) for Christ: "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation." Christ is our mercy seat, where God meets sinners on the basis of blood.

- **The table of shewbread (25:23-30).** Twelve loaves always before God (Leviticus 24:5-9): Christ the bread of life, and God's people kept in His presence.
- **The golden candlestick (lampstand) (25:31-40).** Beaten from one talent of pure gold, with seven lamps, the only light in the Holy Place: Christ the light of the world (John 8:12), and the churches as lampstands (Revelation 1:20).

Chapter 26 — The Tabernacle Structure and the Veil

The tent had ten inner curtains of fine linen with cherubim, covered by goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins (26:1-14). Outwardly plain, inwardly glorious: like Christ, who had "no form nor comeliness" outwardly (Isaiah 53:2) but whose inner glory was seen by faith (John 1:14). Boards of acacia overlaid with gold stood in sockets of silver (26:15-30); the silver came from the redemption money (38:25-27), so the dwelling of God rested on redemption. A veil of blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen, embroidered with cherubim, separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy (26:31-33).

> *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh*
>
> **Hebrews 10:20**

When Christ died, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:51): torn by God, from above, opening the way into His presence for all believers (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Chapter 27 — The Brazen Altar and the Court

The altar of burnt offering, of acacia overlaid with brass (bronze), stood at the entrance (27:1-8). Brass in Scripture often pictures judgment. No one could approach God except past the altar: the cross comes first. The court was surrounded by white linen hangings (27:9-19), a picture of the righteousness that separates God's dwelling from the world, with one gate on the east side (27:16). There was only one way in, as Christ is the one way (John 10:9; 14:6). Pure olive oil kept the lamp burning continually (27:20-21).

Chapter 28 — The Priestly Garments

Aaron and his sons were set apart as priests, with "holy garments... for glory and for beauty" (28:2). The high priest wore the ephod, with two onyx stones on the shoulders engraved with the names of the twelve tribes (28:9-12), and the breastplate with twelve precious stones, each engraved with a tribe's name, "upon his heart" (28:15-29). Our High Priest carries His people both on His shoulders (strength) and on His heart (love) before God (Hebrews 7:25). The Urim and Thummim, kept in the breastplate, were used to discern God's will (28:30). The robe had golden bells and pomegranates on the hem (28:33-35). On the mitre was a gold plate: "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (28:36-38). The high priest bore "the iniquity of the holy things": even Israel's worship needed atonement.

Chapter 29 — The Consecration of the Priests

Aaron and his sons were washed with water (29:4), clothed (29:5-9), and anointed with oil (29:7). A bull was offered as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering (29:10-18). The blood of the ram of consecration was put on the right ear, right thumb and right big toe (29:20): ears to hear God's Word, hands to do His work, feet to walk His way, all covered by blood. The daily burnt offering, a lamb morning and evening, was to continue forever (29:38-42). God's purpose: "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God" (29:45).

Chapter 30 — The Altar of Incense, Ransom Money, Laver and Holy Oil

- **The golden altar of incense (30:1-10)** stood before the veil, with incense burned morning and evening. Incense pictures prayer (Psalm 141:2; Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4) and the intercession of Christ (Hebrews 7:25).
- **The ransom money (30:11-16).** Every man counted in the census paid half a shekel, "a ransom for his soul... The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less" (30:12, 15). All souls are of equal value and need the same redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19). Jesus paid the temple tax with a coin from a fish's mouth "for me and thee" (Matthew 17:24-27).
- **The brass laver (30:17-21).** Priests washed hands and feet before serving. Compare Jesus washing the disciples' feet: daily cleansing for those already washed (John 13:10; 1 John 1:9; Ephesians 5:26).
- **The holy anointing oil and incense (30:22-38).** Never to be copied for common use. Oil pictures the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27).

Chapter 31 — Bezaleel and the Sabbath Sign

God filled Bezaleel "with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (31:3), the first person in Scripture said to be filled with the Spirit, equipped for practical service. Aholiab was appointed with him (31:6). The Sabbath was given as "a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever" (31:13-17): "that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you" (Jehovah-mekaddishkem). God gave Moses two tables of testimony, "written with the finger of God" (31:18).

Section VII: Rebellion and Restoration (Chapters 32-34)

Chapter 32 — The Golden Calf

While Moses was on the mountain, the people demanded gods to go before them. Aaron collected their gold earrings and made a molten calf, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (32:4). Aaron proclaimed "a feast to the LORD," and the people "sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (32:5-6; quoted in 1 Corinthians 10:7). This was idolatry mixed with the LORD's name: worshipping the true God through an image, breaking the second commandment within weeks of hearing it.

God told Moses He would consume them and make a nation of Moses instead (32:10). Moses interceded, appealing to God's reputation among the Egyptians and His oath to Abraham, Isaac and Israel, "And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people" (32:11-14). Coming down, Moses broke the tablets at the foot of the mountain (32:19), burned the calf, ground it to powder,

and made Israel drink it (32:20). Aaron's excuse is famous: "I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf" (32:24). Moses called, "Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me" (32:26), and the Levites killed about three thousand men (32:28). Contrast Pentecost, when the Spirit was given and about three thousand were saved (Acts 2:41): "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

Moses then offered himself: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (32:32). Paul expressed similar love for Israel (Romans 9:3). Moses could not be their substitute, but Christ could and did (Galatians 3:13). Jeroboam later repeated Aaron's sin with almost the same words (1 Kings 12:28).

Chapter 33 — God's Presence and Glory

God said He would send an angel before them but would not go in their midst, "lest I consume thee in the way" (33:3). The people mourned and stripped off their ornaments (33:4-6). Moses pitched a tent outside the camp, where "the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (33:11). Joshua "departed not out of the tabernacle" (33:11). Moses pleaded for God's presence, and God answered:

> *My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.*
>
> **Exodus 33:14**

Moses said, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (33:15). Then he asked, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory" (33:18). God said He would make His goodness pass before him and proclaim His name, "and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" (33:19; Romans 9:15). "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (33:20). God put Moses in a cleft of the rock, covered him with His hand, and let him see His back (33:21-23). John 1:18 says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son... he hath declared him." In Christ, believers see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Chapter 34 — The Covenant Renewed and the Name Proclaimed

Moses hewed two new tablets, and God came down and proclaimed His name:

> *The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty*
>
> **Exodus 34:6-7**

This self-revelation is quoted or echoed throughout the Old Testament (Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). Mercy and justice meet in it; they are fully reconciled only at the cross, where God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). God renewed the covenant, warned against covenants with Canaan's inhabitants, and declared His name "Jealous" (34:14). Moses was again on the mountain forty days and nights without bread or water (34:28; compare Jesus' forty days, Matthew 4:2). When he came down, "the skin of his face shone" (34:29), and he put a veil on his face (34:33-35). Paul explains that the veil hid the fading glory of the old covenant, and that a veil remains on Israel's heart when Moses is read, "Nevertheless when it shall

turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away... But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:7-18).

Section VIII: The Tabernacle Built and Filled (Chapters 35-40)

Chapters 35-36 — The Willing Offering

Moses repeated the Sabbath command (35:1-3) and called for an offering from "whosoever is of a willing heart" (35:5). The people came, "every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing" (35:21), men and women alike. They gave so much that Moses had to command them to stop: "the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work" (36:5-7). This is a model of Spirit-moved giving (2 Corinthians 9:7). Skilled workers led by Bezaleel and Aholiab built the curtains, boards and veil (36:8-38).

Chapters 37-38 — The Furniture and the Court

Bezaleel made the ark, mercy seat, table, candlestick, altar of incense, anointing oil and incense (37), then the altar of burnt offering, the laver and the court (38). The laver was made from the brass mirrors (looking glasses) of the women who served at the door (38:8): personal vanity surrendered for cleansing in God's service. An inventory of gold, silver and brass is given (38:21-31), with the silver totalling over 100 talents from the redemption money of 603,550 men.

Chapter 39 — The Priestly Garments and Inspection

The garments were made "as the LORD commanded Moses," a phrase repeated seven times in this chapter and seven more in chapter 40. Everything was brought to Moses, who inspected it all, "and, behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded... and Moses blessed them" (39:43). God's work done God's way receives God's blessing.

Chapter 40 — The Tabernacle Erected and Filled with Glory

On the first day of the first month of the second year, Moses set up the tabernacle and its furniture, anointed it, and consecrated Aaron and his sons (40:1-33). "So Moses finished the work" (40:33). Then:

> *Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*
>
> **Exodus 40:34-35**

Exodus begins in darkness, slavery and death, and ends with the glory of God dwelling among His redeemed people. The cloud led them through all their journeys (40:36-38). This anticipates the incarnation, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, (and we beheld his glory" (John 1:14); the church as God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21-22); and the final fulfillment, "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (Revelation 21:3).

Part Three: Christ in Exodus

Moses as a Type of Christ

Moses himself said, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee... like unto me" (Deuteronomy 18:15), and Peter applied it to Jesus (Acts 3:22-23).

Moses	Exodus	Christ	New Testament
Preserved as a baby when the king killed the infants	1:22-2:10	Preserved from Herod's slaughter	Matthew 2:13-16
Spent his early years in Egypt	2:10	Taken to Egypt as a child	Matthew 2:14-15
Left royal privilege to identify with his people	Hebrews 11:24-26	Emptied Himself, took the form of a servant	Philippians 2:6-7
Rejected by his brothers the first time	2:14; Acts 7:25, 35	"His own received him not"	John 1:11
Took a Gentile bride during his rejection	2:21	The church gathered from the Gentiles	Acts 15:14
Returned as deliverer and was accepted	4:29-31	Will return and be received by Israel	Romans 11:26
A shepherd	3:1	The Good Shepherd	John 10:11
Prophet who spoke God's words	4:12	The Prophet like Moses	Acts 3:22
Performed signs and wonders	4-11	"A man approved of God... by miracles and wonders"	Acts 2:22
Mediator between God and the people	20:19; 24	The one Mediator	1 Timothy 2:5
Interceded for sinners, offering himself	32:30-32	Gave Himself, ever lives to intercede	Hebrews 7:25
Fasted forty days	34:28	Fasted forty days	Matthew 4:2
His face shone with glory	34:29	Transfigured, His face shone	Matthew 17:2
Faithful in all God's house as a servant	Numbers 12:7	Faithful as a Son over His own house	Hebrews 3:2-6

The Passover Lamb and Christ

The Passover Lamb	Exodus 12	Christ	New Testament
A lamb	12:3	"Behold the Lamb of God"	John 1:29
Without blemish	12:5	"A lamb without blemish and without spot"	1 Peter 1:19
A male in its prime	12:5	Crucified in His early thirties	Luke 3:23

The Passover Lamb	Exodus 12	Christ	New Testament
Chosen on the tenth day, examined until the fourteenth	12:3, 6	Entered Jerusalem and was examined by His enemies before Passover	Matthew 21-22; John 18:38
Killed at evening by the whole assembly	12:6	Died at the ninth hour; rejected by the nation	Matthew 27:46-50
Its blood applied to the door	12:7	His blood applied by faith	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:14
Death passed over those under the blood	12:13	No condemnation to those in Christ	Romans 8:1
Roasted with fire	12:8-9	Bore the fire of God's wrath	Isaiah 53:10
Not a bone broken	12:46	His legs not broken	John 19:33, 36
Eaten by those it saved	12:8	"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man"	John 6:53
Eaten with unleavened bread	12:8, 15	Purge out the old leaven	1 Corinthians 5:7-8
A memorial to be kept for ever	12:14	"This do in remembrance of me"	Luke 22:19
Began a new year	12:2	A new creation	2 Corinthians 5:17

Jesus was crucified at Passover. At the Last Supper, a Passover meal, He took the bread and cup and gave them new meaning (Luke 22:15-20). "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Tabernacle: A Picture of Christ and the Way to God

The tabernacle is described in more detail than any other object in Scripture: about fifty chapters across Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Hebrews. Its arrangement traces the path of a sinner into God's presence.

Item	Exodus	What It Pictures	New Testament
The one gate	27:16	Christ the only way in	John 10:9; 14:6
The brazen altar	27:1-8	The cross: substitutionary sacrifice	Hebrews 13:10-12
The laver	30:17-21	Cleansing by the Word for those already redeemed	John 13:10; Ephesians 5:26
The candlestick	25:31-40	Christ the light of the world; the Spirit's light	John 8:12; Revelation 1:20
The table of shewbread	25:23-30	Christ the bread of life; fellowship	John 6:35
The altar of incense	30:1-10	Prayer and Christ's intercession	Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 8:3-4
The veil	26:31-33	Christ's flesh, torn to open the way	Hebrews 10:19-20; Matthew 27:51
The ark	25:10-16	Christ: wood (humanity) and gold (deity); the law kept within His heart	Psalm 40:8; Hebrews 9:4
The mercy seat	25:17-22	Christ our propitiation, where God meets sinners	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:5

Item	Exodus	What It Pictures	New Testament
The Shekinah glory	40:34	God dwelling with man in Christ	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3
The high priest	28-29	Christ our High Priest	Hebrews 4:14-16; 8:1-2
The silver sockets	26:19; 38:27	God's house founded on redemption	1 Peter 1:18-19

Other Pictures of Christ in Exodus

- **The burning bush (3).** God dwelling in a lowly bush without consuming it: the incarnation, God dwelling in human flesh.
- **"I AM" (3:14).** The divine name Jesus claimed (John 8:58).
- **The tree at Marah (15:25).** The cross that turns bitter to sweet.
- **The manna (16).** The bread from heaven (John 6:32-35).
- **The smitten rock (17:6).** "That Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4).
- **The Hebrew servant with the bored ear (21:5-6).** The willing Servant (Psalm 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-7).
- **The Angel with God's name in him (23:20-23).** The pre-incarnate Son.
- **The blood of the covenant (24:8).** "My blood of the new testament" (Matthew 26:28).
- **The cleft of the rock (33:22).** The believer hidden in Christ (Colossians 3:3).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment in Exodus
Abraham's seed multiplied	Genesis 15:5; 46:3	1:7
Affliction in a foreign land for 400 years	Genesis 15:13	1:11-14; 12:40-41
God would judge the oppressing nation	Genesis 15:14	The ten plagues (7-12)
Israel would leave with great substance	Genesis 15:14; Exodus 3:21-22	12:35-36
Return in the fourth generation	Genesis 15:16	Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses (6:16-20)
God would bring them up out of Egypt	Genesis 46:4; 50:24	12:41; 13:3
Joseph's bones carried out	Genesis 50:25	13:19
Pharaoh would not let them go except by a mighty hand	3:19	5-11
They would serve God on this mountain	3:12	19-24
The death of the firstborn	4:23; 11:4-5	12:29
Pharaoh would pursue and God would be honoured	14:4	14:5-31
The Egyptians you see today you shall see no more	14:13	14:30

Part Five: The Ten Commandments

Commandment	Exodus	Duty	New Testament
1. No other gods before Me	20:3	Worship God alone	Matthew 4:10; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
2. No graven images	20:4-6	Worship God as He commands, not by images	1 John 5:21; Acts 17:29; John 4:24
3. Do not take the LORD's name in vain	20:7	Reverence for God's name	Matthew 6:9; James 5:12
4. Remember the Sabbath day	20:8-11	A holy day of rest and worship	Mark 2:27-28; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 4:9-10
5. Honour your father and mother	20:12	Respect for authority, beginning at home	Ephesians 6:1-3
6. Thou shalt not kill	20:13	The sanctity of human life	Matthew 5:21-22; Romans 13:9
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery	20:14	Sexual purity and faithfulness	Matthew 5:27-28; Hebrews 13:4
8. Thou shalt not steal	20:15	Respect for property; honest work	Ephesians 4:28
9. Do not bear false witness	20:16	Truthfulness	Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9
10. Thou shalt not covet	20:17	Contentment; purity of desire	Romans 7:7; Hebrews 13:5

Jesus' summary. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart... This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40). "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

The Sabbath. Nine of the ten commandments are restated in the New Testament as moral duties for believers. The fourth is the one not repeated as a command; the early church met on "the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2), the day of the resurrection, called "the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10). Paul teaches that no one should judge believers "in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17). The Sabbath points to the rest found in Christ (Hebrews 4:9-11; Matthew 11:28). Christians differ on how the principle of a weekly day of rest and worship applies today.

Jesus deepened the commandments. He showed that anger is heart-murder and lust is heart-adultery (Matthew 5:21-28). No one keeps the law perfectly: "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). The law shows us our need of a Saviour (Galatians 3:24), and only Christ fulfilled it perfectly (Matthew 5:17). The believer is not under the law as a covenant of works but under grace (Romans 6:14), and by the Spirit "the righteousness of the law" is fulfilled in those who walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:4).

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

Exodus 3:14 — I AM THAT I AM

God's name reveals His **self-existence** (He depends on nothing), **eternity** (He always is, with no past or future tense to His being), **unchangeableness** ("I am the LORD, I change not," Malachi 3:6), and **faithfulness** (He will be all He has promised). Jesus' use of "I am" in John is the clearest claim to deity in the Gospels:

John	"I am..."
6:35	The bread of life
8:12	The light of the world
10:9	The door
10:11	The good shepherd
11:25	The resurrection, and the life
14:6	The way, the truth, and the life
15:1	The true vine
8:58	"Before Abraham was, I am" (the absolute claim)
18:5-6	"I am he": the soldiers went backward and fell to the ground

Exodus 12 — Redemption by Blood

Three truths stand out. **Substitution:** a lamb died in the place of the firstborn. **Application:** the blood had to be personally applied to each house; a slain lamb unapplied saved no one. **Assurance:** "When I see the blood" rests on God's sight of the blood, not the person's feelings. These are the foundations of the gospel (Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7).

Exodus 14 — Stand Still and See

The people were trapped between the sea and the army, as the sinner is trapped between sin's penalty and God's law. Salvation came entirely from God: "The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (14:14). But they still had to walk through by faith (Hebrews 11:29) when God said "go forward" (14:15). The same waters that saved Israel judged Egypt, as the cross is "the savour of life unto life" to some and "of death unto death" to others (2 Corinthians 2:16).

Exodus 34:6-7 — The Name of the LORD

God's own definition of His character. He is merciful (compassionate), gracious (giving undeserved favour), longsuffering (slow to anger), abundant in goodness (covenant love) and truth (faithfulness), forgiving every kind of sin (iniquity, transgression and sin), yet "by no means" clearing the guilty. How can God both forgive and not clear the guilty? Only by punishing sin in a substitute: Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:25-26).

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Exodus

1. Redemption

To redeem is to buy back or set free by paying a price. God redeemed Israel by blood (the Passover) and by power (the Red Sea). The New Testament uses the Exodus as the great picture of salvation: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7); He "hath delivered us from the power of darkness" (Colossians 1:13). At the transfiguration, Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus about "his decease [Greek: exodus] which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31).

2. The Names and Character of God

Exodus reveals God as I AM (3:14), Jehovah the covenant-keeping LORD (6:2-3), Jehovah-rapha "the LORD that healeth thee" (15:26), Jehovah-nissi "the LORD my banner" (17:15), Jehovah-mekaddishkem "the LORD that doth sanctify you" (31:13), the Jealous God (34:14), and above all "merciful and gracious" yet just (34:6-7).

3. God's Sovereignty over Nations and Rulers

God raised up Pharaoh to display His power (9:16), judged Egypt's gods (12:12), and controlled nature, history and the hearts of kings. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD" (Proverbs 21:1).

4. The Law

The law reveals God's holiness, defines sin, and drives sinners to Christ (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:24). It was given to a redeemed people, not as a ladder to earn redemption. Its moral principles endure, and Christ fulfils it (Matthew 5:17).

5. Worship and God's Presence

The tabernacle shows that God desires to dwell with His people (25:8), but sinners can only approach Him through sacrifice, priesthood and cleansing, and only in His appointed way. The golden calf shows the danger of worshipping God in man's way. Christ fulfils it all, and believers now "have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19).

6. Mediation and Intercession

Moses stood between God and the people on the mountain (20:19), at the golden calf (32:11-14, 30-32), and in pleading for God's presence (33:12-17). The high priest bore the tribes' names before God (28:29). All point to Christ, "the mediator of the new covenant" (Hebrews 12:24).

7. Faith and Unbelief

Israel's journey alternates between faith and grumbling: faith at the Red Sea (14:31), then murmuring at Marah (15:24), over food (16:2), and over water (17:2-3). 1 Corinthians 10:1-12 warns: "these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition... Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

8. Spiritual Warfare

Pharaoh pictures Satan, who holds sinners in bondage, offers compromises (stay in the land, don't go far, leave the children, leave the flocks), and pursues the redeemed. Amalek pictures the flesh, attacking the weak and defeated only by prayer and the Word (17:8-16; Galatians 5:17).

9. Giving and Service

The tabernacle was built from willing offerings and Spirit-gifted labour (35-36). God's work requires both willing hearts and skilled hands, done exactly according to His pattern (39:42-43).

10. God's Glory

The book climaxes with the glory filling the tabernacle (40:34). God's purpose in redemption is His own glory (9:16; 14:4) and fellowship with His people. "That they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory" (Jeremiah 13:11).

Part Eight: Connections — How Exodus Links to the Rest of the Bible

Exodus Quoted and Cited in the New Testament

Exodus	New Testament	Use
1-2	Acts 7:17-29; Hebrews 11:23-27	Israel's oppression; Moses' birth and choice
2:14	Acts 7:27-28, 35	Moses rejected by his brethren
3:2-6	Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37; Acts 7:30-34	The bush; God of the living
3:6	Matthew 22:32	Proof of the resurrection
3:14	John 8:58; Revelation 1:4, 8	I AM; "which is, and which was, and which is to come"
4:22	Matthew 2:15 (via Hosea 11:1)	Israel God's son; Jesus the true Son
7:11, 22	2 Timothy 3:8	Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses
9:16	Romans 9:17	God raised up Pharaoh
12 (Passover)	John 1:29; 19:36; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 1 Peter 1:19	Christ our Passover
12:46	John 19:36	Not a bone broken
13:2, 12	Luke 2:23	Every firstborn holy to the Lord
13:21; 14	1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Hebrews 11:29	Baptized in the cloud and sea
15:1-18	Revelation 15:3-4	The song of Moses and the Lamb
16 (manna)	John 6:31-58; Revelation 2:17	Christ the true bread
16:18	2 Corinthians 8:15	Equality in giving
17:6	1 Corinthians 10:4	The Rock was Christ
19:5-6	1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10	A kingdom of priests
19:12-19	Hebrews 12:18-21	The terror of Sinai
20:12-17	Matthew 19:18-19; Mark 10:19; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 6:2-3; James 2:11	The commandments
20:17	Romans 7:7	The law reveals sin
21:17	Matthew 15:4; Mark 7:10	Honouring parents
21:24	Matthew 5:38	Eye for eye
22:28	Acts 23:5	Speak not evil of rulers
24:8	Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:20	The blood of the covenant
25:40	Hebrews 8:5	The heavenly pattern
25-30	Hebrews 9:1-5	Tabernacle furniture
26:33	Hebrews 6:19; 9:3; 10:20; Matthew 27:51	The veil

Exodus	New Testament	Use
32:1	Acts 7:40-41	The golden calf
32:6	1 Corinthians 10:7	Rose up to play
33:19	Romans 9:15	Mercy on whom I will
34:29-35	2 Corinthians 3:7-18	Moses' veil and the glory
40:34	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3	God dwelling with man

Exodus in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The promises fulfilled: the great nation (15:5), 400 years (15:13-14), the fourth generation (15:16), "I will bring thee up again" (46:4), Joseph's bones (50:25)
Leviticus	Direct continuation: the tabernacle worship, offerings and priesthood set up in Exodus 25-40 are put into practice
Numbers	The journey continues from Sinai; the cloud leads (Numbers 9:15-23); the smitten rock again (Numbers 20)
Deuteronomy	The Ten Commandments repeated (Deuteronomy 5); "Remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt" (5:15; 15:15)
Joshua	Crossing the Jordan "as the LORD your God did to the Red sea" (Joshua 4:23); the first Passover in the land (5:10); the manna ceases (5:12)
Judges	Gideon asks, "where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?" (Judges 6:13)
1 Samuel	The Philistines fear "these mighty Gods... that smote the Egyptians" (1 Samuel 4:8)
1 Kings	The Exodus as the anchor date (6:1); the glory fills Solomon's temple (8:10-11); Jeroboam's golden calves (12:28)
2 Chronicles	The cloud of glory fills the temple (5:13-14; 7:1-3)
Nehemiah	The Exodus and Sinai recounted in prayer (9:9-21)
Psalms	Psalms 77, 78, 81, 95, 105, 106, 114 and 136 retell the Exodus; "they made a calf in Horeb" (106:19)
Isaiah	A "new exodus" from Babylon and in the last days (11:15-16; 43:16-19; 51:10; 63:11-14)
Jeremiah	The new covenant "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (31:32)
Ezekiel	Israel's rebellion in Egypt and the wilderness reviewed (Ezekiel 20)
Hosea	"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (11:1); "by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt" (12:13)
Amos	"I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness" (2:10)
Micah	"I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt... and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam" (6:4)
Habakkuk	Habakkuk's prayer recalls the LORD's march and the parting of waters (3:8-15)

Themes That Start or Grow in Exodus and Run Through Scripture

Theme	In Exodus	Developed	Fulfilled
The Lamb	12:3-13	Isaiah 53:7	John 1:29; Revelation 5:6-12
Redemption	6:6; 15:13	Ruth 4; Isaiah 43:1	Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19
Blood of the covenant	24:8	Zechariah 9:11	Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:18-22
God dwelling with man	25:8; 40:34	1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezekiel 43:4-5	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3
The law	20	Psalm 19; 119	Matthew 5:17; Romans 8:3-4
Priesthood	28-29	Leviticus 8; Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 4:14-10:22; 1 Peter 2:9
The divine name I AM	3:14	Isaiah 43:10-13	John 8:58; Revelation 1:8
The new exodus	12-15	Isaiah 43:16-19	Luke 9:31; Revelation 15:3
Bread from heaven	16	Psalm 78:24-25	John 6:32-35
Living water	17:6	Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 47	John 4:14; 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1
The glory cloud	13:21; 40:34	2 Chronicles 7:1; Ezekiel 10-11	Luke 9:34-35; Acts 1:9; Revelation 1:7

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **God hears His people's cry.** He heard, remembered, looked and knew (2:23-25), even when centuries seemed silent.
- **God uses unlikely people.** A stammering, 80-year-old fugitive shepherd became Israel's deliverer (3-4). "Who hath made man's mouth?" (4:11).
- **Don't accept the world's compromises.** Pharaoh offered four half-way deals; Moses refused them all (8:25-10:26).
- **Safety is under the blood, not in our feelings.** "When I see the blood" (12:13).
- **Stand still, then go forward.** God fights for us, but we must walk forward in faith (14:13-15).
- **Praise God for deliverance.** Israel sang after the sea (15).
- **Grumbling is unbelief.** Every complaint in the wilderness was a test they failed (16-17; 1 Corinthians 10:10).
- **Live on daily bread.** Manna had to be gathered each day; yesterday's spiritual food will not sustain today (16:19-21).
- **Support your leaders in prayer.** Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands (17:12).
- **Delegate.** Even Moses could not do it alone (18:17-18).
- **Worship God His way.** The golden calf was offered "to the LORD" but was idolatry (32:5).
- **Seek His presence above all.** "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (33:15).
- **Give willingly.** The people had to be told to stop giving (36:5-7).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:24	And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
3:14	I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.
12:13	When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you
14:13	Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day
14:14	The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.
15:2	The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation
15:26	I am the LORD that healeth thee.
19:5	If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people
20:2-3	I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt... Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
25:8	And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.
33:14	My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.
34:6	The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth

Conclusion

Exodus is the gospel in history. A people enslaved and helpless were redeemed by the blood of a lamb and the power of God, brought through the waters, fed with bread from heaven, given water from the smitten rock, taught God's holy law, and made a dwelling place for His glory. Every part of it points to Christ: the Passover Lamb who died in our place, the Rock smitten for us, the Bread of life, the Mediator greater than Moses, the High Priest who brings us through the torn veil, and the Word who tabernacled among us full of glory. What God did for Israel in Egypt, He does for every sinner who trusts in Christ.

> *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you*
>
> **Exodus 12:13**

Leviticus

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Moses • Date: c. 1445-1405 BC • Chapters: 27

> *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls*
>
> **Leviticus 17:11**

Part One: Introduction to Leviticus

The Name

"Leviticus" comes from the Greek and Latin title meaning "relating to the Levites." The book mainly concerns the priests, the sons of Aaron from the tribe of Levi, and their ministry. The Hebrew title is Vayikra, "And he called," from its first words: "And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation" (1:1). Exodus ended with God's glory filling the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35). Leviticus begins with God speaking from that tabernacle. Exodus tells how God redeemed a people and came to dwell among them. Leviticus tells how that people can approach Him and live as His holy people.

Author

Moses wrote Leviticus. More than any other book of the Bible, it presents itself as the direct words of God: the phrase "the LORD spake unto Moses" (or similar) begins most of its chapters, and the book closes, "These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai" (27:34). Jesus referred to the cleansing of lepers as "the gift that Moses commanded" (Matthew 8:4; Leviticus 14). Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5 as "Moses describeth" (Romans 10:5).

Date and Setting

Leviticus was given at Mount Sinai around 1445 BC. The tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month of the second year (Exodus 40:17), and Israel's census began one month later (Numbers 1:1). Leviticus therefore covers only about one month, the shortest time span of any of the five books of Moses. There is very little narrative: only the ordination of the priests (8-9), the death of Nadab and Abihu (10), and the stoning of a blasphemer (24:10-23).

Purpose and Theme

The key word is **holy**. Words for "holy," "holiness" and "sanctify" run through the whole book, together with "atonement," "clean" and "unclean." The key verse:

> *Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*
>
> **Leviticus 19:2**

Leviticus answers two questions:

- **How can a sinful people approach a holy God?** By sacrifice, through a priest, on the basis of atonement by blood (chapters 1-16).
- **How should a redeemed people live before a holy God?** By practical holiness in every part of life: food, family, sexuality, business, worship, time and land (chapters 17-27).

For Christians, Leviticus is not an obsolete rule book but a picture book of Christ. The New Testament letter to the Hebrews is largely a commentary on it. Every offering, the priesthood, the Day of Atonement and the feasts all point to the person and work of Jesus Christ. "For the law having a shadow

of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Hebrews 10:1).

Outline of Leviticus

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Way to God: Sacrifice and Atonement	1-16	Access through sacrifice
The offerings	1-7	Burnt, meal, peace, sin and trespass offerings
The priesthood	8-10	Consecration, inauguration, and Nadab and Abihu
Clean and unclean	11-15	Food, childbirth, leprosy, bodily discharges
The Day of Atonement	16	The annual cleansing of the nation
II. The Walk with God: Holiness of Life	17-27	Sanctification
Holiness of the people	17-20	Blood, sexual morality, love of neighbour
Holiness of the priests	21-22	Standards for those who serve
Holy times	23-25	Sabbath, feasts, sabbatical year, Jubilee
Blessings and warnings	26	Obedience and disobedience
Vows and tithes	27	Things dedicated to the LORD

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Offerings (Chapters 1-7)

Chapters 1-5 describe five offerings from the worshipper's side; chapters 6-7 give the instructions for the priests ("the law of the burnt offering," and so on). The first three are "sweet savour" offerings, offered voluntarily in worship and fellowship. The last two are required offerings for sin. All five picture different aspects of the one offering of Christ (Hebrews 10:10-14).

Chapter 1 — The Burnt Offering

The burnt offering (Hebrew olah, "that which goes up") was the most basic and most frequent sacrifice, offered every morning and evening (Exodus 29:38-42). It could be a bullock, a sheep or goat, or turtledoves or pigeons, so that rich and poor alike could come (1:3, 10, 14). It had to be "a male without blemish" (1:3). The worshipper laid his hand on the animal's head, "and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (1:4): identification and substitution. The offerer himself killed it (1:5); the priests sprinkled the blood around the altar and burned the whole animal on the altar, "a sweet savour unto the LORD" (1:9).

The distinctive feature is that **all** of it was burned; nothing was kept back. It pictures Christ's total devotion to the Father: "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2). It also pictures the believer's response: "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1).

Chapter 2 — The Meal (Meat) Offering

The KJV calls it the "meat offering," meaning food in general; it was made of grain, not flesh. It consisted of fine flour, with oil poured on it and frankincense, baked or unbaked (2:1-7). A handful was burned as a memorial; the rest belonged to the priests (2:2-3). It had to contain no leaven and no honey (2:11), but always salt: "the salt of the covenant of thy God" (2:13). This is the only offering without blood. It pictures Christ's perfect, sinless life: fine flour, even and pure (His perfect humanity); oil (anointed by the Spirit, Acts 10:38); frankincense (His life wholly fragrant to God); no leaven (no sin, 1 Peter 2:22); no honey (no merely natural sweetness or flattery); salt (incorruptible, faithful to the covenant; compare Colossians 4:6). It also points to the Bread of life, broken and given.

Chapter 3 — The Peace Offering

The peace offering could be male or female from the herd or flock, without blemish (3:1, 6). The fat and certain inner parts were burned on the altar: "all the fat is the LORD'S" (3:16). The breast and right shoulder went to the priests, and the rest was eaten by the worshipper and his family (7:11-34). It was a fellowship meal shared by God, the priest and the worshipper, celebrating peace already established. It was offered for thanksgiving, a vow, or a freewill offering (7:12-16). It pictures Christ "our peace" (Ephesians 2:14), who "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:20), and the believer's communion with God and fellow believers, especially at the Lord's Table (1 Corinthians 10:16-18). The command not to eat fat or blood (3:17) is repeated in 7:23-27 and 17:10-14.

Chapter 4 — The Sin Offering

The sin offering dealt with sins committed "through ignorance" (unintentionally, 4:2). The animal depended on the sinner's position: a bullock for the anointed priest (4:3) or the whole congregation (4:13-14), a male goat for a ruler (4:22-23), and a female goat or lamb for a common person (4:27-28, 32). The greater the responsibility, the greater the offering. For the priest and the congregation, the blood was sprinkled seven times before the veil and put on the horns of the incense altar (4:6-7, 17-18), and the body was carried "without the camp" to be burned in a clean place (4:12, 21).

> *For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:11-12**

The sin offering pictures Christ made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). The burnt offering emphasises what Christ is to God; the sin offering emphasises what sin is to God, and what Christ bore in our place. Each case ends with the promise "and it shall be forgiven him" (4:20, 26, 31, 35).

Chapter 5 — Specific Sins and the Trespass Offering

Chapter 5 lists sins that required a sin offering: failing to testify as a witness, touching something unclean, and rash oaths (5:1-4). The sinner had to "confess that he hath sinned in that thing" (5:5; compare 1 John 1:9). God made provision for the poor: if a person could not afford a lamb, two turtledoves or pigeons were accepted, and for the very poorest, a tenth of an ephah of fine flour (5:7, 11). No one was too poor to receive atonement. The trespass (guilt) offering (5:14-6:7) dealt with sins that caused loss or damage, against "the holy things of the LORD" or against a neighbour. It required a ram and full restitution plus a fifth part added (5:16; 6:5). Isaiah 53:10 uses the same Hebrew word (asham) for the Servant: "when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." Christ not only paid for our sin but restored more to God than sin ever took away. Zacchaeus' fourfold restitution reflects this principle of repentance (Luke 19:8).

Chapters 6-7 — The Law of the Offerings for the Priests

These chapters give priestly instructions for each offering. "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (6:13): the altar fire, first lit by God (9:24), was kept continually burning. The priests ate portions of certain offerings in a holy place (6:16, 26). The peace offering's thanksgiving variety had to be eaten the same day (7:15). Unclean persons who ate of the peace offerings were "cut off" (7:20-21; compare 1 Corinthians 11:27-30). The priests received the "wave breast" and "heave shoulder" (7:30-34). The section ends with a summary of all five offerings (7:37-38).

Offering	Chapters	Material	Purpose	Christ
Burnt	1; 6:8-13	Male without blemish; wholly burned	Consecration; atonement; worship	His total devotion to the Father (Ephesians 5:2)
Meal (meat)	2; 6:14-23	Fine flour, oil, frankincense, salt; no leaven or honey	Dedication of one's labour; thanksgiving	His perfect sinless life (Hebrews 4:15)

Offering	Chapters	Material	Purpose	Christ
Peace	3; 7:11-34	Male or female without blemish; shared meal	Fellowship; thanksgiving; vows	Our peace with God (Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20)
Sin	4:1-5:13; 6:24-30	Varied by rank; burned outside the camp	Atonement for unintentional sin	Made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 13:11-12)
Trespass	5:14-6:7; 7:1-10	Ram, with restitution plus a fifth	Atonement where damage was done; restitution	The guilt offering (Isaiah 53:10); restored what He took not away (Psalm 69:4)

Section II: The Priesthood (Chapters 8-10)

Chapter 8 — The Consecration of Aaron and His Sons

Following Exodus 29, Moses gathered the congregation at the door of the tabernacle (8:3). Aaron and his sons were washed with water (8:6), Aaron was clothed in the high priestly garments (8:7-9), and the tabernacle and Aaron were anointed with oil (8:10-12). A sin offering, a burnt offering and a "ram of consecration" were offered. Blood was put on the right ear, thumb and big toe of Aaron and his sons (8:23-24): the whole person consecrated to hear, serve and walk for God. They stayed at the door of the tabernacle seven days (8:33-35). Believers are now "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6).

Chapter 9 — The Priests Begin Their Ministry

On the eighth day Aaron offered sacrifices for himself and then for the people (9:7-21). Aaron needed to offer for his own sins first; Christ did not (Hebrews 7:26-27). Aaron lifted up his hands and blessed the people (9:22). Then:

> *And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*
>
> **Leviticus 9:24**

God accepted the sacrifice by fire from heaven, as He later did for Solomon (2 Chronicles 7:1) and Elijah (1 Kings 18:38).

Chapter 10 — Nadab and Abihu: Strange Fire

On the very day of the inauguration, Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu "offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD" (10:1-2). The same fire that accepted the sacrifice judged the disobedient worshippers. Their sin was worship in a way God had not commanded. The verses that follow (10:8-11), forbidding priests to drink wine before serving, suggest drunkenness may have been involved. Moses explained:

> *This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.*

> **Leviticus 10:3**

The priests' duty was "that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes" (10:10-11). God is not to be approached casually or in self-invented ways. "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28-29). Similar judgments in the New Testament include Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) and those who took the Lord's Supper unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:30).

Section III: Clean and Unclean (Chapters 11-15)

"Clean" and "unclean" in Leviticus are mainly about fitness to approach God in worship, not hygiene or personal sin, though they had health benefits. Uncleanness came from contact with death, disease, bodily discharges and certain animals. These laws taught Israel daily that God is holy, that sin and death defile, and that His people must be separate.

Chapter 11 — Clean and Unclean Food

Land animals were clean if they both chewed the cud and had divided (cloven) hooves (11:3); the camel, coney, hare and swine were unclean (11:4-8). Water creatures needed fins and scales (11:9-12). Certain birds, mostly birds of prey and scavengers, were unclean (11:13-19). Most flying insects were unclean, except locusts, crickets and grasshoppers (11:20-23). Touching a carcass made a person unclean until evening (11:24-40). The reason given is holiness:

> *For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy*
>
> **Leviticus 11:44**

Peter quotes this in 1 Peter 1:15-16. These food laws set Israel apart from the nations. In the New Testament, Jesus declared all foods clean ("purging all meats," Mark 7:19), God showed Peter in a vision that He had cleansed what was once unclean, pointing to the acceptance of the Gentiles (Acts 10:9-16, 28), and Paul teaches that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving" (1 Timothy 4:4; Colossians 2:16-17; Romans 14:14).

Chapter 12 — Purification After Childbirth

A mother was unclean seven days after the birth of a son, who was circumcised on the eighth day (12:2-3), and for a further 33 days of purifying; the periods doubled for a daughter (12:5). She then brought a lamb for a burnt offering and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering. "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons" (12:8). Mary offered "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" after Jesus' birth (Luke 2:22-24), showing that Christ was born into poverty (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus Himself was circumcised on the eighth day (Luke 2:21). The uncleanness was ceremonial, not moral: childbirth is a blessing (Psalm 127:3), but every person born into the world inherits a fallen nature (Psalm 51:5).

Chapters 13-14 — Leprosy and Its Cleansing

Chapter 13 gives the priest detailed tests for diagnosing leprosy, a term covering various serious skin diseases, as well as mould in garments (13:47-59). A leper had to wear torn clothes, leave his hair loose, cover his upper lip, and cry "Unclean, unclean," living alone outside the camp (13:45-46). Leprosy became the Bible's great picture of sin: it starts small, spreads, defiles, isolates, and makes a person an outcast, and no human remedy could cure it.

Chapter 14 gives the ritual for cleansing a leper already healed. The priest went outside the camp to examine him (14:3). Two clean birds were taken: one was killed in an earthen vessel over running water, and the living bird, with cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, was dipped in the blood of the slain bird and let loose into the open field (14:4-7). Many see here the death and resurrection of Christ: the slain bird pictures His death in a human body (the earthen vessel), and the living bird, marked with blood and released to the heavens, His resurrection and ascension (Romans 4:25). The cleansed leper was then anointed with blood and oil on the right ear, thumb and toe (14:14-18), like the priests. The same chapter gives laws for mould ("leprosy") in houses (14:33-57).

When Jesus touched and healed lepers, He told them, "go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them" (Matthew 8:2-4; Luke 17:12-14). Jesus noted that in Elisha's day there were many lepers in Israel, "and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" (Luke 4:27). Cleansing leprosy was seen as a work only God could do (2 Kings 5:7), so a cleansed leper presenting himself to the priest was a testimony that the Messiah had come (Matthew 11:5).

Chapter 15 — Bodily Discharges

Chronic and normal bodily discharges made men and women ceremonially unclean, and whatever they touched (15:1-33). The purpose: "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them" (15:31). The woman with "an issue of blood twelve years" (Mark 5:25-34) was under the law of 15:25-27, continually unclean and excluded. Instead of her touching Jesus making Him unclean, His power made her whole. Jesus reverses the flow of defilement: He is not defiled by sinners; He cleanses them.

Section IV: The Day of Atonement (Chapter 16)

Chapter 16 — The Great Day of Atonement

This chapter is the centre and climax of Leviticus. The occasion was "after the death of the two sons of Aaron" (16:1): access to God's presence is deadly unless it is by His appointed way. Aaron could not come into the Holy of Holies "at all times... that he die not" (16:2), but only once a year, on the tenth day of the seventh month (16:29-34; Hebrews 9:7).

The order of the day:

- **Preparation (16:3-4).** The high priest washed and put on plain white linen garments, not his garments of glory and beauty, a picture of Christ's humility and purity in His work of atonement.
- **Atonement for the priest (16:6, 11-14).** He offered a bullock for himself and his house. He took a censer of burning coals and incense into the Holy of Holies so the cloud would cover the mercy seat, "that he die not" (16:13), then sprinkled the bullock's blood on and before the mercy seat seven times

(16:14).

- **The two goats (16:7-10).** Lots were cast over two goats: one "for the LORD," the other "for the scapegoat" (Hebrew Azazel, "the goat that departs" or "complete removal").
- **The LORD's goat (16:15-19).** It was killed as a sin offering for the people, and its blood was sprinkled on and before the mercy seat, and on the altar, cleansing the holy places from Israel's uncleanness.
- **The scapegoat (16:20-22).**

> *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited*
>
> **Leviticus 16:21-22**

- **Conclusion (16:23-28).** The high priest changed back into his garments of glory, washed, and offered burnt offerings. The bodies of the sin offerings were burned outside the camp.
- **The people's part (16:29-31).** They were to "afflict your souls" (fast and humble themselves) and do no work. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD" (16:30).

The two goats together picture one atonement. The slain goat shows that the penalty of sin is paid by death, satisfying God's justice (propitiation). The scapegoat shows that sin is carried away and removed, never to return (expiation). "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). Christ is both: He died for our sins, and He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24), carrying them away. John the Baptist joined both ideas: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

See Part Four for how Hebrews 9-10 shows Christ's superior atonement.

Section V: Holiness of the People (Chapters 17-20)

Chapter 17 — The Place of Sacrifice and the Sanctity of Blood

All sacrifices had to be brought to the door of the tabernacle, not offered in the open fields "unto devils" (goat-idols, 17:7). Worship was centralised at God's chosen place, a principle that later points to Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 12:5-14) and finally to Christ, the one meeting place between God and man (John 4:21-24). Eating blood was strictly forbidden, and the reason is given in one of the key verses of the Bible:

> *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*
>
> **Leviticus 17:11**

Life is in the blood; sin brings death; therefore atonement requires a life given, which means blood shed. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). This is why the gospel centres on the blood of Christ: "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7; Ephesians 1:7;

Revelation 1:5). The prohibition on eating blood goes back to Noah (Genesis 9:4) and was among the requests to Gentile believers at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:20, 29).

Chapter 18 — Sexual Morality

"After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do" (18:3). God's people must not copy the culture they came from or the culture around them. "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD" (18:5). Paul quotes this to contrast the righteousness of the law, which requires perfect doing, with the righteousness of faith (Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12). The chapter forbids incest in its various forms (18:6-18), adultery (18:20), child sacrifice to Molech (18:21), homosexual acts (18:22), and bestiality (18:23). The Canaanites were being expelled for exactly these practices: "the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants" (18:24-28). God's moral law on sexuality is reaffirmed in the New Testament (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-11, 18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7), along with the good news that such sinners can be washed, sanctified and justified in Christ (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Chapter 19 — Holiness in Everyday Life

This chapter is the heart of the second half of the book. It begins, "Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy" (19:2), and then applies holiness to every area of life, repeating "I am the LORD" about sixteen times. It restates many of the Ten Commandments: honour parents and keep sabbaths (19:3), no idols (19:4), do not steal, lie or swear falsely (19:11-12).

- **Care for the poor (19:9-10).** Leave the corners of the field and the gleanings for the poor and the stranger. Ruth gleaned under this law in Boaz's field (Ruth 2).
- **Fair treatment of workers (19:13).** Pay wages the same day (James 5:4).
- **Protect the vulnerable (19:14).** "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind" (compare Romans 14:13).
- **Impartial justice (19:15).** No favour to the poor or the mighty (James 2:1-9).
- **No gossip or hatred (19:16-17).** "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour" (compare Matthew 18:15).

> *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*
>
> **Leviticus 19:18**

Jesus called this the second great commandment (Matthew 22:39), and it is quoted more often in the New Testament than any other Old Testament verse except perhaps Psalm 110:1 (Matthew 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31, 33; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8). In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus showed that "neighbour" includes anyone in need, even an enemy (Luke 10:25-37). The chapter extends it to the foreigner: "thou shalt love him as thyself" (19:34).

- **Separation from pagan practices (19:19, 26-31).** No mixing of seed, no divination, no cutting the flesh or printing marks on the body for the dead (pagan mourning rites, 19:28), no consulting mediums.

- **Respect for the aged (19:32).** "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man."
- **Honest business (19:35-36).** "Just balances, just weights."

Chapter 20 — Penalties for Serious Sins

This chapter sets the penalties for the sins of chapters 18-19, many of them capital: child sacrifice to Molech (20:2-5), consulting mediums (20:6, 27), cursing parents (20:9), adultery (20:10), incest, homosexual acts and bestiality (20:11-21). Under the law, the woman taken in adultery could have been stoned (John 8:5; 20:10), but Jesus, the only sinless one who could have cast the first stone, forgave her and said, "go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). The chapter repeats the purpose: "And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (20:26).

Section VI: Holiness of the Priests (Chapters 21-22)

Chapter 21 — Standards for the Priests

Because priests stood closest to God, they were held to higher standards: limits on mourning for the dead (21:1-6), marriage only to a virgin of good character (21:7, 13-15), and the high priest was not to defile himself even for his father or mother (21:11). A priest with a physical blemish could eat the holy food but could not offer the sacrifices (21:16-23). The blemish rule was not a judgment on disabled people but a picture: only a perfect priest could represent a perfect sacrifice. Christ is the High Priest who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). Spiritual leaders today also face higher standards (1 Timothy 3:1-7; James 3:1).

Chapter 22 — The Holy Things and Acceptable Sacrifices

Unclean priests could not eat holy food (22:1-9). Only priests' households could eat it (22:10-16). Every offering had to be "perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein" (22:21). Malachi later condemned priests for offering "the blind... the lame and sick" (Malachi 1:8, 13). God deserves our best. Christ was offered "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). "I am the LORD which hallow you, That brought you out of the land of Egypt" (22:32-33).

Section VII: Holy Times (Chapters 23-25)

Chapter 23 — The Feasts of the LORD

God appointed "the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations" (23:2). The Hebrew word for "feasts" (moedim) means "appointed times." They begin with the weekly Sabbath (23:3), then seven annual feasts. Three of them (Unleavened Bread, Weeks and Tabernacles) required all the men to go up to God's sanctuary (Deuteronomy 16:16).

- **Passover (23:5).** The fourteenth day of the first month, remembering the Exodus.
- **Unleavened Bread (23:6-8).** Seven days, with all leaven removed.
- **Firstfruits (23:9-14).** "On the morrow after the sabbath" during the Passover week, the first sheaf of the barley harvest was waved before the LORD, guaranteeing the full harvest to come.

- **Weeks / Pentecost (23:15-22).** Fifty days after Firstfruits. Two loaves baked with leaven were waved (23:17), and the harvest gleanings were left for the poor (23:22).
- **Trumpets (23:23-25).** The first day of the seventh month, a memorial of blowing of trumpets.
- **Day of Atonement (23:26-32).** The tenth day of the seventh month, a day to afflict the soul.
- **Tabernacles (23:33-44).** Seven days from the fifteenth day of the seventh month, living in booths to remember the wilderness and rejoicing at the harvest.

The feasts form a prophetic calendar of redemption. The four spring feasts were fulfilled at Christ's first coming, on the very days of the feasts; the three autumn feasts point to events still to come. (See the full table in Part Three.)

Chapter 24 — The Lamp, the Shewbread and the Blasphemer

Pure olive oil kept the lamps burning "continually" (24:1-4). Twelve loaves of shewbread were set on the golden table every Sabbath, eaten by the priests in the holy place (24:5-9). David and his men ate this bread when they fled (1 Samuel 21:1-6), and Jesus used the incident to teach that the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:25-28). A man, son of an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father, "blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed" (24:11). After seeking God's mind, Moses had him stoned outside the camp (24:13-16, 23). Jesus was later condemned on a charge of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God (Matthew 26:63-66). The chapter restates the law of equal justice, "Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (24:20), applied equally to "the stranger, as for one of your own country" (24:22).

Chapter 25 — The Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee

The sabbatical year (25:1-7). Every seventh year the land was to rest: no sowing or pruning, and whatever grew of itself was for everyone, including servants, strangers and animals. God promised a triple harvest in the sixth year (25:20-22). The land belonged to God: "for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me" (25:23).

The Jubilee (25:8-55). After seven sabbatical cycles (49 years), the trumpet was sounded on the Day of Atonement of the fiftieth year:

> *And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.*
>
> **Leviticus 25:10**

In the Jubilee, land returned to its original family, Israelite slaves went free, and debts were cancelled. Land sales were really leases priced by the years left to Jubilee (25:14-17). The poor could be redeemed by a near kinsman (25:25, 47-49), the law behind Boaz's redemption of Ruth (Ruth 4). Israelites who became poor were to be treated as hired servants, not slaves, "for they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt" (25:39-43, 55).

Jesus began His ministry reading Isaiah 61, "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19), which echoes the Jubilee: He came to proclaim liberty to captives. The Jubilee began on the Day of Atonement: liberty flows from atonement. The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia bears the inscription of 25:10.

Section VIII: Blessings, Warnings and Vows (Chapters 26-27)

Chapter 26 — Blessings for Obedience, Curses for Disobedience

If Israel obeyed, God promised rain, harvests, peace, victory, fruitfulness and His presence:

> *And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.*
>
> **Leviticus 26:12**

Paul applies this to the church as God's temple (2 Corinthians 6:16). "I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright" (26:13). If Israel disobeyed, God warned of five increasing stages of discipline, each introduced by "if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me" (26:14-39): disease and defeat; drought ("I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass," 26:19); wild beasts; war, pestilence and famine; and finally siege, cannibalism, destruction of cities and sanctuaries, and exile among the nations. All of these came upon Israel in history, under Assyria (722 BC), Babylon (586 BC), and Rome (AD 70).

During the exile, "Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths... because it did not rest in your sabbaths" (26:34-35). 2 Chronicles 36:21 says the 70-year Babylonian captivity was "to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths." Israel had neglected about 70 sabbatical years.

Yet the chapter ends with grace. If they confess their iniquity, "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land" (26:40-42). "I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them" (26:44). God's discipline of Israel is real, but His covenant is unbreakable (Romans 11:1-2, 26-29).

Chapter 27 — Vows and Tithes

Voluntary vows of persons, animals, houses and fields to the LORD could be redeemed at fixed valuations, usually with a fifth added (27:1-25). Firstborn animals already belonged to God and could not be vowed (27:26). Things "devoted" (cherem) to the LORD were most holy and could not be redeemed (27:28-29). The book ends with the tithe:

> *And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.*
>
> **Leviticus 27:30**

The tithe goes back to Abraham (Genesis 14:20) and Jacob (Genesis 28:22). Malachi 3:8-10 rebukes Israel for robbing God in tithes. Jesus affirmed tithing while rebuking those who neglected "judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matthew 23:23). New Testament giving is to be regular, proportionate, generous and cheerful (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 warns not to make vows rashly. The book closes: "These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai" (27:34).

Part Three: Christ in Leviticus

The Offerings and Christ

Every offering pictures some aspect of Christ's one sacrifice (see the table at the end of chapter 7). Hebrews explains that the many animal sacrifices could never take away sin (Hebrews 10:4), but Christ "by one offering... hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (10:14). The offerings show:

- **What Christ is to God:** perfectly devoted (burnt offering) and perfectly pure (meal offering).
- **What Christ is to us:** our peace and fellowship with God (peace offering).
- **What Christ did for our sins:** became sin for us (sin offering) and paid the full debt with more besides (trespass offering).

Aaron and Christ: The Greater High Priest

Aaron	Leviticus	Christ	Hebrews
Taken from among men	8:2	Fully man, tempted in all points	4:15; 5:1
Offered first for his own sins	9:7; 16:6	Needed no offering for Himself	7:26-27
Died and was replaced	Numbers 20:28	Lives for ever; unchangeable priesthood	7:23-25
From the tribe of Levi	8:2	From Judah, after the order of Melchizedek	7:11-17
Offered many sacrifices repeatedly	9; 16:34	Offered Himself once for all	7:27; 9:12; 10:12
Offered the blood of animals	16:14-15	Offered His own blood	9:12-14
Entered an earthly holy of holies	16:12	Entered heaven itself	9:24
Entered once a year	16:2, 34	Entered once for all	9:12, 25-26
Came out again; the work was never finished	16:23-24	Sat down; the work is finished	10:11-12
The veil remained	16:2	The veil was torn; open access	10:19-20
Bore the names of the tribes on his heart	Exodus 28:29	Ever lives to make intercession	7:25

The Day of Atonement Fulfilled

Day of Atonement	Leviticus 16	Christ	New Testament
Once a year	16:34	Once for all	Hebrews 9:12, 26
The high priest alone	16:17	Christ alone, "by himself purged our sins"	Hebrews 1:3
Plain linen garments	16:4	Humbled Himself; became a servant	Philippians 2:7-8

Day of Atonement	Leviticus 16	Christ	New Testament
Blood carried into the holiest	16:14-15	Entered heaven with His own blood	Hebrews 9:12, 24
Blood on the mercy seat	16:14	Christ our propitiation	Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2
The slain goat	16:15	He died for our sins	1 Corinthians 15:3
The scapegoat carrying sins away	16:21-22	He bore our sins and took them away	1 Peter 2:24; John 1:29; Hebrews 9:28
Bodies burned outside the camp	16:27	Suffered without the gate	Hebrews 13:11-13
The people afflict their souls	16:29	Repentance; Israel's future mourning	Acts 2:37-38; Zechariah 12:10
Clean from all your sins	16:30	Cleansed from all sin	1 John 1:7
Repeated yearly, a reminder of sins	16:34	No more remembrance of sins	Hebrews 10:3, 17-18

The Feasts of the LORD: God's Prophetic Calendar

Feast	Leviticus 23	Date	Fulfillment in Christ	New Testament
Passover	23:5	14th of 1st month	Christ crucified on Passover	1 Corinthians 5:7; John 19:14
Unleavened Bread	23:6-8	15th-21st of 1st month	His sinless body in the grave; the believer's holy walk	1 Corinthians 5:8; Acts 2:27
Firstfruits	23:9-14	Morrow after the Sabbath	Christ raised on the first day of the week	1 Corinthians 15:20, 23
Pentecost (Weeks)	23:15-22	Fifty days later	The Holy Spirit given; the church born, Jew and Gentile (two loaves)	Acts 2:1-4; Ephesians 2:14-16
Trumpets	23:23-25	1st of 7th month	The trumpet of the Lord's return and Israel's regathering	1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52
Day of Atonement	23:26-32	10th of 7th month	Israel's national repentance and cleansing	Zechariah 12:10; 13:1; Romans 11:26-27
Tabernacles	23:33-44	15th-21st of 7th month	Christ's kingdom; God dwelling with His people	Zechariah 14:16; Revelation 21:3; John 7:37-39

The spring feasts were fulfilled to the day: Christ died at Passover, lay in the grave during Unleavened Bread, rose on the day of Firstfruits, and sent the Spirit on Pentecost. Bible teachers who hold a premillennial view expect the autumn feasts to be fulfilled just as literally at His second coming; others apply them spiritually to the church age and the eternal state. All agree the feasts point to Christ. "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:17).

Other Pictures of Christ in Leviticus

- **The two birds (14:4-7).** The death and resurrection of Christ.
- **The kinsman-redeemer (25:25, 47-49).** Christ who became our kinsman to redeem us (Hebrews 2:14-17; Ruth 4).
- **The Jubilee (25:10).** Christ proclaiming liberty to captives (Luke 4:18-19).
- **The shewbread (24:5-9).** The bread of life; God's people kept in His presence.
- **The continual fire (6:13).** Christ's sacrifice ever availing; the Spirit's fire in the believer.
- **The cleansed leper (14).** Christ cleansing the sinner and making him a priest to God (Revelation 1:5-6).

Part Four: Key Passages in Depth

Leviticus 17:11 — The Life Is in the Blood

This verse is the foundation of the Bible's doctrine of atonement. It teaches three things. First, the **nature** of blood: life is in it. Second, the **purpose** God gave it: atonement, a substitute's life for the sinner's life. Third, the **power** of blood: "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." This explains why the cross was necessary and why the New Testament speaks so often of "the blood of Christ": it means His life given in death as our substitute (Romans 5:9; Ephesians 2:13; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9).

Leviticus 19:2 and 1 Peter 1:15-16 — Be Holy

Peter applies Leviticus directly to Christians: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Holiness means being set apart for God and separated from sin. The believer is holy in position (sanctified in Christ, Hebrews 10:10), is called to become holy in practice (2 Corinthians 7:1), and will be made perfectly holy at Christ's return (1 John 3:2). "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Leviticus 10 — The Danger of Self-Invented Worship

Nadab and Abihu were priests, sons of the high priest, who had seen God's glory on the mountain (Exodus 24:9-11). They were not judged for ignorance but for presumption: they offered what God "commanded them not." The principle is that God determines how He is to be worshipped. Jesus taught that true worshippers "worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) and rebuked worship based on "the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

Hebrews 9-10 — The Commentary on Leviticus

Hebrews explains why the sacrificial system has ended. The old covenant sacrifices were:

- **Shadows**, not the reality (10:1).
- **Repeated**, proving they never finished the work (10:1-3, 11).
- **Insufficient**: "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (10:4).
- **External**: they purified the flesh but could not cleanse the conscience (9:9-10, 13-14).

Christ's sacrifice is real, once for all, sufficient, and cleanses the conscience. Therefore "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (10:18), and believers have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (10:19). To return to the old sacrifices after Christ would be to reject the only sacrifice that saves (10:26-29).

Part Five: The Major Teachings of Leviticus

1. The Holiness of God

God is utterly pure and separate from sin, and His presence is both a blessing and a danger. Leviticus 10 shows that His holiness consumes what is unholy, and Leviticus 16 shows that only the way He provides allows sinners into His presence.

2. The Seriousness of Sin

Sin defiles the sinner, the community, the land and even the sanctuary (15:31; 16:16; 18:25). Even unintentional sins need atonement (4:2). Sin is not only against people but "against the LORD" (6:2).

3. Atonement by Substitutionary Sacrifice

The worshipper laid his hand on the animal (1:4; 16:21), identifying with it, and its death was accepted in his place. The word "atonement" (kaphar, "to cover" or "to ransom") appears dozens of times. The New Testament presents Christ as the fulfillment: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Hebrews 9:28).

4. Priesthood and Mediation

Sinners need a mediator to approach God. Aaron's priesthood was real but temporary and imperfect. Christ is the perfect and permanent High Priest (Hebrews 7-10), and through Him all believers are made priests who offer spiritual sacrifices: praise, good works and giving (Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5, 9).

5. Holiness of Life

Holiness reaches every part of life: diet, health, sexuality, family, business, justice, care for the poor, respect for the elderly, and treatment of foreigners. There is no sacred/secular divide; all of life is lived before the LORD ("I am the LORD" repeated throughout chapters 18-26).

6. Love of Neighbour

Leviticus 19:18 shows that the Old Testament law was not merely ritual but deeply relational. Jesus and Paul both summarise the whole law in love (Matthew 22:39-40; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14).

7. Separation

God "severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (20:26). The clean/unclean distinctions, food laws and moral laws marked Israel off from the nations. In the New Testament, separation is no longer about food but about holiness of heart and conduct: "be ye separate... and touch not the unclean thing" (2 Corinthians 6:17).

8. God's Ownership

God owns the land (25:23), the firstborn (27:26), the tithe (27:30), and His people (25:42, 55). We are stewards, not owners. "Ye are not your own... For ye are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

9. Rest, Liberty and Restoration

Sabbaths, the sabbatical year and the Jubilee show God's concern for rest, release and restoration, all fulfilled in Christ, who gives rest to the weary (Matthew 11:28) and liberty to the captive (Luke 4:18).

10. Covenant Faithfulness

Even in judgment, God does not break His covenant (26:40-45). This guarantees Israel's future restoration (Romans 11:26-29) and the believer's security in the new covenant (Hebrews 13:5).

Part Six: Connections — How Leviticus Links to the Rest of the Bible

Leviticus Quoted and Cited in the New Testament

Leviticus	New Testament	Use
1-7 (offerings)	Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 10:5-14	Christ the true offering
2:13 (salt)	Mark 9:49-50; Colossians 4:6	Every sacrifice salted
4:12; 16:27	Hebrews 13:11-13	Suffered without the gate
8 (priests consecrated)	1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6	Believers as priests
11 (clean foods)	Mark 7:19; Acts 10:9-16; Romans 14:14; 1 Timothy 4:3-5	All foods cleansed
11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7	1 Peter 1:15-16	Be ye holy; for I am holy
12:3	Luke 2:21; John 7:22-23	Circumcision on the eighth day
12:6-8	Luke 2:22-24	Mary's offering of two turtledoves
13-14 (leprosy)	Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-44; Luke 5:12-14; 17:12-14	Show yourself to the priest
15:25	Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48	The woman with the issue of blood
16 (Day of Atonement)	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:7-28; 10:1-22	Christ's once-for-all atonement
17:11	Hebrews 9:22; Romans 3:25; 1 John 1:7	Remission by blood
17:10-14	Acts 15:20, 29	Abstain from blood
18:5	Luke 10:28; Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12	Do this and live
18:8	1 Corinthians 5:1	Incest condemned in Corinth
18:22; 20:13	Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11	Sexual morality
19:12	Matthew 5:33	Do not forswear thyself
19:13	James 5:4	Wages withheld
19:15	James 2:1, 9	No respect of persons
19:17	Matthew 18:15	Rebuke your brother
19:18	Matthew 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8	Love thy neighbour
20:9	Matthew 15:4; Mark 7:10	Cursing parents
20:10	John 8:5	The woman taken in adultery
21; 22:20	Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19	The perfect priest and offering
23 (feasts)	1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 15:20; Acts 2:1; John 7:2, 37	Passover, firstfruits, Pentecost, Tabernacles

Leviticus	New Testament	Use
24:5-9	Matthew 12:3-4; Mark 2:25-26	David and the shewbread
24:16	Matthew 26:65-66; John 10:33	The charge of blasphemy
24:20	Matthew 5:38	Eye for eye
25:10	Luke 4:18-19	The acceptable year of the Lord
26:11-12	2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:3	God dwelling among His people
27:30	Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42	Tithing

Leviticus in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The prohibition of blood (9:4); the tithe (14:20; 28:22); clean and unclean animals in the ark (7:2)
Exodus	Leviticus continues directly from Exodus 40: the tabernacle filled with glory becomes the place from which God speaks (Leviticus 1:1); consecration of priests commanded (Exodus 29) and carried out (Leviticus 8)
Numbers	The census follows one month later (Numbers 1:1); the Levites' duties (3-4); the red heifer (19); the offerings calendar (28-29)
Deuteronomy	Clean and unclean foods repeated (14:3-21); one place of worship (12); the feasts (16); love of the stranger (10:19)
Ruth	Gleaning (Leviticus 19:9-10; 23:22; Ruth 2) and the kinsman-redeemer (Leviticus 25:25; Ruth 4)
1 Samuel	David and the shewbread (1 Samuel 21:1-6); the sins of Eli's sons with the offerings (2:12-17)
2 Kings	Lepers outside the city (7:3); Naaman (5); Uzziah, a leper "until the day of his death" (15:5)
2 Chronicles	Uzziah struck with leprosy for intruding into the priest's office (26:16-21); the land enjoys her sabbaths (36:21; Leviticus 26:34-35)
Ezra	The Feast of Tabernacles and offerings restored (3:4-6)
Nehemiah	Tabernacles kept with booths "since the days of Jeshua" (8:14-18)
Psalms	"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire... mine ears hast thou opened" (40:6-8); "a broken and a contrite heart" (51:16-17); "Purge me with hyssop" (51:7; Leviticus 14:4)
Isaiah	Empty sacrifices rejected (1:11-15); the Servant as a guilt offering (53:10); the acceptable year (61:2)
Jeremiah	Obedience over sacrifice (7:21-23)
Ezekiel	Priests to teach the difference between holy and profane (44:23; Leviticus 10:10); offerings in the future temple (40-46)
Daniel	Seventy weeks of years (9:24-27), built on the sabbatical cycles of Leviticus 25-26
Hosea	"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice" (6:6)
Amos	Feasts and offerings rejected without justice (5:21-24)
Micah	"Wherewith shall I come before the LORD?... to do justly, and to love mercy" (6:6-8)

Book	Link
Haggai	The priests asked a ruling on holy and unclean (2:11-14)
Zechariah	All nations keep the Feast of Tabernacles (14:16-19)
Malachi	Blemished offerings condemned (1:7-14; Leviticus 22:20); robbing God in tithes (3:8-10)

Themes That Run from Leviticus Through Scripture

Theme	In Leviticus	Developed	Fulfilled
Atonement by blood	16; 17:11	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:12-14
Holiness	11:44; 19:2	Isaiah 6:3	1 Peter 1:15-16; Revelation 4:8
Priesthood	8-10; 21	Psalm 110:4; Zechariah 6:13	Hebrews 7-10; 1 Peter 2:9
Love of neighbour	19:18, 34	Micah 6:8	Matthew 22:39; Romans 13:8-10
Sabbath rest	23:3; 25	Isaiah 58:13	Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:9-11
Jubilee and liberty	25:10	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-21
Clean and unclean	11-15	Haggai 2:11-14	Mark 7:19; Acts 10; 2 Corinthians 7:1
The feasts	23	Zechariah 14:16	1 Corinthians 5:7; 15:20; Acts 2
Leprosy as a picture of sin	13-14	2 Kings 5	Matthew 8:2-4; Luke 17:12-19
God dwelling among His people	26:11-12	Ezekiel 37:27	2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:3

Part Seven: Practical Lessons

- **Come to God only through Christ.** Every approach in Leviticus required a sacrifice; ours is Christ (John 14:6; Hebrews 10:19-22).
- **Take sin seriously, including "small" and unintentional sins.** God provided atonement even for sins of ignorance (4).
- **Confess sin specifically.** "He shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing" (5:5; 1 John 1:9).
- **Make restitution where you have wronged others.** Repentance includes putting things right (6:4-5).
- **Worship God His way, with reverence.** Strange fire is still strange fire (10; Hebrews 12:28-29).
- **Give your whole self.** The burnt offering held nothing back (1; Romans 12:1).
- **God deserves our best.** No blemished offerings (22:20; Malachi 1:8).
- **Holiness is practical.** It shows in how you treat workers, the poor, the disabled, the elderly and strangers (19).
- **Love your neighbour as yourself.** Including the foreigner (19:18, 34).
- **Be different from the culture around you.** "After the doings of the land... shall ye not do" (18:3).
- **Rest and trust.** Sabbath rest and the sabbatical year required faith that God would provide (25:20-22).
- **Remember God's faithfulness even in discipline.** He remembers His covenant when His people repent (26:40-45).

Part Eight: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:4	And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.
10:3	I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.
11:44	Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy
16:30	For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.
17:11	For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls
19:2	Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.
19:18	Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.
20:26	And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.
25:10	And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof
26:12	And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

Conclusion

Leviticus can look like a book of ancient rituals, but it is one of the clearest pictures of the gospel in Scripture. It shows a holy God who wants to dwell among His people, a sinful people who cannot approach Him on their own, and God's gracious provision of sacrifice, priesthood and atonement so they can draw near and live as His holy people. Every lamb, every drop of blood, every priestly garment and every feast pointed forward to Jesus Christ, the Lamb without blemish, the great High Priest, and the true Day of Atonement. What the old sacrifices could only picture, Christ accomplished once for all. And the call of Leviticus remains the call to every believer:

> *Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*
>
> **Leviticus 19:2**

Numbers

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Moses • Date: c. 1445-1405 BC • Chapters: 36

> *Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.*
>
> **Numbers 21:8**

Part One: Introduction to Numbers

The Name

"Numbers" comes from the Greek Septuagint title Arithmoi, after the two censuses of Israel in chapters 1 and 26. The Hebrew title is Bemidbar, "In the wilderness," from the first verse, and it describes the book better: Numbers is the story of Israel in the wilderness between Sinai and the border of Canaan. It is the story of the generation that was redeemed out of Egypt but never entered the land because of unbelief, and of the new generation that was prepared to enter.

Author

Moses wrote Numbers. "And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD" (33:2). The book repeatedly records "the LORD spake unto Moses" (over 80 times), and it closes: "These are the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses" (36:13). Jesus referred to the brazen serpent that "Moses lifted up" (John 3:14), and Paul treats the events of Numbers as real history written "for our admonition" (1 Corinthians 10:1-11).

Date and Time Span

Numbers covers about 38 years and 9 months: from the first day of the second month of the second year after the Exodus (1:1), around 1445 BC, to the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deuteronomy 1:3), around 1406 BC. Most of those years are passed over in silence. Chapters 1-14 cover a few months; chapters 15-19 cover the long years of wandering; chapters 20-36 cover the final year.

Purpose and Theme

Numbers teaches that God is faithful even when His people are faithless. It shows the consequences of unbelief (an entire generation died in the wilderness), God's patience, provision and discipline in the journey, and His preparation of a new generation to inherit His promises. The New Testament uses Numbers as a solemn warning to believers:

> *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 10:11-12**

Hebrews 3-4 builds its warning about entering God's rest directly on Numbers 13-14: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19).

The Spiritual Journey

Many Bible teachers see Israel's journey as a picture of the believer's life:

Stage	In Israel's History	In the Believer's Life
Egypt	Bondage under Pharaoh	Slavery to sin and the world
Passover and Red Sea	Redemption by blood and power	Salvation through Christ's death and resurrection
Sinai	The law and the tabernacle	Learning God's Word and worship
The wilderness	Testing, provision and discipline	The Christian walk with its trials
Kadesh-barnea	Unbelief and refusal to enter	Failing to trust God for victory and rest
Wandering	Forty years of wasted life	A defeated, unfruitful Christian life
Jordan and Canaan	Entering by faith, fighting and possessing	Living by faith in God's promises; rest in Christ (Hebrews 4)

Outline of Numbers

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Old Generation Prepared at Sinai	1:1-10:10	Order in the camp
The census and the camp	1-4	Counting and arranging the tribes and the Levites
Purity and blessing	5-6	Holiness in the camp; the Nazarite; the priestly blessing
Dedication and guidance	7:1-10:10	Offerings, Levites, Passover, the cloud, the trumpets
II. The Journey from Sinai to Kadesh	10:11-12:16	Complaining begins
III. Failure at Kadesh and Forty Years of Wandering	13-19	Unbelief and its consequences
The spies and the rebellion	13-14	The generation that refused to enter
Laws, rebellion and the priesthood	15-19	Korah; Aaron's rod; the red heifer
IV. The New Generation's Journey to Moab	20-25	Tests on the way
The final journey	20-21	Meribah; the brazen serpent; victories
Balaam and Baal-peor	22-25	Blessing that could not be reversed; seduction
V. The New Generation Prepared in Moab	26-36	Ready to inherit
Census and succession	26-27	The new count; Joshua appointed
Offerings and vows	28-30	The worship calendar
Victory and settlement	31-32	Midian; the tribes east of Jordan
Journeys and borders	33-36	The itinerary; the land; cities of refuge

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Old Generation Prepared at Sinai (Chapters 1:1-10:10)

Chapter 1 — The First Census

God commanded Moses to number every man "from twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel" (1:3). This was a military census: Israel was being organised as an army to take the land. The total was 603,550 men (1:46), matching the figure from the ransom money (Exodus 38:26). The Levites were not counted among the soldiers, because they were appointed over the tabernacle (1:47-53). God knows His people by name and number (2 Timothy 2:19; Luke 12:7).

Chapter 2 — The Arrangement of the Camp

Each tribe camped "by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house" (2:2), around the tabernacle in four groups of three:

Side	Leading Tribe	Tribes	Total
East	Judah	Judah, Issachar, Zebulun	186,400
South	Reuben	Reuben, Simeon, Gad	151,450
West	Ephraim	Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin	108,100
North	Dan	Dan, Asher, Naphtali	157,600

The tabernacle stood in the centre, with the Levites camped immediately around it (2:17). God was at the centre of His people's life. Judah, the royal tribe of the Lion (Genesis 49:9-10), camped on the east, toward the sunrise, at the entrance of the tabernacle, and led the march (10:14). Moses, Aaron and the priests camped directly in front of the entrance on the east (3:38).

Chapter 3 — The Levites in Place of the Firstborn

The priests were Aaron's sons; Nadab and Abihu had died for their strange fire (3:4). The rest of the tribe of Levi was given to Aaron to serve the tabernacle (3:5-10). God took the Levites "instead of all the firstborn" whom He had spared in Egypt (3:12-13, 41). There were 22,000 Levite males (3:39) and 22,273 firstborn; the extra 273 were redeemed at five shekels each (3:46-48). Redemption was precise: every person counted, and every one paid for (compare 1 Peter 1:18-19). The three Levite families, Gershon, Kohath and Merari, each had their camp position and duties (3:17-37).

Chapter 4 — The Duties of the Levites

Levites served from age 30 to 50 (4:3). When the camp moved, the priests covered the holy furniture, and then:

- **The Kohathites** carried the most holy things (ark, table, lampstand, altars) on their shoulders, but must not touch them or look at them uncovered, "lest they die" (4:15, 20). No wagons were given to them (7:9).
- **The Gershonites** carried the curtains and coverings (4:24-28).

- **The Merarites** carried the boards, bars, pillars and sockets (4:31-33).

When David later moved the ark on a new cart instead of on the Levites' shoulders, Uzzah touched it and died (2 Samuel 6:3-7). David then admitted, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites" and "we sought him not after the due order" (1 Chronicles 15:2, 13). Every task in God's house matters, and God's work must be done God's way.

Chapter 5 — Purity in the Camp

Lepers, those with discharges, and those defiled by the dead were put outside the camp, "that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell" (5:3). Wrongs against others required confession and full restitution plus a fifth (5:6-7), as in Leviticus 6. A husband suspecting his wife of adultery could bring her before the priest for the trial of jealousy, a solemn test in which God Himself revealed guilt or innocence (5:11-31). Marriage faithfulness was a matter of public holiness.

Chapter 6 — The Nazarite Vow and the Priestly Blessing

Any man or woman could take a voluntary vow "to separate themselves unto the LORD" (6:2). A Nazarite (from nazar, "to separate") had to:

- **Abstain from wine and every product of the grape** (6:3-4), giving up legitimate joys.
- **Let the hair grow uncut** (6:5), a visible sign of dedication.
- **Never touch a dead body**, even of a close relative (6:6-7).

If defiled accidentally, the Nazarite shaved his head and began again (6:9-12). At the end of the vow he offered sacrifices and burned his hair (6:13-21). Samson (Judges 13:5), Samuel (1 Samuel 1:11) and John the Baptist (Luke 1:15) were lifelong Nazarites, and Paul took a Nazarite-type vow (Acts 18:18; 21:23-26). Jesus was a "Nazarene" (from the town of Nazareth, Matthew 2:23), not a Nazarite; He drank wine and touched the dead. But He was perfectly "separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26) in heart and life.

The chapter ends with the Aaronic Blessing:

> *The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*
>
> **Numbers 6:24-26**

The name "the LORD" is spoken three times, and God says, "they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them" (6:27). Many Christians see here an echo of the Trinity, later revealed as the Father who keeps, the Son whose face shines with grace (2 Corinthians 4:6), and the Spirit who gives peace (Galatians 5:22), and an anticipation of the apostolic blessing (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Chapter 7 — The Offerings of the Princes

For twelve days, the twelve tribal leaders each brought identical offerings for the dedication of the altar: silver and gold vessels, flour, incense and animals (7:10-88). With 89 verses, it is the longest chapter in the Pentateuch. God recorded every gift in full, even though they were the same: He notices and values each person's offering (Hebrews 6:10; Mark 12:41-44). Six covered wagons and twelve oxen were given to the Gershonites and Merarites, but none to the Kohathites, who carried the holy things on their

shoulders (7:6-9). When Moses went into the tabernacle, "he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat... from between the two cherubims" (7:89).

Chapter 8 — The Lamps and the Cleansing of the Levites

Aaron set the seven lamps of the candlestick to give light in front of it (8:1-4). The Levites were cleansed with water, shaved, washed their clothes, and were "offered" as a wave offering to the LORD (8:5-22), given as a gift to Aaron for service (8:19). Levites retired from heavy service at fifty but could still assist (8:24-26).

Chapter 9 — The Second Passover and the Guiding Cloud

Israel kept the Passover at Sinai, one year after the Exodus (9:1-5). For those unclean or away on a journey, God allowed a second Passover one month later (9:6-14), showing His grace in making a way for those who could not come the first time. The rule "nor break any bone of it" (9:12) is cited in John 19:36. The cloud covered the tabernacle by day and fire by night:

> *At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.*
>
> **Numbers 9:18**

Whether two days, a month or a year, they moved only when God moved (9:22). This is a picture of being "led by the Spirit of God" (Romans 8:14) and waiting on His timing.

Chapter 10:1-10 — The Silver Trumpets

Two silver trumpets were made to call the assembly, sound the march, sound the alarm for war, and celebrate feasts (10:1-10). The New Testament speaks of "the trump of God" that will gather His people at Christ's return (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:52).

Section II: The Journey from Sinai to Kadesh (Chapters 10:11-12:16)

Chapter 10:11-36 — Departure from Sinai

On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted, and Israel left Sinai after about eleven months there (10:11-12). Judah led the march (10:14). Moses asked his brother-in-law Hobab to come and be "instead of eyes" for them (10:29-32). The ark went before them three days to find a resting place (10:33). Whenever the ark set out, Moses prayed, "Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered" (10:35; compare Psalm 68:1), and when it rested, "Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel" (10:36).

Chapter 11 — Complaining, the Seventy Elders and the Quails

Within days the people complained, and fire from the LORD burned the edges of the camp at Taberah ("burning") until Moses prayed (11:1-3). Then "the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting" (11:4), and Israel wept for meat: "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna" (11:5-6). They remembered Egypt's food and forgot Egypt's whips. They despised the bread from heaven.

Moses, overwhelmed, said, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me" and asked to die (11:14-15). God took of the Spirit on Moses and put it on seventy elders, who prophesied (11:16-17, 24-25). When Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp and Joshua wanted them stopped, Moses replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!" (11:29), fulfilled at Pentecost (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17-18). God promised meat for a whole month "until it come out at your nostrils" (11:20). Moses doubted, and God asked, "Is the LORD'S hand waxed short?" (11:23). Quails covered the camp, but while the meat was still in their mouths, a plague struck those who lusted; the place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, "graves of lust" (11:31-34). "He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul" (Psalm 106:15). Paul warns, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer" (1 Corinthians 10:10).

Chapter 12 — Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of his Ethiopian (Cushite) wife, and asked, "Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?" (12:1-2). The real issue was jealousy of his authority.

> *Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.*
>
> **Numbers 12:3**

Moses did not defend himself; God did. God said He speaks to prophets in visions and dreams, but "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth" (12:7-8). Hebrews 3:2-6 quotes this and adds that Christ is faithful "as a Son over his own house," worthy of more glory than Moses. Miriam became leprous, Moses prayed "Heal her now, O God" (12:13), and she was shut out of the camp seven days while the whole people waited.

Section III: Failure at Kadesh and Forty Years of Wandering (Chapters 13-19)

Chapter 13 — The Twelve Spies

From the wilderness of Paran, God told Moses to send twelve men, one from each tribe, to search the land (13:1-2). Moses renamed Hoshea son of Nun as Joshua (Yehoshua, "the LORD is salvation," 13:16), the same name as Jesus. For forty days they explored Canaan and brought back a cluster of grapes from the valley of Eshcol so large that two men carried it on a pole (13:23-25). They reported: "surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong... and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there" (13:27-28).

> *And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*
>
> **Numbers 13:30**

The ten spies spread "an evil report": "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we... and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (13:31-33). Ten men saw giants compared to themselves; two saw giants compared to God.

Chapter 14 — The Rebellion at Kadesh-barnea

The whole congregation wept all night and said, "would God we had died in this wilderness!... Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt" (14:2-4). Joshua and Caleb pleaded:

> *If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us... Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.*
>
> **Numbers 14:8-9**

The people wanted to stone them, and the glory of the LORD appeared (14:10). God said He would destroy them and make a greater nation from Moses (14:12). Moses interceded, appealing to God's reputation among the Egyptians and to the very words of Exodus 34:6-7: "The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression" (14:13-19). God answered, "I have pardoned according to thy word: But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD" (14:20-21).

Pardon did not remove consequences. Everyone counted from twenty years and upward would die in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua (14:29-30). Caleb was spared "because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully" (14:24). They would wander forty years, "each day for a year" of the spying (14:34). Their children, whom they said would be a prey, would enter the land (14:31). The ten unfaithful spies died by plague (14:37). The next morning, the people tried to go up anyway without the LORD, the ark or Moses, and were defeated at Hormah (14:40-45). Faith obeys when God says go; presumption goes when God has said no.

Hebrews 3:7-4:11 applies this directly: "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation... Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God... So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Jude 5 recalls that the Lord, "having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

Chapter 15 — Laws for the Land and the Presumptuous Sin

Immediately after the sentence of death on a generation, God gave laws beginning "When ye be come into the land" (15:2): a promise that the nation would still enter. Offerings were to include grain, oil and wine (15:1-16), with one law for Israelite and stranger (15:15-16). Unintentional sins could be atoned (15:22-29), but "the soul that doeth ought presumptuously" (literally "with a high hand") "reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off" (15:30-31). There was no sacrifice for defiant rebellion (compare Hebrews 10:26-29). A man gathering sticks on the Sabbath, in open defiance, was stoned (15:32-36). God commanded fringes (tassels) with a blue cord on the corners of garments, "that ye may

look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD" (15:38-40). The woman with the issue of blood touched "the hem [fringe] of his garment" (Matthew 9:20; 14:36), and Jesus rebuked Pharisees who enlarged their fringes for show (Matthew 23:5).

Chapter 16 — The Rebellion of Korah

Korah, a Levite of the Kohathite family, joined with Dathan, Abiram and On of Reuben, and 250 princes, against Moses and Aaron: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them" (16:3). Korah was not content to be a Levite; he wanted the priesthood (16:9-10). Dathan and Abiram accused Moses of bringing them out of "a land that floweth with milk and honey" (meaning Egypt!) to kill them (16:13). Moses said, "the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy" (16:5; compare 2 Timothy 2:19). The ground split open and swallowed Korah's household, Dathan and Abiram, and they "went down alive into the pit" (16:31-33). Fire from the LORD consumed the 250 who offered incense (16:35). Their bronze censers were hammered into a covering for the altar as a memorial (16:38-40).

The next day the whole congregation murmured, "Ye have killed the people of the LORD" (16:41). A plague began. Moses sent Aaron with incense into the congregation:

> *And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.*
>
> **Numbers 16:48**

14,700 died (16:49). Aaron standing between the dead and the living is a vivid picture of Christ the Mediator, whose intercession stands between sinners and judgment (Hebrews 7:25). Jude 11 warns of those who "perished in the gainsaying of Core." Remarkably, "the children of Korah died not" (26:11). Their descendants became temple singers who wrote eleven Psalms (42, 44-49, 84-85, 87-88), including "As the hart panteth after the water brooks" (Psalm 42:1) and "How amiable are thy tabernacles" (Psalm 84:1). Grace saved the sons of a rebel and made them worshippers.

Chapter 17 — Aaron's Rod That Budded

To settle the question of the priesthood, each tribal leader put a rod with his name before the testimony overnight. "And, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" (17:8). A dead stick came to life: God's chosen priest is proven by life out of death. Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power... by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4), and His priesthood is "after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16). Aaron's rod was kept in the ark (Hebrews 9:4).

Chapter 18 — The Duties and Portions of Priests and Levites

Priests and Levites were responsible for guarding the sanctuary, "that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel" (18:5). The priests received portions of the offerings, the firstfruits and the firstborn (18:8-19), in "a covenant of salt for ever" (18:19). They received no land: "I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel" (18:20). The Levites received the tithes of Israel (18:21-24), and gave a tithe of that tithe to the priests (18:25-28). Those who serve God are supported by God's people (1 Corinthians 9:13-14).

Chapter 19 — The Red Heifer and the Water of Purification

For cleansing from contact with the dead, the priests took "a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke" (19:2). It was slain outside the camp (19:3), its blood sprinkled seven times toward the tabernacle, and the whole animal burned with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet (19:4-6). The ashes were kept and mixed with running water as "a water of separation... a purification for sin" (19:9). Anyone who touched a dead body was unclean seven days and had to be sprinkled on the third and seventh days (19:11-19). With a whole generation dying in the wilderness, this provision was constantly needed.

> *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
>
> **Hebrews 9:13-14**

The red heifer pictures Christ: without spot, never under the yoke of sin, slain outside the camp, providing continual cleansing for believers defiled by a dying world (1 John 1:7-9).

Section IV: The New Generation's Journey to Moab (Chapters 20-25)

Chapter 20 — Miriam's Death, Moses' Sin, Aaron's Death

In the first month of the fortieth year, Israel came again to Kadesh, and Miriam died there (20:1). There was no water, and the new generation complained exactly as their fathers had (20:2-5). God told Moses to take the rod and "speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water" (20:8). Instead Moses said, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" and struck the rock twice (20:10-11). Water came out abundantly, but God said:

> *Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.*
>
> **Numbers 20:12**

Moses' sin was serious: he disobeyed God's word, spoke in anger, took glory to himself ("must **we**"), misrepresented God to the people, and spoiled the picture God had set up. The rock was struck once at Horeb (Exodus 17:6); that rock "was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). Christ was smitten once for sin (Hebrews 9:28; 10:10-12); after that, believers need only speak to Him in prayer for the water of life. The place was called Meribah (20:13; Psalm 106:32-33).

Edom refused Israel passage through its land, despite Moses' appeal to their brotherhood (20:14-21); the ancient conflict between Jacob and Esau continued (Obadiah 10-14). At Mount Hor, Aaron's garments were placed on his son Eleazar, and Aaron died at 123 (20:22-29; 33:39). Israel mourned thirty days. Aaron's death shows the weakness of the Levitical priesthood: "they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Hebrews 7:23-24).

Chapter 21 — Victories and the Brazen Serpent

Israel defeated the Canaanite king of Arad at Hormah, the same place as their earlier defeat (21:1-3; 14:45). Then, discouraged by the long detour around Edom, "the people spake against God, and against Moses... our soul loatheth this light bread" (21:4-5). God sent fiery serpents, and many died. The people confessed, "We have sinned," and Moses prayed (21:6-7).

> *And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.*
>
> **Numbers 21:8**

Jesus Himself explained this event: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

- **The problem:** everyone bitten was dying; sin is fatal (Romans 6:23).
- **The remedy was God's provision,** not man's invention.
- **It was in the form of the very thing that killed them** (a serpent), yet made of brass and without venom. Christ came "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3) and was "made... sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- **It was lifted up** on a pole, as Christ was lifted up on the cross (John 12:32-33).
- **Healing came by a look,** not by medicine, effort or merit. "Look unto me, and be ye saved" (Isaiah 45:22).
- **It was for "every one"** who looked: "whosoever believeth."

Centuries later the people were burning incense to this brass serpent, and King Hezekiah destroyed it, calling it Nehushtan, "a piece of brass" (2 Kings 18:4): even good things God used can become idols. Paul warns, "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents" (1 Corinthians 10:9).

The chapter continues with the journey, the "book of the wars of the LORD" (21:14), the song of the well at Beer, "Spring up, O well" (21:16-18), and Israel's first great victories under Moses: over Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan (21:21-35). These victories were celebrated for centuries (Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11; Joshua 2:10; Nehemiah 9:22; Psalm 135:10-12; 136:17-22) and struck fear into Canaan.

Chapter 22 — Balak Hires Balaam

Balak, king of Moab, terrified by Israel camped on his border, sent princes with "the rewards of divination" to Balaam son of Beor, a famous diviner from Pethor near the Euphrates, asking him to curse Israel (22:1-7). God told Balaam, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (22:12). When Balak sent more honourable princes and promised great honour, Balaam said he could not go beyond God's word "for a house full of silver and gold," but invited them to stay while he asked again (22:18-19). God allowed him to go, but warned him to speak only what God said (22:20). God's anger was kindled because he went (22:22): his heart was set on the reward.

On the way, the Angel of the LORD stood in the road with a drawn sword. Balaam's donkey saw Him and turned aside three times; Balaam beat her. "And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass," and she

rebuked him (22:28-30). Then Balaam's eyes were opened, and he saw the Angel (22:31). 2 Peter 2:15-16 describes Balaam, "who loved the wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet." Balaam is the pattern of the false teacher who uses religion for profit (Jude 11).

Chapters 23-24 — Balaam's Oracles

Three times Balak built seven altars on different heights, hoping a new view of Israel would produce a curse; each time God put a blessing in Balaam's mouth.

- **First oracle (23:7-10).** "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?... lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations... Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Balaam wanted the death of the righteous without the life of the righteous; he later died fighting against Israel (31:8).
- **Second oracle (23:18-24).**

> *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*
>
> **Numbers 23:19**

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel" (23:21): God saw His people through His covenant grace, not through their failures, a picture of justification (Romans 4:7-8; 8:33). "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob... What hath God wrought!" (23:23). These words were the first message sent by Samuel Morse over the electric telegraph in 1844.

- **Third oracle (24:3-9).** Balaam, now with "the Spirit of God" upon him (24:2), saw Israel's tents spread like gardens by a river. "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee" (24:9), repeating Genesis 12:3.
- **Fourth oracle (24:15-19).** Balak, furious, dismissed Balaam without reward, but Balaam gave one more prophecy, looking far into the future:

> *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab*
>
> **Numbers 24:17**

This is one of the clearest Messianic prophecies in the Pentateuch. The Sceptre echoes Genesis 49:10. David partially fulfilled it by conquering Moab and Edom (2 Samuel 8:2, 14), but its ultimate fulfillment is Christ, "the bright and morning star" (Revelation 22:16) and King. The wise men from the east, possibly aware of this prophecy from Balaam's own region, came saying, "we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2). Jewish tradition also read it of the Messiah.

- **Final oracles (24:20-24).** Amalek, the Kenites, Asshur (Assyria) and Eber would fall, and ships from Chittim (the western Mediterranean, later understood of Greece and Rome) would afflict Assyria.

Chapter 25 — Sin at Baal-peor and the Zeal of Phinehas

What Balaam could not do by cursing, he did by counsel. Israel "began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab," joined in their sacrificial feasts and bowed to their gods, being "joined unto Baal-peor" (25:1-3). Numbers 31:16 reveals that this happened "through the counsel of Balaam." Revelation 2:14 condemns "the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." God sent a plague. When an Israelite prince, Zimri, brazenly brought a Midianite princess, Cozbi, into his tent in sight of all, Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, killed them both with a javelin, and the plague stopped (25:6-8). 24,000 had died (25:9). Paul says 23,000 "fell in one day" (1 Corinthians 10:8); Numbers gives the total including those executed by the judges (25:4-5), while Paul counts those who fell in a single day.

God made with Phinehas "my covenant of peace... the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel" (25:12-13). "And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore" (Psalm 106:30-31). Israel was told to vex the Midianites (25:16-18). Satan's attacks come both from outside (curses) and from within (seduction into compromise), and the second is far more dangerous.

Section V: The New Generation Prepared in Moab (Chapters 26-36)

Chapter 26 — The Second Census

After the plague, God commanded a new count of men twenty years and upward (26:1-4). The total was 601,730 (26:51), almost the same as forty years earlier (603,550). The tribes changed: Simeon dropped dramatically (from 59,300 to 22,200), perhaps connected to Baal-peor (Zimri was a Simeonite, 25:14), while Manasseh grew. The land would be divided by lot according to size (26:52-56). The Levites numbered 23,000 (26:62). The census confirmed God's judgment: "there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered... in the wilderness of Sinai... save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun" (26:64-65). God's word had come true to the letter.

Chapter 27 — The Daughters of Zelophehad and the Appointment of Joshua

Five daughters of Zelophehad, whose father had died without sons, asked for an inheritance in the land (27:1-4). This was an act of faith: the land had not yet been conquered. God said, "The daughters of Zelophehad speak right" (27:7), and established the law of inheritance through daughters when there were no sons (27:8-11).

God told Moses to go up Mount Abarim to see the land before he died (27:12-14). Moses' concern was not for himself but for the people:

> *Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation... that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.*
>
> **Numbers 27:16-17**

Jesus, seeing the multitudes, "was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34). God chose Joshua, "a man in whom is the spirit" (27:18). Moses laid his hands on him and gave him a charge before Eleazar and the congregation (27:18-23).

Chapters 28-29 — The Calendar of Offerings

These chapters list the public offerings required throughout the year: daily (morning and evening lambs, 28:3-8), weekly (Sabbath, 28:9-10), monthly (new moons, 28:11-15), and at each feast: Passover and Unleavened Bread (28:16-25), Weeks (28:26-31), Trumpets (29:1-6), Atonement (29:7-11), and Tabernacles (29:12-38), when the number of bullocks decreased each day from thirteen to seven, totalling seventy. Jesus noted that "the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless" because of these Sabbath offerings (Matthew 12:5; Numbers 28:9-10). The constant flow of sacrifices reminded Israel that sin required continual atonement, until the one sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 10:11-14).

Chapter 30 — Vows

"If a man vow a vow unto the LORD... he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth" (30:2). A father could annul his unmarried daughter's vow, and a husband his wife's vow, on the day he heard it (30:3-15); widows and divorced women were bound by their own vows (30:9). The chapter honours both personal integrity and family headship. Jesus taught a higher standard of simple truthfulness: "let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay" (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12).

Chapter 31 — War Against Midian

God commanded vengeance on the Midianites for Baal-peor (31:1-2). A thousand men from each tribe went, with Phinehas and the holy trumpets (31:3-6). They killed the five kings of Midian "and Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword" (31:8). The man who wanted to "die the death of the righteous" died among the enemies of God. Moses rebuked the officers for sparing the women who had seduced Israel "through the counsel of Balaam" (31:15-16). The soldiers purified themselves (31:19-24), the spoil was divided between the warriors and the congregation with a portion for the LORD (31:25-47), and not one Israelite soldier was lost (31:49). In gratitude the officers brought an offering of gold "to make an atonement for our souls" (31:50).

Chapter 32 — Reuben and Gad Settle East of the Jordan

Reuben and Gad, with large herds, asked to settle in the rich pastureland of Gilead east of the Jordan (32:1-5). Moses feared they were repeating Kadesh, discouraging the others (32:6-15). They promised to cross over armed and fight until all Israel was settled (32:16-19). Moses agreed, with a warning:

> *But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.*
>
> **Numbers 32:23**

Half the tribe of Manasseh joined them (32:33). They kept their promise (Joshua 1:12-18; 22:1-6), but being outside the natural border of Canaan, these tribes were later the first to be carried away captive by Assyria (1 Chronicles 5:26). Choosing by sight what is good for cattle, as Lot did (Genesis 13:10), can leave one exposed.

Chapter 33 — The Itinerary of the Journey

Moses recorded the 42 stations of Israel's journey from Rameses to the plains of Moab (33:1-49), from "with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians" (33:3) to the edge of the promised land. Every stage was remembered by God. Then came a command and a warning: drive out all the inhabitants and destroy their idols and high places (33:50-53), "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides" (33:55). This is exactly what happened (Judges 1:27-36; 2:1-3).

Chapter 34 — The Borders of Canaan

God defined the borders of the land: from the wilderness of Zin and the river of Egypt in the south, to the Mediterranean (the "great sea") on the west, to Mount Hor and the entrance of Hamath in the north, and down the Jordan to the Salt Sea on the east (34:1-12). Leaders from each tribe were appointed under Eleazar and Joshua to divide the land (34:16-29). The promise to Abraham was about to be fulfilled in real geography.

Chapter 35 — Levitical Cities and Cities of Refuge

The Levites received 48 cities with pasturelands scattered throughout Israel (35:1-8), so God's teachers lived among all the tribes, fulfilling Jacob's prophecy that Levi would be scattered (Genesis 49:7) as a blessing. Six of these were cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan (35:6, 9-15), where anyone who killed a person unintentionally could flee from the "avenger of blood" (the nearest kinsman). The congregation judged whether the killing was deliberate murder or accidental (35:16-25). A murderer was executed; the manslayer was protected, but only inside the city. He had to stay there "until the death of the high priest" (35:25, 28); after the high priest died, he could return home free.

The cities of refuge picture Christ:

- **They were appointed by God** and easy to reach, within a day's journey (Deuteronomy 19:3).
- **The fugitive had to flee** to them; safety was only inside.
- **They were open to Israelite and stranger alike** (35:15).
- **Freedom came through the death of the high priest.** Christ is both the refuge and the High Priest whose death sets us free.

> *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us*
>
> **Hebrews 6:18**

God insisted that murder must be punished: "blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it" (35:33).

Chapter 36 — The Inheritance of Zelophehad's Daughters

The leaders of Manasseh pointed out that if Zelophehad's daughters married outside their tribe, their land would pass to another tribe (36:1-4). God ruled that they must marry within their father's tribe, "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe" (36:5-9). The daughters obeyed and married their cousins (36:10-12). The book ends with the people on the plains of Moab by the Jordan, opposite Jericho, ready to enter (36:13).

Part Three: Christ in Numbers

Pictures of Christ

Picture	Numbers	How It Points to Christ	New Testament
The tabernacle at the centre of the camp	2:2, 17	God dwelling in the midst of His people	Matthew 18:20; John 1:14
The cloud and fire	9:15-23	God's presence leading His people	John 8:12; Romans 8:14
The manna	11:6-9; 21:5	The bread from heaven, despised by many	John 6:31-35
The meek mediator Moses	12:3, 7	Christ meek and lowly; faithful over His house	Matthew 11:29; Hebrews 3:1-6
Joshua (Yehoshua)	13:16; 27:18	The Saviour who leads His people into the inheritance	Hebrews 4:8; 2:10
Aaron between the dead and the living	16:47-48	Christ's intercession stops judgment	Hebrews 7:25; 1 Timothy 2:5
Aaron's rod that budded	17:8	Life out of death; the risen Priest	Romans 1:4; Hebrews 7:16
The red heifer	19	Spotless, slain outside the camp; continual cleansing	Hebrews 9:13-14; 13:12
The smitten rock	20:8-11	Smitten once; then only speak to Him	1 Corinthians 10:4; Hebrews 9:28
The brazen serpent	21:8-9	Lifted up; life by a look of faith	John 3:14-15
The well at Beer	21:16-18	Living water	John 4:14; 7:37-39
The Star out of Jacob	24:17	The Messiah-King	Matthew 2:2; Revelation 22:16
The Sceptre out of Israel	24:17	Christ's universal rule	Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 19:15
The Shepherd for the flock	27:16-17	The Good Shepherd	Matthew 9:36; John 10:11
The cities of refuge	35	Christ our refuge	Hebrews 6:18
The death of the high priest	35:25, 28	Freedom through the death of our High Priest	Hebrews 9:15-16

The Brazen Serpent and the Cross: A Closer Look

Numbers 21	John 3 and the Cross
The people were dying from serpents' bites	All have sinned; the wages of sin is death (Romans 3:23; 6:23)
God provided the remedy	"God so loved the world, that he gave" (John 3:16)
A serpent of brass, without venom	Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin (Romans 8:3)
Lifted up on a pole	"So must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14)

Numbers 21	John 3 and the Cross
"Every one that is bitten"	"Whosoever believeth" (John 3:15-16)
"When he looketh upon it, shall live"	"Should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)
No other cure	"Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy	Numbers	Fulfillment
The rebellious generation will die in the wilderness	14:29-35	26:64-65; Deuteronomy 2:14-16
Caleb and Joshua will enter the land	14:24, 30	Joshua 14:6-14; Joshua 1
Their children will possess the land	14:31	Joshua 21:43-45
Moses and Aaron will not enter Canaan	20:12	20:28; Deuteronomy 34:4-5
Israel will defeat Sihon and Og	21:34	21:24-35
Balaam: Israel will "dwell alone"	23:9	Israel's distinct national identity through history
Balaam: a King will smite Moab and possess Edom	24:17-18	David (2 Samuel 8:2, 14); ultimately Christ
Balaam: Amalek will perish for ever	24:20	1 Samuel 15; 1 Chronicles 4:43
Balaam: Asshur (Assyria) will carry the Kenites away; Chittim will afflict Asshur	24:22-24	Assyrian conquests; later Greek and Roman powers
Remaining Canaanites will be thorns in Israel's side	33:55	Judges 1:27-2:3
"Be sure your sin will find you out"	32:23	Principle confirmed throughout Scripture (Galatians 6:7)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Numbers 6:24-26 — The Priestly Blessing

Each line has two parts, building in intensity:

- **"The LORD bless thee, and keep thee."** God's provision and protection (Psalm 121:7-8; John 17:11; Jude 24).
- **"The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee."** God's favour and unearned grace (Psalm 67:1; 2 Corinthians 4:6).
- **"The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."** God's personal attention and wholeness (shalom) (John 14:27; Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:7).

The blessing was spoken by the priest, but the blessing came from God: "I will bless them" (6:27). It points forward to the blessing pronounced by the risen Christ, who "lifted up his hands, and blessed them" as He ascended (Luke 24:50-51).

Numbers 13-14 — Kadesh-barnea: The Tragedy of Unbelief

Kadesh is the turning point of the book. The people were at the very border of the promised land, about two years after leaving Egypt (Deuteronomy 1:2 says it was an eleven-day journey from Horeb). Their failure teaches:

- **Unbelief sees problems before God.** The ten spies said "we are not able" (13:31); Caleb and Joshua said "the LORD is with us" (14:9).
- **Unbelief spreads.** Ten men discouraged two million (13:32-14:1).
- **Unbelief rewrites the past.** They wanted to go back to Egypt (14:4).
- **Unbelief is rebellion.** "Rebel not ye against the LORD" (14:9); "How long will this people provoke me?" (14:11).
- **Forgiveness does not cancel all consequences.** God pardoned (14:20) but the generation died in the wilderness.
- **Late obedience is disobedience.** Going up after God had said no led to defeat (14:40-45).

The book of Hebrews applies this to every generation: "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15). The writer urges believers to "labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (4:11).

Numbers 22-24 — Balaam: Blessing That Cannot Be Reversed

Balaam's story shows that **God's blessing on His people cannot be cursed away**: "Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it" (23:20). Nothing outside can separate God's people from His love (Romans 8:31-39). But it also shows that **the greatest danger is from within**: Balaam failed to curse Israel but succeeded in seducing them into sin (25; 31:16). The New Testament names Balaam three times as a warning: his **way** (greed, 2 Peter 2:15), his **error** (thinking God must curse sinful Israel, or that gifts can buy God's power, Jude 11), and his **doctrine** (compromise with idolatry and immorality, Revelation 2:14).

Numbers 35 — The Cities of Refuge

The six cities were Kedesh, Shechem and Hebron west of the Jordan, and Bezer, Ramoth-gilead and Golan east of it (Joshua 20:7-8). Many Bible teachers note how their names have been connected to aspects of Christ: Kedesh ("holy"), Shechem ("shoulder," the place of strength), Hebron ("fellowship"), Bezer ("stronghold"), Ramoth ("heights") and Golan ("joy" or "exile"), though meanings of some names are debated. The fugitive's only safety was to remain inside. So the believer's security is to be "found in him" (Philippians 3:9) and to "abide in him" (1 John 2:28).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Numbers

1. God's Faithfulness and Man's Unfaithfulness

God kept every promise: He provided food, water, guidance, protection and victory, and brought the nation to the border of Canaan as He said. Israel complained at almost every stage. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).

2. The Seriousness of Unbelief

Unbelief kept a whole generation out of God's promised rest (14; Hebrews 3:19). It is not a weakness to be excused but a sin that dishonours God (14:11).

3. The Danger of Complaining

Complaining appears again and again (11:1, 4; 14:2; 16:41; 20:2-5; 21:5) and is treated as rebellion against God, not merely against Moses. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Philippians 2:14).

4. God's Order and Holiness in the Camp

God is a God of order (1-4). Each tribe had its place, each Levite family its task, and impurity was put outside the camp (5:1-4). "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

5. Spiritual Authority and Rebellion

Miriam and Aaron (12), Korah (16) and the congregation (14; 16:41) rejected God's appointed leaders, and God defended them. Leadership in God's work is God's appointment, not human ambition (Hebrews 5:4; 13:17).

6. Intercession

Moses interceded for the people repeatedly (11:2; 12:13; 14:13-19; 16:22; 21:7), and Aaron stood between the dead and the living (16:48). Christ is the perfect Intercessor (Romans 8:34), and believers are called to pray for others (1 Timothy 2:1).

7. Discipline and Consequences

God disciplines His people (14:29-35; 20:12). Even Moses was not exempt. Forgiveness restores the relationship, but sin often leaves lasting consequences (2 Samuel 12:13-14). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Hebrews 12:6).

8. God's Sovereign Blessing

Balaam's oracles show that God's purpose for His people cannot be overturned by enemies, sorcery or money (23:19-23). God's gifts and calling are without repentance (Romans 11:29).

9. Separation and Compromise

The Nazarite vow (6) and the disaster at Baal-peor (25) present two paths: deliberate separation to God, and gradual compromise with the world. James 4:4 warns that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God."

10. Preparing the Next Generation

The second half of Numbers prepares a new generation: a new census, new leadership, laws for the land, and faith-filled examples like Zelophehad's daughters. God's purposes continue beyond any one generation's failure (Psalm 78:4-7).

Part Seven: Connections — How Numbers Links to the Rest of the Bible

Numbers Quoted and Cited in the New Testament

Numbers	New Testament	Use
6 (the Nazarite)	Luke 1:15; Acts 18:18; 21:23-26	John the Baptist; Paul's vows
9:12	John 19:36	No bone broken
11 (murmuring)	1 Corinthians 10:10	Warning against complaining
11:29	Acts 2:17-18	The Spirit on all God's people
12:7	Hebrews 3:2, 5	Moses faithful in all his house
14 (Kadesh)	Hebrews 3:7-4:11; 1 Corinthians 10:5; Jude 5	Unbelief and failure to enter rest
14:29	Hebrews 3:17	Carcases fell in the wilderness
15:38-40	Matthew 9:20; 14:36; 23:5	The fringe (hem) of the garment
16 (Korah)	Jude 11; 2 Timothy 2:19	The gainsaying of Core; the Lord knows His own
16:48	Hebrews 7:25	Intercession between death and life (by type)
17:8-10	Hebrews 9:4	Aaron's rod in the ark
19 (red heifer)	Hebrews 9:13-14	Ashes of an heifer; the blood of Christ
20:8-11	1 Corinthians 10:4	The Rock was Christ
21:5-6	1 Corinthians 10:9	Destroyed by serpents
21:8-9	John 3:14-15	The Son of man lifted up
22-24 (Balaam)	2 Peter 2:15-16; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14	The way, error and doctrine of Balaam
24:17	Matthew 2:2; Revelation 22:16	The Star; the bright and morning star
25 (Baal-peor)	1 Corinthians 10:8; Revelation 2:14	Fornication and idolatry
27:17	Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34	Sheep without a shepherd
28:9-10	Matthew 12:5	Priests on the Sabbath
30 (vows)	Matthew 5:33-37	Keeping one's word
35 (refuge)	Hebrews 6:18	Fled for refuge
Wilderness forty years	Acts 7:36; 13:18; Hebrews 3:9-10	God's patience with Israel

Numbers in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	Direct continuation of the wilderness journey; the cloud (Exodus 40:36-38); the earlier water from the rock (Exodus 17)
Leviticus	Laws given at Sinai put into practice; the offerings calendar (Numbers 28-29) matches the feasts (Leviticus 23)
Deuteronomy	Moses retells Kadesh (1:19-46), the wilderness years (2), Sihon and Og (2:24-3:11), his own exclusion (3:23-27; 32:48-52), and Balaam (23:4-5)
Joshua	Caleb claims his inheritance (14:6-14); the eastern tribes keep their promise (1:12-18; 22); cities of refuge (20); Levitical cities (21); Balaam slain (13:22); Balaam's curse turned to blessing (24:9-10)
Judges	Caleb's inheritance (1:20); Canaanites left as thorns in their sides (2:3); Samson the Nazarite (13-16)
1 Samuel	Samuel dedicated as a Nazarite (1:11)
2 Samuel	Uzzah dies touching the ark carried on a cart (6:6-7); David subdues Moab and Edom (8:2, 14; Numbers 24:17-18)
2 Kings	Hezekiah destroys the brazen serpent, Nehushtan (18:4)
1 Chronicles	The ark must be carried by Levites (15:2, 13-15); the eastern tribes taken captive first (5:26)
Nehemiah	God's provision in the wilderness recalled (9:19-22); Balaam hired against Israel (13:2)
Psalms	Psalm 78 (the quails, 78:26-31); Psalm 90 (Moses' prayer as a generation died: "we are consumed by thine anger"); Psalm 95:8-11 (Meribah; "they should not enter into my rest"); Psalm 105:39-41; Psalm 106 (quails 14-15, Korah 16-18, Baal-peor and Phinehas 28-31, Meribah 32-33); Psalm 68:1 (Numbers 10:35); the Psalms of the sons of Korah (42-49, 84-88)
Isaiah	God leading His people in the wilderness (63:11-14)
Jeremiah	"Thou wentest after me in the wilderness" (2:2); the Rechabites' abstinence (35)
Ezekiel	Israel's rebellion in the wilderness reviewed (20:13-26)
Hosea	"They went to Baal-peor" (9:10)
Amos	Forty years in the wilderness (2:10; 5:25)
Micah	"Remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him" (6:5)

Themes That Run from Numbers Through Scripture

Theme	In Numbers	Developed	Fulfilled
Entering God's rest	13-14	Psalm 95:11	Hebrews 3-4; Matthew 11:28
Unbelief and judgment	14:11, 29	Psalm 78:22, 32	Hebrews 3:19; Jude 5
The lifted-up Saviour	21:8-9	Isaiah 52:13	John 3:14; 12:32

Theme	In Numbers	Developed	Fulfilled
Intercession	14:13-19; 16:48	Isaiah 53:12	Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25
The Star and Sceptre	24:17	Isaiah 60:1-3	Matthew 2:2; Revelation 22:16
Refuge	35	Psalm 46:1	Hebrews 6:18
Separation to God	6	Judges 13; 1 Samuel 1	2 Corinthians 6:17; Hebrews 7:26
Shepherding God's people	27:17	Ezekiel 34	John 10:11; 1 Peter 5:4
The danger of greed in ministry	22-24	Micah 3:11	2 Peter 2:15; Jude 11
Living water	20; 21:16-18	Isaiah 55:1	John 4:14; 7:37-39

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Put God at the centre.** The tabernacle stood in the middle of the camp (2).
- **Move only when God moves.** Follow the cloud, not your own timetable (9:15-23).
- **Do not despise God's provision.** They loathed the manna and longed for Egypt (11:5-6; 21:5).
- **Beware of getting what you lust for.** God gave them their request but sent leanness into their soul (11:33; Psalm 106:15).
- **Measure obstacles against God, not against yourself.** Giants make grasshoppers only of those who forget God (13:33; 14:9).
- **Follow the Lord fully.** Caleb was rewarded for wholehearted faith (14:24).
- **Don't confuse presumption with faith.** Obey when God says go, and stop when He says no (14:40-45).
- **Respect God-given authority.** God defended meek Moses (12; 16).
- **Keep your temper in ministry.** One angry act cost Moses the promised land (20:10-12).
- **Look and live.** Salvation is by looking in faith to the lifted-up Saviour (21:8-9).
- **Watch for the enemy within.** Balaam's counsel did what his curses could not (25; 31:16).
- **Keep your word.** Vows and promises must be kept (30:2; 32:20-23).
- **Your sin will find you out** (32:23).
- **Run to Christ your refuge,** and stay there (35; Hebrews 6:18).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
6:24-26	The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.
9:18	At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched
11:23	Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.
12:3	Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.
13:30	Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.
14:9	Neither fear ye the people of the land... the LORD is with us: fear them not.
14:24	But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully
21:8	Every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.
23:19	God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent
24:17	There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel
32:23	Be sure your sin will find you out.

Conclusion

Numbers is the story of a journey that should have taken eleven days and took forty years. God redeemed His people, organised them around His presence, fed them, guided them and fought for them, yet at the border of His promise they refused to believe, and a generation died in the wilderness. Even so, God remained faithful: He disciplined, forgave, protected His people from curses they never knew about, and raised up a new generation to inherit the land. Through it all, Numbers points to Christ: the bread from heaven, the smitten Rock, the lifted-up serpent, the risen Priest, the spotless red heifer, the Star out of Jacob, and the city of refuge. Its warning still speaks to every believer:

> *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*
>
> **Hebrews 3:12**

Deuteronomy

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Moses • Date: c. 1405 BC • Chapters: 34

> *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

Part One: Introduction to Deuteronomy

The Name

"Deuteronomy" comes from the Greek Septuagint, meaning "second law." The title comes from 17:18, where the king is told to write "a copy of this law." Deuteronomy is not a different law but a restatement and application of the law given at Sinai to a new generation about to enter the land. The Hebrew title is Devarim, "words," from the opening line: "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel" (1:1). The book is mostly preaching: Moses' farewell sermons, full of warmth, warning and appeal.

Author

Moses wrote Deuteronomy. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests" (31:9); "Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished" (31:24). The account of Moses' death in chapter 34 was added afterward; Jewish tradition attributes it to Joshua. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy as Scripture to defeat Satan (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10), and treated its commands as from Moses (Matthew 19:7-8; Mark 10:3-5). Peter and Stephen quote 18:15 as the words of Moses (Acts 3:22; 7:37), and Paul writes, "Moses describeth" and "Moses saith" when citing it (Romans 10:5, 19).

Critical scholars have often claimed Deuteronomy was written in the 7th century BC and "found" in the temple under King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8) to support his reforms. But the book is presented as Moses' words, never mentions Jerusalem by name, and its structure closely matches international treaties of the second millennium BC (the time of Moses) better than later treaties.

Date and Setting

Moses delivered these sermons on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan opposite Jericho, "in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month" (1:3), around 1406 BC. He was 120 years old (31:2; 34:7). The old generation had died in the wilderness (2:14-16). Within weeks, Israel would cross the Jordan under Joshua on the tenth day of the first month (Joshua 4:19). Deuteronomy covers only about a month, but it looks back over forty years and forward to Israel's whole future in the land.

The Treaty Structure

Deuteronomy follows the pattern of ancient suzerain-vassal treaties, in which a great king made a covenant with a lesser people:

Treaty Element	Deuteronomy	Content
Preamble	1:1-5	Who is speaking and where
Historical prologue	1:6-4:49	What the LORD has done for Israel
Stipulations	5-26	The commandments: general (5-11) and specific (12-26)
Blessings and curses	27-30	Consequences of obedience and disobedience

Treaty Element	Deuteronomy	Content
Witnesses and deposit	31-34	Heaven and earth called as witnesses; the book placed beside the ark; public reading; succession

The LORD is the great King; Israel is His people bound to Him by covenant. Love and loyalty are the heart of the relationship.

Purpose and Theme

Deuteronomy calls Israel to **remember** what God has done, to **love** and **obey** Him wholeheartedly, and to **choose life** by keeping His covenant in the land. Key words include "remember" and "forget," "love," "hear" (shema), "keep" and "do," "the land," "today" and "the place which the LORD shall choose." The key verses:

> *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

> *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live*
>
> **Deuteronomy 30:19**

Outline of Deuteronomy

Section	Chapters	Theme
Introduction	1:1-5	Time and place
I. First Sermon: Looking Back	1:6-4:43	What God has done
From Horeb to Kadesh	1	Failure at Kadesh recalled
Through the wilderness to Moab	2-3	Victories over Sihon and Og
Call to obedience	4	Remember, do not make images
II. Second Sermon: Looking at the Law	4:44-26:19	What God requires
The Ten Commandments	5	The covenant at Horeb restated
The great commandment	6-11	Love God wholeheartedly; do not forget
Laws of worship	12-16	One place, no idols, clean food, tithes, feasts
Laws of leadership	16:18-18:22	Judges, kings, priests, prophets
Laws of daily life	19-26	Justice, war, family, property, compassion
III. Third Sermon: Looking Ahead	27-30	Blessing and cursing
Ceremony at Ebal and Gerizim	27	Twelve curses
Blessings and curses	28	Obedience and disobedience

Section	Chapters	Theme
The covenant in Moab	29-30	Choose life
IV. Moses' Final Days	31-34	Transition to Joshua
Joshua commissioned	31	The law to be read
The Song of Moses	32	A witness against Israel
The Blessing of Moses	33	The tribes blessed
The death of Moses	34	Moses views the land and dies

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: First Sermon — Looking Back (Chapters 1:1-4:43)

Chapter 1 — From Horeb to Kadesh

"There are eleven days' journey from Horeb... unto Kadesh-barnea" (1:2), yet it took forty years. Moses recalled God's command to leave Horeb and take the land (1:6-8), his appointment of judges because he could not bear the people alone (1:9-18; Exodus 18), and the failure at Kadesh (1:19-46). He reminded them that the LORD had carried them "as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went" (1:31), "Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God" (1:32). The new generation needed to learn from their fathers' unbelief (compare 1 Corinthians 10:11).

Chapter 2 — Through Edom, Moab and Ammon

God told Israel not to fight Edom, Moab or Ammon, because He had given those lands to Esau's and Lot's descendants (2:4-5, 9, 19). God is sovereign over all nations' borders (Acts 17:26). The 38 years at Kadesh and in the wilderness passed "until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host" (2:14). Then God gave them Sihon king of Heshbon (2:24-37), whose heart God hardened as He had Pharaoh's (2:30).

Chapter 3 — Victory over Og; Moses' Plea

God also gave them Og king of Bashan, a giant whose iron bedstead was nine cubits long (3:1-11). The land east of the Jordan was given to Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh, who must still help their brothers (3:12-20). Moses pleaded to cross over and see "that goodly mountain, and Lebanon" (3:25), but the LORD said, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter" (3:26). Even great saints receive "no" to some prayers (2 Corinthians 12:8-9). Moses was to encourage and strengthen Joshua instead (3:28).

Chapter 4 — The Call to Obey and Remember

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it" (4:2; compare Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19). Obedience would make Israel a witness to the nations: "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" (4:7). They must not forget and must teach their children and grandchildren (4:9-10).

At Horeb, "ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude" (4:12). Because God revealed Himself by His Word and not in a visible form, they must make no image of Him (4:15-19). "For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God" (4:24; Hebrews 12:29). Moses foretold that if they corrupted themselves, they would be scattered among the nations (4:25-28), yet:

> *But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 4:29**

"For the LORD thy God is a merciful God; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers" (4:31). No other god has ever spoken from fire or taken a nation out of another nation (4:32-34). "The LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else" (4:39; quoted in Mark 12:32). Moses set apart three cities of refuge east of the Jordan: Bezer, Ramoth and Golan (4:41-43).

Section II: Second Sermon — The Great Commandment (Chapters 4:44-11:32)

Chapter 5 — The Ten Commandments Repeated

"The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us" (5:2-3): each generation must own the covenant personally. The Ten Commandments are repeated (5:6-21) with small differences from Exodus 20. The Sabbath command is grounded not in creation (as in Exodus 20:11) but in redemption: "remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence" (5:15). The people's fear at Sinai is recalled, and God's longing: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (5:29). The problem was not the law but the heart (Romans 8:3), which only God could change (30:6; Jeremiah 31:33).

Chapter 6 — The Shema

> *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

These verses, called the Shema (from its first word, "Hear"), are the central confession of Israel's faith, recited by devout Jews twice daily. Jesus called 6:5 "the first and great commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30). "One LORD" affirms there is only one God, against all polytheism. The Hebrew word for "one" (echad) can describe a compound unity ("one flesh," Genesis 2:24; "one cluster," Numbers 13:23), which fits the later revelation of one God in three persons (Matthew 28:19).

God's Word must be in the heart and passed on in daily life:

> *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

They were to bind them on their hands and between their eyes and write them on their doorposts (6:8-9). Later Jews took this literally with phylacteries (tefillin) and the mezuzah; Jesus rebuked those who made their phylacteries broad for show (Matthew 23:5). Moses warned that prosperity in the land, with houses they did not build and wells they did not dig, could make them forget the LORD (6:10-12). "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him" (6:13) and "Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah" (6:16) are two of the three verses Jesus used against Satan (Matthew

4:7, 10). When children asked what the laws meant, parents were to tell the story of redemption from Egypt (6:20-25): the gospel comes before the law.

Chapter 7 — A Chosen and Holy People

Israel was to utterly destroy the seven nations of Canaan, make no covenants with them, and not intermarry with them, "For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (7:1-5). Why did God choose Israel?

> *The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers*
>
> **Deuteronomy 7:7-8**

God's choice was an act of free love, not based on merit (compare Ephesians 1:4-5; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29). "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him" (7:9). God would drive out the nations "by little and little" (7:22), and Israel was to burn their idols and not covet the silver and gold on them (7:25).

Chapter 8 — Remember the Wilderness; Beware of Pride

God led them forty years in the wilderness "to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart" (8:2).

> *And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 8:3**

Jesus quoted this as His first answer to Satan (Matthew 4:4). Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell (8:4). "As a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee" (8:5; Hebrews 12:5-11). Canaan was "a good land" of brooks, wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olive oil, honey, iron and copper (8:7-9). The danger of prosperity is pride:

> *And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*
>
> **Deuteronomy 8:17-18**

Chapter 9 — Not Because of Your Righteousness

God would drive out the nations, but not because of Israel's righteousness: "for thou art a stiffnecked people" (9:4-6). The nations were judged for their wickedness (9:4-5; Genesis 15:16). Moses recalled their rebellions: the golden calf at Horeb (9:7-21), Taberah, Massah, Kibroth-hattaavah and Kadesh (9:22-24). "Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you" (9:24). Only Moses' forty days of intercession saved them (9:25-29). Salvation is "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9; Titus 3:5).

Chapter 10 — What Does the LORD Require?

God wrote the commandments on new tablets, which Moses put in the ark (10:1-5). The tribe of Levi was set apart to carry the ark and minister, with the LORD as their inheritance (10:8-9).

> *And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul*
>
> **Deuteronomy 10:12**

"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked" (10:16; compare Jeremiah 4:4; Romans 2:28-29). God is "God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (10:17; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11). He loves the stranger, so Israel must too, "for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (10:18-19).

Chapter 11 — Love and Obey, and Teach Your Children

Moses appealed to those who had personally seen God's mighty acts (11:2-7). Canaan was not like Egypt, watered by human irrigation, but "a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it" (11:11-12). Israel would depend daily on God for rain, which He would give or withhold according to their obedience (11:13-17). They were again told to lay up God's words in their hearts and teach their children (11:18-21). "I set before you this day a blessing and a curse" (11:26), to be proclaimed from Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal (11:29; 27).

Section III: Second Sermon — The Statutes and Judgments (Chapters 12-26)

Chapter 12 — One Place of Worship

Israel was to destroy every Canaanite place of worship, altar, pillar, grove and image (12:2-3) and worship only "unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there" (12:5, 11, 14). This place was first Shiloh (Jeremiah 7:12) and later Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:36; 2 Chronicles 6:6). In the wilderness "every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes" (12:8), a phrase that would describe the chaos of Judges (Judges 21:25). Meat could be eaten anywhere, but not the blood (12:15-16, 23-25). They must not inquire how the nations served their gods in order to copy them (12:30-32). Jesus later taught that true worship is no longer tied to one location but is "in spirit and in truth" through Him (John 4:21-24).

Chapter 13 — False Prophets and Enticers

If a prophet gives a sign that comes to pass but then says "Let us go after other gods... Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet" (13:1-3). Signs alone do not prove a message is from God; the test is faithfulness to God's Word (Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Galatians 1:8). "For the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart" (13:3). Even a family member or close friend who enticed others to idolatry was to be exposed (13:6-11), and an apostate city destroyed (13:12-18). Loyalty to God comes above every human relationship (Matthew

10:37).

Chapter 14 — Children of God: Holy Food and Tithes

"Ye are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves... for the dead" (14:1). Clean and unclean animals are listed again (14:3-21; Leviticus 11). The tithe of crops and herds was to be eaten in celebration at God's chosen place, "that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always" (14:22-27). Every third year the tithe was stored locally for "the Levite... and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow" (14:28-29). Giving to God and caring for the needy go together (James 1:27).

Chapter 15 — The Year of Release

Every seventh year debts owed by fellow Israelites were cancelled (15:1-6). Generosity was commanded: "thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him" (15:7-8). "For the poor shall never cease out of the land" (15:11); Jesus echoed this in Matthew 26:11. A Hebrew slave went free in the seventh year and was sent away with generous provision, "because thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee" (15:12-15). A servant who loved his master could choose lifelong service, his ear bored at the door (15:16-17; Exodus 21:5-6), a picture of Christ the willing Servant (Psalm 40:6-8). Firstborn animals were sanctified to the LORD (15:19-23).

Chapter 16 — The Three Pilgrim Feasts and Justice

Israel was to keep Passover, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles at God's chosen place (16:1-17), rejoicing with their families, servants, Levites, strangers, orphans and widows (16:11, 14). "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD... and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: Every man shall give as he is able" (16:16-17; compare 2 Corinthians 8:12). Judges were to be appointed in every city, take no bribes, and judge righteously: "That which is altogether just shalt thou follow" (16:18-20). No groves or pillars near God's altar (16:21-22).

Chapter 17 — Courts and the Law of the King

Sacrifices must be without blemish (17:1). An idolater could be executed only "at the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses... but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death" (17:6). This principle is repeated throughout the New Testament (Matthew 18:16; John 8:17; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28). Difficult cases went to the priests and judge at the central place (17:8-13).

God anticipated that Israel would ask for a king "like as all the nations that are about me" (17:14), as they did in 1 Samuel 8:5. The king must be God's choice, an Israelite (17:15), and must not:

- **multiply horses**, or send people back to Egypt for them (military self-reliance);
- **multiply wives**, "that his heart turn not away";
- **greatly multiply silver and gold** (17:16-17).

He must write his own copy of the law, "and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God" (17:18-19). Solomon broke all three prohibitions (1 Kings 10:14-11:8), and his heart turned away (1 Kings 11:4). Only Christ, the perfect King, perfectly kept the law of God (Psalm 40:8; John 8:29).

Chapter 18 — Priests, the Occult and the Prophet Like Moses

The priests and Levites had no inheritance: "the LORD is their inheritance" (18:2). Israel was forbidden every occult practice of the Canaanites:

> *There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD*
>
> **Deuteronomy 18:10-12**

This covers child sacrifice, fortune-telling, astrology, sorcery, spells, mediums and contacting the dead (compare Isaiah 8:19-20; Acts 16:16-18; 19:19; Galatians 5:20). "Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God" (18:13). Instead of seeking hidden knowledge from spirits, Israel would hear God through His prophets:

> *The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken*
>
> **Deuteronomy 18:15**

God said, "I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And... whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him" (18:18-19). This promise had an immediate application to the line of prophets God would send, but it was ultimately a promise of one unique Prophet. Deuteronomy 34:10 notes that no prophet like Moses had yet arisen. By Jesus' day the Jews were waiting for "that prophet" (John 1:21, 25; 6:14; 7:40). Peter and Stephen both identified Him as Jesus (Acts 3:22-26; 7:37). The test of a false prophet is simple: "if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken" (18:22).

Chapter 19 — Cities of Refuge, Landmarks and Witnesses

Three cities of refuge were to be set apart west of the Jordan, with roads prepared to them, and three more added if the land grew (19:1-10; Numbers 35). Murderers were not protected (19:11-13). "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark" (19:14; Proverbs 22:28). At least two or three witnesses were required for any conviction (19:15), and a false witness received the punishment he intended for the accused (19:16-21), the principle behind "life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (19:21).

Chapter 20 — Laws of Warfare

Before battle, the priest was to encourage the army: "fear not... For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you" (20:3-4). Men who had built a new house, planted a new vineyard, or become engaged were sent home, as was anyone "fearful and fainthearted, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart" (20:5-8). In Jesus' parable of the great supper, people use very similar excuses to refuse God's invitation (Luke 14:18-20). Distant cities were first offered peace (20:10-15). The cities of Canaan were to be completely destroyed, "That they teach you not to do after all their abominations" (20:16-18). Fruit trees were not to be cut down in a siege (20:19-20).

Chapter 21 — Unsolved Murder, Family Laws and the Hanged Man

For an unsolved murder, the elders of the nearest city sacrificed a heifer and declared their innocence, so innocent blood would not remain on the land (21:1-9). Laws protected a captive woman taken as wife (21:10-14) and the firstborn son of an unloved wife (21:15-17). A persistently rebellious son, "a glutton, and a drunkard," was to be judged by the elders (21:18-21). Then:

> *And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;)*
>
> **Deuteronomy 21:22-23**

This is why the Jews asked Pilate to have the bodies taken down before the Sabbath (John 19:31). Paul explains its meaning: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). The cross was the place of the curse, and Jesus bore it for us (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Peter 2:24).

Chapter 22 — Neighbourly Care and Purity

Return a neighbour's lost animal or property; do not "hide thyself" from his need (22:1-4). "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment" (22:5): God's design for distinct male and female identity. Let the mother bird go when taking eggs (22:6-7). Build a parapet around a flat roof "that thou bring not blood upon thine house" (22:8): responsibility for others' safety. No mixing of seeds, animals or fabrics (22:9-11), tassels on garments (22:12), and laws protecting marriage, virginity and women from false accusation and violence (22:13-30).

Chapter 23 — The Assembly of the LORD and Daily Holiness

Certain persons were excluded from "the congregation of the LORD": eunuchs by mutilation, those of illegitimate birth, and Ammonites and Moabites to the tenth generation, because they hired Balaam against Israel (23:1-6; Nehemiah 13:1-2). Yet Ruth the Moabitess became the ancestor of David by grace (Ruth 4:13-22), and Isaiah 56:3-7 promises that faithful eunuchs and foreigners will be welcomed, fulfilled in the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27-39). Grace overcomes the barriers of the law. Edomites and Egyptians could enter in the third generation (23:7-8). The camp must be kept clean, "For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp" (23:14). A runaway slave was not to be returned to his master (23:15-16). No interest on loans to fellow Israelites (23:19-20). Vows must be paid promptly (23:21-23; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5). A traveller could eat grapes or pluck grain in a neighbour's field but not carry it away (23:24-25), the law that permitted the disciples to pluck ears of corn (Matthew 12:1).

Chapter 24 — Divorce, Compassion and Individual Responsibility

A man who divorced his wife with a "bill of divorcement" could not remarry her after she married another (24:1-4). This regulated an existing practice to protect women. Jesus explained, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so" (Matthew 19:8; 5:31-32). A newly married man was free from military service for a year, "and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken" (24:5). Laws protected the poor: no taking a millstone in pledge (24:6), no keeping a poor man's garment overnight (24:12-13), wages paid the same day (24:14-15). "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the

fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (24:16; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezekiel 18:20). Forgotten sheaves and leftover olives and grapes belonged to the stranger, fatherless and widow (24:19-22), "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt."

Chapter 25 — Justice, the Ox and the Levirate Law

Beatings were limited to forty stripes (25:1-3); Paul received "forty stripes save one" five times (2 Corinthians 11:24). "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" (25:4). Paul twice applies this to supporting gospel ministers (1 Corinthians 9:9-11; 1 Timothy 5:18). If a man died childless, his brother was to marry the widow and raise up a son to carry on his name (25:5-10), the law behind Ruth 4 and the Sadducees' question to Jesus about the resurrection (Matthew 22:23-33). Honest weights and measures were required (25:13-16). Israel was to remember Amalek's cowardly attack on the weak and blot out its memory (25:17-19; Exodus 17).

Chapter 26 — Firstfruits and the Covenant Confession

When Israel brought their firstfruits to the LORD, each worshipper recited a confession of God's grace:

> *A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation... And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand... And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land*
>
> **Deuteronomy 26:5-9**

Worship begins by remembering the story of redemption. The third-year tithe was accompanied by a declaration of obedience and a prayer for blessing (26:12-15). The section closes with mutual commitment: "Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God... And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people" (26:17-18; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9).

Section IV: Third Sermon — Blessing and Cursing (Chapters 27-30)

Chapter 27 — The Ceremony at Ebal and Gerizim

After crossing the Jordan, Israel was to set up great stones plastered over, write all the law on them, and build an altar of whole stones on Mount Ebal (27:1-8). Six tribes would stand on Mount Gerizim to bless and six on Mount Ebal to curse (27:11-13). The Levites would pronounce twelve curses on secret sins, and all the people would answer "Amen" (27:14-26). The last curse summarises them all:

> *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 27:26**

Paul quotes this to show that no one can be justified by the law: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10). Joshua carried out this ceremony (Joshua 8:30-35). Notice that the blessings in this ceremony are not listed; only the curses are. The law, on its own, can only condemn.

Chapter 28 — Blessings and Curses

If Israel obeyed, blessings would come on every area of life: city and field, children, crops and herds, coming in and going out, victory, rain, prosperity and respect among the nations (28:1-14). "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail" (28:13). If Israel disobeyed, curses would come, and they occupy four times as much space (28:15-68):

- **Disease, drought and crop failure** (28:21-24, 38-42). "Thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass" (28:23).
- **Defeat and oppression** (28:25-34).
- **Exile to a foreign nation** "which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone" (28:36).
- **A distant, fierce nation** "as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand" (28:49-52).
- **Siege and starvation so terrible that parents would eat their children** (28:53-57). This happened in the siege of Samaria (2 Kings 6:28-29), in the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (Lamentations 2:20; 4:10), and in the Roman siege of AD 70 as recorded by Josephus.
- **Worldwide dispersion**:

> *And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other... And among these nations shalt thou find no ease... and the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart*
>
> **Deuteronomy 28:64-65**

- **Becoming "an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword"** among the nations (28:37).
- **Being sold back to Egypt in ships** as slaves (28:68), which happened after AD 70, when Roman markets were flooded with Jewish captives.

This chapter is one of the most remarkable prophecies in the Bible. It describes in advance the history of the Jewish people over more than three thousand years.

Chapter 29 — The Covenant in Moab

Moses renewed the covenant with the new generation, including "him that is not here with us this day" (29:14-15), their future descendants. They had seen God's wonders, "Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day" (29:4; Romans 11:8). He warned against "a root that beareth gall and wormwood" (29:18; Hebrews 12:15), a person who hears the curse but says, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart" (29:19). Future generations and foreigners would ask why the land was devastated, and the answer would be: "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers" (29:24-28; 1 Kings 9:8-9; Jeremiah 22:8-9).

> *The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 29:29**

Chapter 30 — Restoration and the Call to Choose Life

Moses looked beyond the curses to a future restoration. When Israel, scattered among the nations, returns to the LORD with all their heart, God will "turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations... If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee" (30:1-5). God Himself will do the work of renewal:

> *And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 30:6**

This promise of a new heart is developed into the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-27) and fulfilled by the Spirit (Romans 2:29; Colossians 2:11). God's Word was not far off: "it is not in heaven... Neither is it beyond the sea... But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (30:11-14). Paul applies this to the gospel: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:6-9). Christ came down from heaven and rose from the deep, so salvation is near to every believer.

Moses closed with the great appeal:

> *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life*
>
> **Deuteronomy 30:19-20**

Section V: Moses' Final Days (Chapters 31-34)

Chapter 31 — Joshua Commissioned; the Law Written and Read

Moses, 120 years old, announced he would not cross the Jordan; the LORD Himself and Joshua would lead them (31:1-3).

> *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 31:6**

This promise is applied to all believers: "for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). Moses charged Joshua publicly (31:7-8), and God commissioned him at the tabernacle (31:14-15, 23). Moses wrote the law and gave it to the priests, to be read to the whole nation, "men, and women, and children, and thy stranger," every seventh year at the Feast of Tabernacles (31:9-13; compare Nehemiah 8). God told Moses that after his death Israel would "go a whoring after the gods of the strangers" and break the covenant (31:16-18), fulfilled in Judges 2:10-13. God therefore gave Moses

a song to teach them as a witness (31:19-22). The book of the law was placed beside the ark (31:24-26).

Chapter 32 — The Song of Moses

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth" (32:1). The song is a covenant lawsuit in poetry, summarising Israel's history and future.

> *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 32:4**

God is called "the Rock" five times in the song (32:4, 15, 18, 30, 31); Paul identifies the Rock as Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). God chose Israel as His portion (32:8-9), found him in a desert land and "kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings" (32:10-11). But "Jeshurun [Israel] waxed fat, and kicked... then he forsook God which made him" (32:15). "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God" (32:17; 1 Corinthians 10:20).

God would respond: "they have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God... and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people" (32:21). Paul quotes this of the Gentiles' salvation provoking Israel (Romans 10:19; 11:11). "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence" (32:35; Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30). "For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants" (32:36; Hebrews 10:30). "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal" (32:39). The song ends in hope: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people" (32:43; Romans 15:10), and God "will be merciful unto his land, and to his people." In the Septuagint, 32:43 includes "let all the angels of God worship him," quoted of Christ in Hebrews 1:6. In Revelation 15:3, the redeemed sing "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Moses told Israel these words were "not a vain thing for you; because it is your life" (32:47). God then told Moses to climb Mount Nebo to view the land and die (32:48-52).

Chapter 33 — The Blessing of Moses

Like Jacob in Genesis 49, Moses blessed the tribes before his death. "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand" (33:3). Reuben would live (33:6); Judah would be helped against enemies (33:7); Levi was blessed for faithfulness, to teach Israel the law (33:8-11); "The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him" (Benjamin, 33:12); Joseph received rich blessings of the land (33:13-17); and Asher, "as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (33:25). Simeon is not mentioned, consistent with its absorption into Judah (Joshua 19:1-9). The blessing ends with two of the most comforting verses in Scripture:

> *The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms*
>
> **Deuteronomy 33:27**

> *Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!*
>
> **Deuteronomy 33:29**

Chapter 34 — The Death of Moses

Moses climbed Mount Nebo to the top of Pisgah, and the LORD showed him the whole land from Dan to the Negev (34:1-3). "This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob... I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither" (34:4). Moses died there "according to the word of the LORD" (34:5). God Himself buried him in a valley in Moab, "but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day" (34:6). Jude 9 records that Michael the archangel disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. "Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (34:7). Israel mourned thirty days (34:8). Joshua was "full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him" (34:9).

> *And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face*
>
> **Deuteronomy 34:10**

This verse looks forward: the Prophet "like unto me" (18:15) had not yet come. Moses never entered the land under the law, but centuries later he stood in the land with Elijah, talking with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration about His coming death at Jerusalem (Matthew 17:3; Luke 9:30-31). The law could not bring Moses into the land; grace brought him there in the presence of Christ.

Part Three: Christ in Deuteronomy

The Prophet Like Moses

Moses	Deuteronomy	Christ	New Testament
Raised up by God from among the brethren	18:15	Born of Israel, of the seed of David	Romans 1:3; 9:5
Spoke God's words with authority	18:18	"The words that I speak unto you... are spirit, and they are life"	John 6:63; 12:49-50
Mediator of a covenant	5:5, 27	Mediator of a better covenant	Hebrews 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5
Knew God face to face	34:10	In the bosom of the Father; has declared Him	John 1:18
Performed signs and wonders	34:11	"A man approved of God... by miracles and wonders and signs"	Acts 2:22
Interceded for a sinful people	9:18-20, 25-29	Ever lives to make intercession	Hebrews 7:25
Led God's people out of bondage	1:30-31	Delivers from the bondage of sin and death	Luke 4:18; Hebrews 2:15
Rejecting him brought judgment	18:19	Rejecting Christ brings judgment	Acts 3:23; Hebrews 2:2-3; 12:25

Jesus, the True Israel, in the Wilderness

Israel was God's "son" (Exodus 4:22), tested forty years in the wilderness, and failed. Jesus, the Son of God, was led into the wilderness for forty days, was tested in the same three areas, and answered each temptation from Deuteronomy 6-8, the very chapters that describe Israel's testing.

Temptation	Matthew 4	Israel's Failure	Jesus' Answer from Deuteronomy
Turn stones into bread	4:3-4	Murmured for bread (Exodus 16; Numbers 11)	"Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word... of the LORD" (8:3)
Cast Thyself down from the temple	4:5-7	Tempted God at Massah (Exodus 17:7)	"Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God" (6:16)
Worship Satan for the kingdoms	4:8-10	Worshipped the golden calf (Exodus 32)	"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him" (6:13; 10:20)

Where Israel failed, Christ succeeded. He is the obedient Son who loved God with all His heart, soul and might, and His obedience is credited to all who believe (Romans 5:19).

Other Pictures of Christ in Deuteronomy

- **The Rock (32:4, 15, 18).** "That Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4).
- **The one hanged on a tree (21:22-23).** Christ made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13).
- **The city of refuge (19).** Christ our refuge (Hebrews 6:18).
- **The kinsman who raises up a name for the dead (25:5-10).** Christ our Redeemer-Kinsman (Ruth 4).
- **The servant with the bored ear (15:16-17).** The willing Servant (Psalm 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-7).
- **The true King (17:14-20).** The King who kept God's law perfectly (Psalm 40:8; John 8:29).
- **The Word that is near (30:11-14).** Christ, the Word of faith (Romans 10:6-9).
- **The everlasting arms (33:27).** The Good Shepherd who carries His sheep (Isaiah 40:11; John 10:28).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Deuteronomy	Fulfillment
Israel will ask for a king like the nations	17:14	1 Samuel 8:5
God will choose a place for His name	12:5	Shiloh, then Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:36; 2 Chronicles 6:6)
After Moses' death Israel will turn to other gods	31:16-21, 29	Judges 2:10-13
A Prophet like Moses	18:15-19	Jesus Christ (Acts 3:22-26; 7:37)
Exile to a nation unknown to their fathers, with their king	28:36	Assyria and Babylon (2 Kings 17:6; 24:15; 25:7)
Siege so severe parents eat their children	28:53-57	2 Kings 6:28-29; Lamentations 4:10; Roman siege of AD 70
A nation as swift as the eagle	28:49-52	Babylon (Habakkuk 1:6-8); Rome
Scattered among all nations from one end of the earth to the other	28:64	Assyrian and Babylonian exiles; worldwide dispersion after AD 70
A proverb and a byword	28:37	1 Kings 9:7; Jeremiah 24:9
Sold in Egypt as slaves	28:68	Jewish captives sold after the Roman wars
Regathering from all nations after repentance	30:1-5	The return under Cyrus (Ezra 1); many also see the modern return of Jews to the land; future full restoration (Romans 11:26)
God will circumcise their heart	30:6	The new covenant (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26; Romans 2:29)
Gentiles will provoke Israel to jealousy	32:21	Romans 10:19; 11:11-14
Joshua will lead Israel into the land	31:3, 7	Joshua 1-12

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 — The Shema

The Shema contains the whole of biblical religion in seed form:

- **Doctrine: "The LORD our God is one LORD."** There is one true God, personal and covenantal ("our God"). Jesus affirmed it (Mark 12:29), and Paul built on it (1 Corinthians 8:4-6), while the New Testament reveals that this one God exists as Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
- **Devotion: "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God."** The heart of God's law is love, not mere outward conformity. Love involves the heart (affections and will), soul (life) and might (strength and resources).
- **Discipleship: "These words... shall be in thine heart."** God's Word must first be internalised.
- **Duty to the next generation: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children."** Faith is passed on in ordinary daily life, at home, on the road, at bedtime and at breakfast (6:7; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15).
- **Display: "Write them upon the posts of thy house."** A home publicly marked by God's Word.

Deuteronomy 18:15-22 — The Prophet and the Test of Prophecy

The passage arose from Israel's request at Sinai for a mediator (18:16-17; 5:23-27). It gives two tests: a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods is false (13:1-5; 18:20), and a prophet whose prediction fails is false (18:22). Together they require both doctrinal faithfulness and accuracy. The passage is fulfilled ultimately in Christ, whose words carry final authority: "This is my beloved Son... hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5; compare "unto him ye shall hearken," 18:15).

Deuteronomy 28 — History Written in Advance

The covenant curses read like a summary of Israel's history: drought under Ahab (1 Kings 17), invasions and oppression throughout Judges, exile under Assyria and Babylon, the horrors of the sieges, and the worldwide scattering after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Daniel's prayer confesses, "therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses" (Daniel 9:11). Yet the same Moses who predicted the scattering also predicted the regathering (30:1-5), and God's covenant with Israel stands (Romans 11:1-2, 28-29).

Deuteronomy 30:11-20 — The Word Is Near; Choose Life

Moses insisted that God's Word was clear and accessible, not hidden in heaven or across the sea. Paul's use of this passage in Romans 10 shows its deepest meaning: the righteousness of faith does not require climbing to heaven to bring Christ down or descending to the deep to bring Him up; He has come and has risen. The word of faith is near: confess Jesus as Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:6-10). The call "choose life" (30:19) becomes the gospel call: "he that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Deuteronomy

1. The One True God

There is one LORD, "there is none else beside him" (4:35, 39; 6:4; 32:39). He is faithful (7:9), a consuming fire (4:24), merciful (4:31), "God of gods, and Lord of lords" (10:17), the Rock (32:4) and the eternal refuge (33:27).

2. Love as the Heart of Obedience

Deuteronomy uses the language of love more than any other book of the law. God loved Israel freely (7:7-8; 10:15; 23:5), and Israel was to love Him with the whole heart (6:5; 10:12; 11:1, 13; 30:6, 16, 20). Obedience flows from love: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

3. Remember and Do Not Forget

"Remember" and "forget" occur again and again (4:9, 23; 5:15; 6:12; 8:2, 11, 18; 9:7; 15:15; 16:12; 24:18; 32:7). Spiritual decline begins with forgetting what God has done. The Lord's Supper is the Christian's great act of remembrance (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

4. Grace Before Law

God redeemed Israel before giving the law (5:6), chose them out of love and not merit (7:7-8), and gave them the land not for their righteousness (9:4-6). Law in Deuteronomy is the grateful response of a redeemed people, not a means of earning salvation.

5. The Danger of Prosperity

The greatest threat in the land would not be giants but comfort: full houses and full stomachs leading to forgotten hearts (6:10-12; 8:10-20; 31:20; 32:15). Compare Jesus' warnings about riches (Luke 12:15-21; 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17).

6. Teaching the Next Generation

Parents are responsible to pass faith to their children (4:9-10; 6:6-7, 20-25; 11:19; 31:12-13; 32:46). A generation that does not know the LORD soon follows (Judges 2:10).

7. Choosing Between Two Ways

Blessing or curse, life or death, obedience or disobedience (11:26-28; 30:15-20). Every person stands before the same choice (Joshua 24:15; Matthew 7:13-14).

8. Justice and Compassion

Deuteronomy is full of concern for the vulnerable: the poor, widows, orphans, foreigners, servants, Levites and even animals (10:18-19; 14:29; 15:7-11; 24:10-22; 25:4). God's people must reflect His character (James 1:27).

9. Holiness and Separation

Israel was to be "an holy people unto the LORD" (7:6; 14:2, 21), separate from Canaanite idolatry, occultism and immorality (7:1-5; 12:29-32; 18:9-14).

10. The Authority and Sufficiency of God's Word

Nothing must be added or taken away (4:2; 12:32). The king must read it daily (17:18-19). It is "your life" (32:47). True prophets are tested by it (13:1-5; 18:20-22). "The secret things belong unto the LORD... but those things which are revealed belong unto us" (29:29).

11. The Heart Problem and God's Solution

Israel lacked the heart to obey (5:29; 29:4), and Moses predicted their failure (31:16-29). Yet God promised to circumcise their hearts (30:6), pointing to the new covenant and the work of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27; 2 Corinthians 3:3).

12. God's Faithfulness to His Covenant

Even after the curses and scattering, God will restore His repentant people (4:29-31; 30:1-10; 32:36-43). "He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (31:6, 8).

Part Seven: Connections — How Deuteronomy Links to the Rest of the Bible

Deuteronomy Quoted and Cited in the New Testament

Deuteronomy is one of the most-quoted Old Testament books in the New Testament, alongside Psalms, Isaiah, Genesis and Exodus.

Deuteronomy	New Testament	Use
4:2; 12:32	Revelation 22:18-19	Do not add to or take from God's Word
4:24	Hebrews 12:29	Our God is a consuming fire
4:35, 39	Mark 12:32	There is none other but He
5:16-21	Matthew 19:18-19; Mark 10:19; Ephesians 6:2-3; Romans 7:7; 13:9	The commandments
6:4-5	Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:29-30, 33; Luke 10:27	The great commandment
6:13; 10:20	Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8	Worship God only
6:16	Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:12	Do not tempt the Lord
7:1	Acts 13:19	Seven nations destroyed
8:3	Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4	Man shall not live by bread alone
8:5	Hebrews 12:5-7	God chastens as a father
9:19	Hebrews 12:21	"I exceedingly fear and quake"
10:17	Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6	God is no respecter of persons
15:11	Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8	The poor always with you
17:6; 19:15	Matthew 18:16; John 8:17; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28	Two or three witnesses
17:7; 13:5; 22:21	1 Corinthians 5:13	Put away the wicked person
18:15-19	John 1:21; 6:14; 7:40; Acts 3:22-23; 7:37	The Prophet like Moses
19:21	Matthew 5:38	Eye for eye
21:23	Galatians 3:13; John 19:31; Acts 5:30; 10:39	Cursed is he that hangs on a tree
23:21	Matthew 5:33	Perform your vows
23:25	Matthew 12:1; Luke 6:1	Plucking ears of corn
24:1-4	Matthew 5:31; 19:7-8; Mark 10:4-5	The bill of divorcement
25:3	2 Corinthians 11:24	Forty stripes save one
25:4	1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Timothy 5:18	Muzzle not the ox
25:5-6	Matthew 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28	The levirate law and the resurrection
27:26	Galatians 3:10	Cursed is everyone who does not keep the law

Deuteronomy	New Testament	Use
29:4	Romans 11:8	Eyes that should not see
29:18	Hebrews 12:15	Root of bitterness
30:12-14	Romans 10:6-8	The word of faith is near
31:6, 8	Hebrews 13:5	I will never leave thee
32:17	1 Corinthians 10:20	Sacrificing to devils
32:21	Romans 10:19; 1 Corinthians 10:22	Provoked to jealousy
32:35-36	Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30	Vengeance is mine
32:43	Romans 15:10; Hebrews 1:6	Rejoice, ye Gentiles; let the angels worship Him
34 (Moses' body)	Jude 9	Michael and the devil dispute

Deuteronomy in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (1:8; 6:10; 34:4); "A Syrian ready to perish was my father" (26:5)
Exodus	The Ten Commandments repeated (5); Horeb and the golden calf recalled (9); the Exodus as the foundation of every command
Leviticus	Clean and unclean foods (14; Leviticus 11); feasts (16; Leviticus 23)
Numbers	Kadesh, the wilderness years, Sihon and Og, Baal-peor and Moses' exclusion all recalled (1-4; 23:4-5)
Joshua	"Be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:6-9; Deuteronomy 31:6-8); "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth" (1:8); the Ebal ceremony carried out (8:30-35); cities of refuge (20)
Judges	Israel forgets the LORD after Joshua's generation (2:10-13); "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (21:25; Deuteronomy 12:8)
Ruth	The levirate duty (25:5-10; Ruth 4); a Moabitess welcomed by grace (23:3)
1 Samuel	Israel asks for a king like the nations (8:5; 17:14)
1 Kings	David charges Solomon to keep "the law of Moses" (2:3); Solomon multiplies horses, wives and gold (10:14-11:8; 17:16-17); Elijah's drought fulfils the curse (17; 11:17; 28:23)
2 Kings	Amaziah obeys 24:16 (14:6); the exile explained by covenant breaking (17:7-23); Josiah finds "the book of the law" and reforms (22-23)
2 Chronicles	Josiah's reform (34-35)
Nehemiah	Prayer quoting the promise of regathering (1:8-9; Deuteronomy 30:1-4); the law read publicly at Tabernacles (8); Ammonites and Moabites excluded (13:1-2)
Psalms	Delight in and meditation on the law (Psalms 1, 19, 119); Psalm 90 by Moses; "the eternal God is thy refuge" echoed in Psalm 46 and 91
Proverbs	"Despise not the chastening of the LORD" (3:11-12; Deuteronomy 8:5); remove not the ancient landmark (22:28; Deuteronomy 19:14)

Book	Link
Isaiah	Heaven and earth summoned as witnesses (1:2; Deuteronomy 32:1); eunuchs and foreigners welcomed (56:3-7)
Jeremiah	"Circumcise yourselves to the LORD" (4:4); covenant curses applied (11:1-8); the new covenant with the law in the heart (31:31-34)
Lamentations	The covenant curses fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem (2:20; 4:10)
Ezekiel	Individual responsibility (18:20; Deuteronomy 24:16); a new heart and spirit (36:26)
Daniel	"The curse is poured upon us... written in the law of Moses" (9:11-13)
Hosea	"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge... thou hast forgotten the law of thy God" (4:6)
Malachi	"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb" (4:4)

Themes That Run from Deuteronomy Through Scripture

Theme	In Deuteronomy	Developed	Fulfilled
Love for God	6:5	Psalm 18:1; 116:1	Matthew 22:37; 1 John 4:19
One God	6:4	Isaiah 45:5	Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:6
Circumcision of the heart	10:16; 30:6	Jeremiah 4:4; Ezekiel 36:26	Romans 2:29; Colossians 2:11
The Prophet like Moses	18:15	Malachi 4:5	John 6:14; Acts 3:22
Blessing and curse	27-28	2 Kings 17; Daniel 9:11	Galatians 3:10-14
The curse of the tree	21:23	Isaiah 53:4-5	Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24
Choosing life	30:19	Joshua 24:15; Jeremiah 21:8	John 5:24; 1 John 5:12
Scattering and regathering	28:64; 30:1-5	Jeremiah 29:14; Ezekiel 37	Romans 11:25-27
God never forsakes	31:6, 8	Joshua 1:5; Psalm 37:28	Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20
God's Word as life	8:3; 32:47	Psalm 119; Isaiah 55:10-11	Matthew 4:4; John 6:63
The Rock	32:4	Psalm 18:2; Isaiah 26:4	1 Corinthians 10:4
Vengeance belongs to God	32:35	Nahum 1:2	Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Learn from the past.** The new generation had to learn from their parents' failure at Kadesh (1).
- **Accept God's "no."** Moses asked to enter the land and was told, "Let it suffice thee" (3:26).
- **Love God with everything.** Heart, soul and strength (6:5).
- **Make your home a place of God's Word.** Talk of it at home, on the road, at bedtime and in the morning (6:7).
- **Beware of comfort.** Prosperity tempts us to forget God (6:10-12; 8:11-18).
- **Live by every word of God.** Answer temptation with Scripture, as Jesus did (8:3; Matthew 4:4).
- **Remember that you were saved by grace.** Not for your righteousness (9:4-6).
- **Test every teacher by Scripture, not by signs.** (13:1-5).
- **Avoid every form of the occult.** (18:9-14).
- **Be generous to the poor.** Open your hand wide (15:7-11).
- **Treat the vulnerable with justice.** Widows, orphans and foreigners (24:17-22).
- **Support those who teach God's Word.** Muzzle not the ox (25:4; 1 Corinthians 9:9).
- **Choose life every day.** (30:19).
- **Be strong and courageous.** He will not fail you nor forsake you (31:6).
- **Rest in the everlasting arms.** (33:27).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
4:29	But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.
6:4-5	Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
6:6-7	And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children
7:9	Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him
8:3	Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.
10:12	What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him
18:15	The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken
29:29	The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever
30:19	I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life
31:6	Be strong and of a good courage... he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.
32:4	He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment
33:27	The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms

Conclusion

Deuteronomy is Moses' farewell: the heart-cry of an old shepherd to a people he had carried for forty years. He reminds them of God's love and faithfulness, calls them to love Him in return with all their heart, sets before them blessing and curse, and warns them of the danger of forgetting. He foresees their failure, their scattering and their final restoration through a circumcised heart. Above all, Deuteronomy points beyond Moses to the Prophet like him, Jesus Christ, who lived by every word of God where Israel failed, bore the curse of the tree for us, and gives the new heart that loves God. The appeal of Moses still stands:

> *Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life*
>
> **Deuteronomy 30:19-20**

Joshua

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Joshua (with later additions) • Date: c. 1405-1385 BC • Chapters: 24

> *Choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*
>
> **Joshua 24:15**

Part One: Introduction to Joshua

The Name

The book is named after its central human character, Joshua son of Nun. His name was originally Hoshea, "salvation," and Moses renamed him Yehoshua, "the LORD is salvation" (Numbers 13:16). In Greek, the name is Iesous, the same name as Jesus. The King James Version twice uses "Jesus" for Joshua in the New Testament, following the Greek (Acts 7:45; Hebrews 4:8). The very name of the man who led Israel into the promised land points to the One who leads His people into eternal salvation.

Author

Jewish tradition and the book itself point to Joshua as the main author: "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God" (24:26). The writer was an eyewitness: "until we were passed over" (5:1, KJV first person). Rahab was still alive when it was written, for "she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day" (6:25). The account of Joshua's death and burial (24:29-33) and a few later notes were added after his death, probably by Eleazar's son Phinehas or the elders who outlived Joshua (24:31).

Date and Setting

Israel crossed the Jordan in the spring of about 1406 BC, forty years after the Exodus (5:6). The conquest took about seven years: Caleb was 40 when Moses sent him from Kadesh (14:7) and 85 when he received Hebron (14:10), which was 45 years later; 38 of those years were spent wandering (Deuteronomy 2:14), leaving about seven years of war. The book ends with Joshua's death at 110 (24:29), perhaps around 1380-1370 BC. It covers about 25-30 years.

Canaan at this time was a land of independent city-states, each with its own king (31 are listed in chapter 12), loosely under Egyptian influence but without strong central control. Their religion centred on Baal and Asherah, with fertility rites, temple prostitution and child sacrifice (Leviticus 18:21-27; Deuteronomy 12:31).

Purpose and Theme

Joshua shows **God's faithfulness in giving His people the inheritance He promised**, and **the faith and obedience required to possess it**. God promised the land to Abraham (Genesis 12:7; 15:18-21), Isaac and Jacob; Joshua records the fulfillment:

> *There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*
>
> **Joshua 21:45**

At the same time, the book shows that Israel did not possess all that God gave. "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed" (13:1). The gift was complete; the possession depended on faith and obedience. This sets the stage for the failures in Judges.

The Key Verse

> *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*
>
> **Joshua 1:8**

Outline of Joshua

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Entering the Land	1-5	Preparation
Joshua commissioned	1	Be strong and of a good courage
Rahab and the spies	2	The scarlet line
Crossing the Jordan	3-4	The ark and the memorial stones
Consecration at Gilgal	5	Circumcision, Passover, the Captain of the LORD's host
II. Conquering the Land	6-12	Victory and failure
Jericho	6	Victory by faith
Achan and Ai	7-8	Defeat through sin; victory after cleansing
The Gibeonite deception	9	Failure to seek God's counsel
The southern campaign	10	The sun stands still
The northern campaign	11	Hazor destroyed
The defeated kings	12	31 kings listed
III. Dividing the Land	13-22	Inheritance
The eastern tribes	13	Land yet to possess
Caleb and Judah	14-15	"Give me this mountain"
Joseph's tribes	16-17	Ephraim and Manasseh
The remaining seven tribes	18-19	Shiloh; lots cast
Cities of refuge and of the Levites	20-21	All God's promises fulfilled
The altar of witness	22	Unity preserved
IV. Joshua's Farewell	23-24	Remain faithful
Farewell to the leaders	23	Love the LORD; do not mix with the nations
Covenant renewal at Shechem	24	Choose you this day

The Conquest and the Justice of God

Many readers are troubled by God's command to destroy the Canaanites. Scripture gives several important truths:

- **It was judgment on extreme wickedness.** God told Abraham the land would not be given yet because "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16). Their practices included child sacrifice, ritual prostitution, incest and bestiality, and "the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants" (Leviticus 18:24-28). "For the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out" (Deuteronomy 9:5).
- **God was patient.** He waited over 400 years, and the Canaanites had heard of His power for forty years (2:9-11; 9:9).
- **It was not ethnic hatred.** Rahab the Canaanite and her family were spared because of faith (6:25), and the Gibeonites were spared (9). Achan the Israelite was judged when he sinned (7).
- **Israel was warned it would face the same judgment.** "As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish" (Deuteronomy 8:20). Israel was later expelled from the land for the same sins (2 Kings 17:7-18).
- **It was a specific, limited command.** It applied to those nations at that time, carried out under God's direct command. It is not a pattern for violence by God's people today. Christians fight "not against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12) with weapons that "are not carnal" (2 Corinthians 10:4).
- **It foreshadows the final judgment.** The conquest is a picture of the day when Christ will judge the wicked and give His people the inheritance (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 19).

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Entering the Land (Chapters 1-5)

Chapter 1 — Joshua's Commission

"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua" (1:1). God's servants die, but God's work goes on. "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan" (1:2). God promised:

> *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses... There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*
>
> **Joshua 1:3, 5**

The land was given, but each place had to be claimed by walking on it. Hebrews 13:5 applies "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" to every believer. Three times God said, "Be strong and of a good courage" (1:6, 7, 9). Joshua's strength would come from the Word (1:7-8) and God's presence:

> *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*
>
> **Joshua 1:9**

Joshua told the people to prepare food, "for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan" (1:11). He reminded Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh of their promise to fight (1:12-15; Numbers 32), and they answered, "All that thou commandest us we will do... only be strong and of a good courage" (1:16-18).

Chapter 2 — Rahab and the Spies

Joshua sent two spies secretly to Jericho, where they lodged in the house of Rahab, a harlot (2:1). Her house was built into the city wall (2:15). When the king's men came looking, she hid the spies under stalks of flax on the roof and sent the soldiers away (2:2-7). Then she confessed her faith:

> *I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us... For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you... and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites... for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.*
>
> **Joshua 2:9-11**

All Jericho had heard the same news and "our hearts did melt" (2:11), but only Rahab turned to the God of Israel. She asked for her family to be spared (2:12-13). The spies promised, on condition that she bind "this line of scarlet thread in the window" and keep her family inside the house (2:18-21). She tied it in the window at once (2:21). The spies hid three days in the mountains and returned: "Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land" (2:24).

Rahab's story is a striking picture of salvation by grace through faith. She was a Gentile, a Canaanite under sentence of judgment, and a sinful woman, yet she was saved by believing God's word and taking refuge under a scarlet sign. The scarlet line recalls the Passover blood on the doorposts (Exodus 12:13); all who were inside the house were safe. The New Testament honours her twice: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not" (Hebrews 11:31), and her faith was shown by her works (James 2:25). She married Salmon of Judah and became the mother of Boaz, the great-great-grandmother of David, and an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5).

Her lie. Rahab lied to protect the spies (2:4-5). Scripture commends her faith and her actions in receiving the messengers, not her falsehood. God used a new believer who still had much to learn.

Chapter 3 — Crossing the Jordan

The ark, carried by the priests, went about 2,000 cubits (over half a mile) ahead of the people, "that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore" (3:3-4). "Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you" (3:5). God said, "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee" (3:7). It was harvest time, when "Jordan overfloweth all his banks" (3:15). The moment the priests' feet touched the water, the river stopped and rose up in a heap far upstream at the city of Adam, and the people crossed on dry ground while the priests stood firm in the middle (3:13-17). Faith had to step into the water before it parted.

The Red Sea crossing brought Israel **out** of Egypt; the Jordan crossing brought them **in** to the land. The God who began their salvation finished it (Philippians 1:6). The Jordan is often sung of as a picture of death and entry into heaven. Many Bible teachers also see it as a picture of the believer's identification with Christ in death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-6), leading into the life of faith, rest and spiritual warfare pictured by Canaan (Ephesians 1:3; 6:12).

Chapter 4 — The Memorial Stones

Twelve men, one from each tribe, took twelve stones from the riverbed where the priests stood, and Joshua set them up at Gilgal (4:1-8, 20). Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan (4:9). The purpose:

> *That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD*
>
> **Joshua 4:6-7**

God's people must remember His works and pass them on (Psalm 78:4-7). The LORD "magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses" (4:14). When the priests came up out of the river, the waters returned (4:18). The crossing took place "on the tenth day of the first month" (4:19), the very day the Passover lambs were chosen (Exodus 12:3). The purpose was worldwide: "That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever" (4:24).

Chapter 5 — Gilgal: Circumcision, Passover and the Captain of the Host

The kings of Canaan heard and "their heart melted" (5:1). Before any battle, God required consecration. The generation born in the wilderness had not been circumcised, so all the men were circumcised at Gilgal (5:2-8). "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you" (5:9). Gilgal means "rolling." It was an act of great faith: the army was disabled for days in enemy territory, trusting God for protection.

Israel kept the Passover on the fourteenth day, in the plains of Jericho (5:10), their first Passover in the land. The next day they ate the produce of the land, "And the manna ceased on the morrow... but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year" (5:11-12). God's wilderness provision gave way to the provision of the inheritance.

Near Jericho, Joshua saw a man with a drawn sword and asked, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" (5:13).

> *And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship... And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.*
>
> **Joshua 5:14-15**

The command echoes God's words to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:5), and the Captain accepted Joshua's worship, which no created angel would do (Revelation 22:8-9). This was a pre-incarnate appearance of the Son of God. The real question is not whether God is on our side, but whether we are on His. Joshua was the general of Israel's army, but the LORD was the Commander-in-chief. Christ is "the captain of their salvation" (Hebrews 2:10).

Section II: Conquering the Land (Chapters 6-12)

Chapter 6 — The Fall of Jericho

Jericho was shut up tight (6:1). God gave an unusual battle plan: the armed men, seven priests with trumpets of rams' horns, and the ark were to march around the city once a day for six days in silence, then seven times on the seventh day; at the long trumpet blast, the people would shout and "the wall of the city shall fall down flat" (6:2-5). Israel obeyed exactly, "and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city" (6:20).

> *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:30**

The victory came by faith and obedience, not military power, "that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Corinthians 1:29). Note the number seven: seven priests, seven trumpets, seven days, seven times on the seventh day, signifying God's complete work.

Jericho was "accursed" (devoted to God, herem): its people were destroyed, its silver, gold, brass and iron went into the treasury of the LORD, and nothing was to be taken for personal gain (6:17-19, 21, 24). The spies brought out Rahab and all her family, "and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day" (6:22-25). The house on the wall was spared when the wall fell. Joshua pronounced a curse on anyone

who rebuilt Jericho: he would lay the foundation at the cost of his firstborn and set up the gates at the cost of his youngest son (6:26). About 500 years later, "Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua" (1 Kings 16:34). "So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country" (6:27).

Archaeology. Excavations at Jericho (Tell es-Sultan) have found a city destroyed by fire with collapsed walls. The date of that destruction is debated: John Garstang in the 1930s dated it to about 1400 BC, Kathleen Kenyon in the 1950s dated it earlier, and later re-examination of the pottery by Bryant Wood argued again for about 1400 BC. Notable features consistent with the biblical account include large stores of grain left in the burned city (a short siege at harvest time, Joshua 3:15; 5:10) and fallen walls.

Chapter 7 — Achan's Sin and the Defeat at Ai

"But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan... took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel" (7:1). One man sinned, but God counted it as the nation's sin. Joshua, not knowing, sent about 3,000 men against the small town of Ai, confident it would be easy (7:2-4). Israel fled, and 36 men died; "the hearts of the people melted, and became as water" (7:5). Joshua tore his clothes and lay on his face before the ark until evening (7:6-9). God answered, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned... for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also" (7:10-11). "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you" (7:12).

By lot, the tribe, family, household and man were identified: Achan (7:16-18). Joshua said, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him" (7:19). Achan confessed:

> *When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent*
>
> **Joshua 7:21**

The progression of sin: **saw, coveted, took, hid**. It is the same pattern as Eve's sin (Genesis 3:6) and David's (2 Samuel 11:2-4). "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). Achan and his family, who probably knew of the goods buried in the tent, were stoned and burned in the valley of Achor ("trouble") (7:24-26). "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23).

At the beginning of Israel's life in the land, secret sin in the camp was severely judged, as at the beginning of the church, when Ananias and Sapphira lied about money and died (Acts 5:1-11). God's holiness in His people matters most at the start. Centuries later God promised to give "the valley of Achor for a door of hope" (Hosea 2:15; Isaiah 65:10): the place of judgment becomes a place of grace.

Chapter 8 — The Capture of Ai and the Covenant at Mount Ebal

With sin dealt with, God said, "Fear not, neither be thou dismayed" (8:1). This time Israel was allowed to take the spoil and cattle for themselves (8:2, 27); had Achan waited, he could have had it lawfully. Joshua set an ambush behind the city, drew the men of Ai out with a feigned retreat, and stretched out his spear toward Ai as the signal (8:18). The ambush took and burned the city (8:3-29).

Then Joshua led all Israel to Mount Ebal near Shechem, in the heart of the land, as Moses had commanded (Deuteronomy 27). He built an altar of uncut stones, offered sacrifices, wrote a copy of the law on plastered stones, and read all the blessings and curses before the people, half standing before Mount Gerizim and half before Mount Ebal, "the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them" (8:30-35). "There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not" (8:35). After a victory, Israel recommitted to God's Word.

Chapter 9 — The Gibeonite Deception

The kings of Canaan united to fight Israel (9:1-2), but the Gibeonites used cunning. They came with old sacks, worn wineskins, patched shoes, old garments and dry, mouldy bread, claiming to be from a far country, wanting a treaty (9:3-13). "And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD" (9:14). Joshua made peace with them and swore an oath (9:15). Three days later the truth came out: they were neighbours (9:16). The congregation murmured, but the leaders kept their oath, made in the LORD's name (9:18-20). The Gibeonites became "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD" (9:21-27).

Lessons: the enemy comes not only as a lion but as a deceiver (2 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Peter 5:8); appearances deceive; every decision needs prayer (Proverbs 3:5-6; James 1:5). Yet God brought good out of it: the Gibeonites served at God's altar, and the temple servants known as the Nethinim are traditionally linked with them (1 Chronicles 9:2); men of Gibeon helped rebuild Jerusalem's wall (Nehemiah 3:7). Israel's oath was binding: when King Saul later killed Gibeonites, God sent three years of famine (2 Samuel 21:1-9). God holds His people to their word (Psalm 15:4).

Chapter 10 — The Southern Campaign and the Long Day

Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, formed an alliance of five Amorite kings (Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon) to attack Gibeon for making peace with Israel (10:1-5). Gibeon called for help, and Joshua marched all night from Gilgal (10:6-9). God said, "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand" (10:8). The LORD threw the enemy into confusion, and as they fled, "the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them... they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword" (10:10-11). Then Joshua prayed:

> *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies... So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.*
>
> **Joshua 10:12-14**

The writer cites "the book of Jasher" (10:13), a collection of heroic poems also quoted in 2 Samuel 1:18. Bible-believing Christians have explained the event in various ways: a slowing of the earth's rotation, a miraculous prolonging of light, or a refraction of light. Whatever the mechanism, the text presents a real miracle in which the Creator, who controls the heavens, answered the prayer of His servant. Habakkuk recalls it: "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation" (Habakkuk 3:11), and Isaiah refers to God's work "in the valley of Gibeon" (Isaiah 28:21).

The five kings hid in a cave at Makkedah (10:16). Joshua had the captains put their feet on the kings' necks: "Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies" (10:24-25). This pictures Christ's final victory, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1), and the believer's share in it (Romans 16:20). Joshua then took the southern cities, "because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel" (10:28-43).

Chapter 11 — The Northern Campaign

Jabin, king of Hazor, the chief city of the north, gathered a vast coalition, "much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many" (11:1-5). God said, "Be not afraid because of them" (11:6). Joshua attacked suddenly at the waters of Merom and won (11:7-8). He hamstrung the horses and burned the chariots as God commanded (11:9), so Israel would trust in God rather than military power (Psalm 20:7; Deuteronomy 17:16). Hazor, "the head of all those kingdoms," was burned (11:10-11). Archaeologists have found a major destruction layer at Hazor, and its interpretation and date are debated.

"Joshua made war a long time with all those kings" (11:18). "For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly" (11:20); they had hardened themselves against what they knew of God (2:9-11), and He confirmed them in it, as with Pharaoh. Joshua destroyed the Anakim, the giants who had terrified the spies forty years earlier (Numbers 13:33), except in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod (11:21-22). Goliath of Gath would come from that remnant (1 Samuel 17:4). "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses... And the land rested from war" (11:23).

Chapter 12 — The Defeated Kings

A summary of the victories: two kings east of the Jordan under Moses, Sihon and Og (12:1-6), and 31 kings west of the Jordan under Joshua (12:7-24), each named with his city. God's victories are recorded one by one, like the names of His people in His book (Philippians 4:3).

Section III: Dividing the Land (Chapters 13-22)

Chapter 13 — Land Yet to Possess; the Eastern Tribes

"Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed" (13:1). The Philistine cities, the coast and the north still remained (13:2-6). God promised, "them will I drive out," and told Joshua to divide the land anyway (13:6-7): faith allots what God has promised even before it is fully possessed. The chapter describes the eastern inheritance of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh (13:8-32). Balaam is noted among the slain (13:22). "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance" (13:33; 13:14). Israel "expelled not the Geshurites, nor the

Maachathites" (13:13), the first note of incomplete obedience.

Chapter 14 — Caleb: "Give Me This Mountain"

The land west of the Jordan was divided by lot under Eleazar the priest, Joshua and the tribal heads (14:1-2). Then Caleb came to Joshua at Gilgal. He reminded him of Kadesh forty-five years earlier, when "I wholly followed the LORD my God" (14:8), and of Moses' promise (14:9; Deuteronomy 1:36).

> *And now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me... Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out*
>
> **Joshua 14:10-12**

At 85, Caleb asked not for a quiet retirement but for the hardest assignment: Hebron, the stronghold of the giants who had terrified Israel. Joshua blessed him and gave him Hebron, "because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel" (14:13-14). Hebron was where Abraham had lived and was buried (Genesis 23). "And the land had rest from war" (14:15).

Chapter 15 — Judah's Inheritance

Judah, the royal tribe, received the largest territory in the south, with its boundaries carefully described (15:1-12) and over a hundred cities listed (15:20-63), including Bethlehem's region. Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from Hebron and offered his daughter Achsah in marriage to whoever took Kirjath-sepher (Debir). Othniel, his nephew, took it and later became Israel's first judge (15:13-19; Judges 1:12-15; 3:9-11). Achsah asked her father for springs of water as well as land, and he gave her "the upper springs, and the nether springs" (15:19), a picture of asking our Father boldly for blessing (Luke 11:13). But "as for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out" (15:63). Jerusalem was not taken until David (2 Samuel 5:6-9).

Chapters 16-17 — Ephraim and Manasseh

The descendants of Joseph received the central hill country (16:1-17:13). Ephraim "drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer" but made them pay tribute (16:10); Gezer was later taken by Pharaoh and given to Solomon (1 Kings 9:16). The daughters of Zelophehad received the inheritance Moses promised (17:3-6; Numbers 27). Manasseh also failed to drive out the Canaanites in several cities, but "put the Canaanites to tribute" (17:12-13): profitable compromise instead of obedience. When Joseph's tribes complained that their land was too small, Joshua told them to clear the forest and drive out the Canaanites with iron chariots: "for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong" (17:14-18). They wanted more given to them rather than possessing what they had.

Chapter 18 — Shiloh and the Survey of the Land

"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there" (18:1). Shiloh remained the centre of worship until the time of Eli and Samuel (1 Samuel 1-4; Jeremiah 7:12). Seven tribes had not yet received their inheritance, and Joshua rebuked them: "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?" (18:3). Spiritual laziness can leave God's gifts unclaimed. Three men from each tribe surveyed the land and wrote a description in a book, and Joshua cast lots "before the LORD" (18:4-10). Benjamin received the land between Judah and Joseph, including Jerusalem, Jericho and Gibeon (18:11-28).

Chapter 19 — The Remaining Tribes and Joshua's Inheritance

Simeon's inheritance was within Judah's territory (19:1-9), fulfilling Jacob's prophecy, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7). Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan received their lands (19:10-48). Nazareth and Capernaum would later lie in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali, "Galilee of the Gentiles," where Christ ministered (Isaiah 9:1-2; Matthew 4:13-16). Dan, unable to hold its land, captured Leshem far to the north and renamed it Dan (19:47; Judges 18). Last of all, Joshua, the leader, received his own inheritance, Timnath-serah in Ephraim, a city he asked for (19:49-50). He served others first, like the Lord who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matthew 20:28).

Chapter 20 — The Cities of Refuge

As Moses commanded (Numbers 35; Deuteronomy 19), six cities were appointed where a manslayer "that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither" from the avenger of blood (20:1-6). West of the Jordan: Kedesh in Galilee, Shechem in Ephraim, and Hebron in Judah. East of the Jordan: Bezer, Ramoth in Gilead, and Golan in Bashan (20:7-8). They were open to Israelites and strangers alike (20:9). See Numbers 35 for their picture of Christ our refuge (Hebrews 6:18).

Chapter 21 — The Levitical Cities and God's Faithfulness

The Levites received 48 cities with their pasture lands scattered throughout all the tribes (21:1-42), including the six cities of refuge. The priests, Aaron's descendants, received thirteen cities in Judah, Simeon and Benjamin (21:4, 9-19), near where Jerusalem and the temple would later be. Then comes the great summary of the book:

> *And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about... there stood not a man of all their enemies before them... There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*
>
> **Joshua 21:43-45**

God had kept every promise. Any land not yet possessed was due to Israel's failure, not God's. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Chapter 22 — The Altar of Witness

After about seven years of fighting, Joshua commended Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh for keeping their promise and sent them home with a charge: "take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law... to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways... and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart" (22:1-6). On the way they built "a great altar to see to" by the Jordan (22:10). The western tribes, fearing it was a rival altar and the start of apostasy, gathered at Shiloh to make war (22:11-12). Wisely, they first sent Phinehas and ten princes to confront them, recalling Peor and Achan, and offered to share their own land if the eastern tribes felt it was unclean (22:13-20). The eastern tribes explained: the altar was not for sacrifice but a witness, so that future generations on the west side could never say "Ye have no part in the LORD" (22:21-29). Phinehas was satisfied, war was averted, and the altar was named Ed, "witness" (22:30-34).

Lessons: zeal for purity is right, but accusations should be investigated before acting (Proverbs 18:13; Matthew 18:15); and believers must guard the unity of God's people (Ephesians 4:3), while recognising that physical separation (the Jordan) can become spiritual distance.

Section IV: Joshua's Farewell (Chapters 23-24)

Chapter 23 — Joshua's Charge to the Leaders

"A long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel," Joshua, old, called the leaders together (23:1-2). He reminded them that "the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you" (23:3). "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you" (23:10).

> *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.*
>
> **Joshua 23:11**

He warned against mixing with the remaining nations through marriage, because "they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land" (23:12-13; Numbers 33:55). He testified to God's faithfulness: "I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you" (23:14). But just as surely as God kept His good promises, He would keep His warnings if they turned to other gods (23:15-16).

Chapter 24 — Covenant Renewal at Shechem

Joshua gathered all the tribes to Shechem, where Abraham first built an altar in the land (Genesis 12:6-7) and where Jacob had buried his household idols (Genesis 35:4). Speaking for God, he reviewed their history: their fathers beyond the river "served other gods" (24:2), the call of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Egypt, the Exodus, the wilderness, Balaam, and the conquest (24:2-13). "And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out... but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour" (24:12-13; Exodus 23:28). Everything they had was grace. Then came the challenge:

> *Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*
>
> **Joshua 24:14-15**

The people answered, "God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods" (24:16-18). Joshua tested their sincerity: "Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God" (24:19). He was not discouraging them but warning them not to promise lightly. They insisted, "Nay; but we will serve the LORD" (24:21). Joshua said, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves," and called them again to "put away... the strange gods which are among you" (24:22-23), which shows idols were still hidden among them. "The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey" (24:24).

Joshua made a covenant, wrote the words "in the book of the law of God," and set up a great stone under an oak as a witness (24:25-27). He died at 110 and was buried at Timnath-serah (24:29-30), called "the servant of the LORD," the title Moses had held. "And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD" (24:31). The next generation would be different (Judges 2:7-10). Joseph's bones, carried out of Egypt, were finally buried at Shechem in the plot Jacob had bought (24:32; Genesis 33:19; 50:25; Exodus 13:19; Hebrews 11:22). Eleazar the priest died and was buried (24:33). The book ends with three graves in the promised land: a picture of faith that rested in God's promises to the end.

Part Three: Christ in Joshua

Joshua as a Type of Christ

Joshua	In the Book	Christ	New Testament
His name means "the LORD is salvation"	Numbers 13:16	"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people"	Matthew 1:21
Same name in Greek: Iesous	Acts 7:45; Hebrews 4:8	Jesus	
Succeeded Moses; did what Moses could not	1:1-2	The law could not save; Christ does	John 1:17; Romans 8:3
Led the people into their inheritance	1:6	Brings many sons to glory	Hebrews 2:10; 1 Peter 1:4
Magnified before the people	3:7; 4:14	Exalted and given a name above every name	Philippians 2:9
Went before the people into battle	10:9; 11:7	The Captain of our salvation	Hebrews 2:10
Defeated every enemy who stood against him	10:42; 11:23	Triumphed over principalities and powers	Colossians 2:15
Put the enemies under the feet of his people	10:24	Enemies made His footstool; Satan bruised under our feet	Hebrews 10:13; Romans 16:20
Divided the inheritance by lot	13-19	Gives every believer an inheritance	Ephesians 1:11; Colossians 1:12
Interceded for the people	7:6-9	Ever lives to make intercession	Hebrews 7:25
Received his own inheritance last	19:49-50	Came to serve, not to be served	Matthew 20:28
Gave rest to the people	21:44	Gives rest; and a rest remains	Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:8-10

Hebrews 4:8 makes the key point: "For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Joshua's rest was real but partial and temporary. Christ gives the true and final rest.

The Captain of the LORD's Host

The Commander who appeared to Joshua (5:13-15) was not an angel but the LORD Himself: He accepted worship, declared the ground holy, and is called "the LORD" in the following verse (6:2). He is the pre-incarnate Christ, who appears at the end of the Bible leading the armies of heaven (Revelation 19:11-16).

Rahab and the Scarlet Line

Rahab	Joshua	The Gospel
A Gentile under sentence of judgment	2:1; 6:17	"Without Christ... having no hope" (Ephesians 2:12)
A sinner by reputation	2:1	"Such were some of you: but ye are washed" (1 Corinthians 6:11)
Heard of God's mighty works and believed	2:9-11	Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17)
Received the messengers	2:4; James 2:25	Faith shown by works (James 2:18)
Saved by a scarlet sign in the window	2:18-21	Saved by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7)
All inside the house were safe	2:19; 6:23	"Thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31)
Her house on the wall stood when the walls fell	6:22	Kept through judgment (1 Thessalonians 1:10)
Brought into Israel and the line of the Messiah	6:25; Matthew 1:5	Brought near; fellowcitizens with the saints (Ephesians 2:13, 19)

Canaan as a Picture of the Christian Life

Canaan is often sung of as heaven, but it contained enemies, battles and failures, which heaven does not. Many Bible teachers therefore see it chiefly as a picture of the believer's present inheritance in Christ, entered by faith and possessed through spiritual warfare:

- **Already given, yet still to be possessed.** "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you" (1:3); God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3), which we must lay hold of (Philippians 3:12).
- **Victory by faith, not by strength.** Jericho fell by faith (Hebrews 11:30); "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).
- **Real enemies.** "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers" (Ephesians 6:12).
- **Secret sin brings defeat.** Achan's sin defeated the whole army (7); "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18).
- **Compromise brings long-term trouble.** The Canaanites left in the land became thorns (23:13).
- **Rest.** The land had rest from war (11:23; 21:44), but the full rest still remains (Hebrews 4:9-11).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Promise or Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment
The land given to Abraham's seed	Genesis 12:7; 15:18-21	21:43-45
The iniquity of the Amorites would be full in the fourth generation	Genesis 15:16	Judgment on Canaan (Joshua 6-12)
Joseph's bones carried to Canaan	Genesis 50:25	24:32
Only Caleb and Joshua of the old generation would enter	Numbers 14:24, 30	14:6-14; Numbers 26:65
Joshua would lead Israel into the land	Deuteronomy 31:7-8	1-12
The hornet would drive out the nations	Exodus 23:28; Deuteronomy 7:20	24:12
God would drive them out "by little and little"	Exodus 23:29-30; Deuteronomy 7:22	13:1-6; 23:5
Blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerizim	Deuteronomy 11:29; 27	8:30-35
Six cities of refuge	Numbers 35:9-15	20
Levitical cities in all the tribes	Numbers 35:1-8	21
Simeon scattered within Israel	Genesis 49:7	19:1-9
The remaining Canaanites would be snares and thorns	Numbers 33:55	23:13; Judges 1:27-2:3
The rebuilder of Jericho would lose his sons	Joshua 6:26	1 Kings 16:34

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Joshua 1:7-9 — The Secret of Success

God's formula for success was not military skill, wealth or numbers, but four things:

- **Courage:** "Be strong and of a good courage" (three times).
- **Obedience:** "observe to do according to all the law... turn not from it to the right hand or to the left."
- **Meditation:** "meditate therein day and night" (compare Psalm 1:1-3).
- **God's presence:** "the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

True "prosperity" and "good success" in Scripture are measured by faithfulness to God, not by worldly wealth (Matthew 6:33; 3 John 2).

Joshua 7 — One Man's Sin

God said, "Israel hath sinned" (7:11), though only Achan took the goods. God's people are one body (1 Corinthians 12:26), and sin tolerated in the camp affects all: "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6). Achan's sin was covetousness (7:21), which "is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). The sin took what belonged to God (6:19), was hidden, and was only confessed when exposed. Confession is still the way to restoration: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

Joshua 10 — The Day the Sun Stood Still

The miracle shows that God controls creation and answers prayer, and that "the LORD fought for Israel" (10:14). Joshua prayed a bold prayer "in the sight of Israel" (10:12), in the middle of the battle, based on God's promise, "I have delivered them into thine hand" (10:8). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Joshua 24:15 — Choose You This Day

Every generation must choose for itself. Joshua's generation and the elders after him served the LORD (24:31), but "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD" (Judges 2:10). Faith is not inherited automatically. Joshua's decision was personal ("as for me"), included his household ("and my house"), and was public, made before all Israel.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Joshua

1. God's Faithfulness to His Promises

"Not one thing hath failed" (23:14). The God who promised the land to Abraham over 400 years earlier delivered it exactly.

2. The Power of God's Word

Success comes from meditating on and obeying God's Word (1:8). Jericho fell when Israel followed God's instructions exactly, however strange they seemed (6).

3. Faith That Acts

The priests stepped into the Jordan before it parted (3:15); Israel marched around Jericho before the walls fell (6); Caleb asked for the giants' mountain (14). Faith takes God at His word and moves forward.

4. Holiness and the Danger of Sin

Victory depends on purity. Before Jericho, Israel was consecrated at Gilgal (5); after Achan's sin, Israel lost at Ai until the sin was removed (7).

5. God Is the Warrior

"The LORD your God is he that hath fought for you" (23:3). Victories came by hailstones, a long day, falling walls and the hornet. Joshua led, but the Captain of the LORD's host commanded.

6. Grace to Outsiders

Rahab the Canaanite and the Gibeonites were brought into God's people. God's plan always included the nations (Genesis 12:3).

7. Prayer and Seeking God's Counsel

Joshua prayed on his face after Ai (7:6-9) and prayed for the sun to stand still (10:12). The one major failure of leadership came when they "asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD" (9:14).

8. Integrity and Keeping One's Word

Israel kept its oath to the Gibeonites even though it was obtained by deceit (9:19-20).

9. Incomplete Obedience

The tribes repeatedly failed to drive out the Canaanites (13:13; 15:63; 16:10; 17:12-13). Partial obedience is disobedience, and it leads to the downward spiral of Judges.

10. Remembering and Passing On the Faith

Memorial stones (4), the altar of witness (22) and the stone of witness (24:26-27) were all reminders for future generations. Each generation must choose for itself (24:15).

Part Seven: Connections — How Joshua Links to the Rest of the Bible

Joshua in the New Testament

Joshua	New Testament	Use
1:5	Hebrews 13:5	"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (also Deuteronomy 31:6)
2 (Rahab's faith)	Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25	Faith that receives God's messengers
2; 6:25	Matthew 1:5	Rahab in the genealogy of Christ
3-4 (entering the land)	Acts 7:45	Joshua (Jesus) brought in the tabernacle
5:13-15	Hebrews 2:10; Revelation 19:11-16	The Captain of salvation; the Commander of heaven's armies
6 (Jericho)	Hebrews 11:30	By faith the walls fell
7 (Achan)	Acts 5:1-11 (parallel)	Sin judged at the start of a new era
13-21 (land divided by lot)	Acts 13:19	"He divided their land to them by lot"
21:44; 23:1	Hebrews 4:8-11	Joshua's rest and the rest that remains
24:32	John 4:5; Acts 7:16; Hebrews 11:22	Joseph's bones and the field at Shechem (Sychar)
The conquest	Ephesians 6:10-18	Spiritual warfare

Joshua in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The land promised to Abraham (12:7; 15:18-21); the iniquity of the Amorites (15:16); Shechem (12:6; 33:19); Hebron (23); Joseph's bones (50:25)
Exodus	Joshua's first battle against Amalek (17:9-14); his service to Moses (24:13; 33:11); the hornet and "little by little" (23:28-30)
Leviticus	The land vomits out its wicked inhabitants (18:24-28)
Numbers	Joshua and Caleb as faithful spies (13-14); Joshua appointed successor (27:18-23); the eastern tribes' promise (32); land boundaries, Levitical cities and cities of refuge (34-35)
Deuteronomy	Joshua charged to lead (31:7-8, 23); the ceremony at Ebal and Gerizim (27); "full of the spirit of wisdom" (34:9)
Judges	Continues the story; the incomplete conquest (1); Joshua's death and the next generation "which knew not the LORD" (2:6-10); Othniel (3:9-11)
Ruth	Rahab's son Boaz (Ruth 4:21; Matthew 1:5)
1 Samuel	The tabernacle at Shiloh (1-4); Gilgal as a centre (7:16; 11:14-15)

Book	Link
2 Samuel	David takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites (5:6-9); Saul's crime against the Gibeonites (21:1-9); the book of Jasher (1:18)
1 Kings	Hiel rebuilds Jericho (16:34); Gezer given to Solomon (9:16)
1 Chronicles	The Levitical cities (6:54-81)
Nehemiah	The conquest recounted in prayer (9:22-25); Gibeonites help build the wall (3:7)
Psalms	"They got not the land in possession by their own sword" (44:1-3); 78:54-55; 105:44; 114:3, 5 ("Jordan was driven back")
Isaiah	"As in the valley of Gibeon" (28:21); "the valley of Achor" (65:10)
Jeremiah	Shiloh as a warning (7:12-14)
Hosea	"The valley of Achor for a door of hope" (2:15)
Micah	"Remember... from Shittim unto Gilgal" (6:5)
Habakkuk	"The sun and moon stood still in their habitation" (3:11)

Themes That Run from Joshua Through Scripture

Theme	In Joshua	Developed	Fulfilled
Rest	11:23; 21:44	Psalm 95:11	Hebrews 4:1-11; Matthew 11:28
Inheritance	13-21	Psalm 16:5-6	Ephesians 1:11; 1 Peter 1:4; Revelation 21:7
The Captain of the LORD's host	5:13-15	Isaiah 55:4	Hebrews 2:10; Revelation 19:11-16
Spiritual warfare	6-12	2 Chronicles 20:15	Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
Faith overcoming obstacles	6; 14	1 Samuel 17	Hebrews 11:30; 1 John 5:4
Grace to the Gentiles	2; 6:25; 9	Ruth; Isaiah 56:6-7	Matthew 1:5; Ephesians 2:11-19
Covenant renewal	8:30-35; 24	2 Kings 23; Nehemiah 8-10	Hebrews 8:6-13
Remembering God's works	4; 24	Psalm 78:4-7	1 Corinthians 11:24-26
Choosing whom to serve	24:15	1 Kings 18:21	Matthew 6:24

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **God's work continues when His servants die.** "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise" (1:2).
- **Feed on the Word daily.** Success comes from meditation and obedience (1:8).
- **Courage is commanded.** Fear is natural; courage comes from God's presence (1:9).
- **God saves the most unlikely people.** Rahab the harlot became an ancestor of Christ (2; Matthew 1:5).
- **Step out in faith.** The waters parted after the priests' feet touched them (3:15).
- **Remember and tell your children.** "What mean ye by these stones?" (4:6).
- **Consecration comes before conquest.** Gilgal came before Jericho (5).
- **Make sure you are on the Lord's side** (5:13-14).
- **Obey even when God's ways seem strange.** Marching round Jericho made no military sense (6).
- **Hidden sin defeats God's people.** Saw, coveted, took, hid (7:21).
- **Pray before every decision,** especially the easy-looking ones (9:14).
- **Keep your word** even when it costs you (9:19-20).
- **Pray boldly.** God stopped the sun at a man's prayer (10:12-14).
- **Age is no barrier to faith.** Caleb at 85 asked for the giants' mountain (14:10-12).
- **Don't be slack to possess what God has given** (18:3).
- **Investigate before you accuse** (22).
- **Choose today whom you will serve,** and lead your household (24:15).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:5	As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.
1:8	This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night
1:9	Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.
3:5	Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.
5:15	Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.
14:12	Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day
21:45	There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.
23:11	Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.
23:14	Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you
24:15	Choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Conclusion

Joshua is the book of fulfilled promise. After 400 years in Egypt and 40 years in the wilderness, God brought His people across the Jordan, defeated their enemies, and gave them the land He swore to Abraham. Not one word failed. Yet the book also shows that God's gifts must be possessed by faith and obedience: Jericho fell to faith, Ai stood against hidden sin, and much land remained unconquered through compromise. Above all, Joshua points to the greater Joshua, Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, who conquers every enemy, divides to His people an eternal inheritance, and gives the true rest that Joshua could only foreshadow.

> *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*
>
> **Hebrews 4:9**

Judges

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (traditionally Samuel) • Date: c. 1050-1000 BC • Chapters: 21

> *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
>
> **Judges 21:25**

Part One: Introduction to Judges

The Name

The book is named after the leaders God raised up to deliver Israel between the death of Joshua and the rise of the monarchy. The Hebrew title is Shophetim, "judges." These were not mainly courtroom judges but military deliverers and tribal rulers, men and one woman whom God raised up and empowered by His Spirit to rescue His people from oppression. "Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (2:16).

Author and Date

The author is not named. Jewish tradition (the Talmud) attributes the book to Samuel, the last of the judges. Internal evidence fits the early monarchy, around 1050-1000 BC:

- **"In those days there was no king in Israel"** (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25) implies the writer lived when Israel had a king.
- **"The Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day"** (1:21) means it was written before David captured Jerusalem around 1000 BC (2 Samuel 5:6-9).
- The note that Dan's idolatrous priesthood lasted "until the day of the captivity of the land" (18:30) may refer to the capture of the ark (1 Samuel 4) or may be a later editorial note.

The Period Covered

Judges covers roughly 300 years, from the death of Joshua (around 1380 BC) to the time just before Samuel and Saul (around 1050 BC). Jephthah, about midway, said Israel had been in the land "three hundred years" (11:26). If all the years of oppression and judgeship are added, the total is over 400, which shows that some judges ruled at the same time in different regions (for example, the Ammonite and Philistine oppressions began together, 10:7). Paul summarises the period as "about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet" (Acts 13:20, KJV).

The final five chapters (17-21) are not in chronological order. They are an appendix describing events early in the period: Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, was still priest (20:28), and the Danite priest was a grandson of Moses (18:30).

Purpose and Theme

Judges is a book of failure and grace. It shows what happens when God's people forget Him: they fall into a cycle of sin and suffering, and each turn of the cycle goes lower. Its theme is summed up in its final verse:

> *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
>
> **Judges 21:25**

The book shows Israel's need for a godly king, pointing first to David and ultimately to Christ, the King who rules in righteousness. It also shows God's amazing patience: again and again, when His people

cried to Him, He raised up a deliverer.

The Cycle of the Judges

Judges 2:11-19 lays out a pattern repeated throughout the book:

Stage	Description	Key Phrase
1. Sin	Israel turns to idols	"The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD" (2:11; 3:7)
2. Servitude	God gives them into the hands of oppressors	"He sold them into the hands of their enemies" (2:14)
3. Supplication	Israel cries out in distress	"The children of Israel cried unto the LORD" (3:9)
4. Salvation	God raises up a judge to deliver them	"The LORD raised up a deliverer" (3:9)
5. Silence (rest)	Peace for a time, until the judge dies	"And the land had rest" (3:11)

The phrase "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD" opens each new cycle (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). The cycle was really a downward spiral: "when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers" (2:19). Each judge was less godly than the last, the deliverances were less complete, and the book ends in moral chaos and civil war.

The Judges of Israel

Judge	Judges	Tribe	Oppressor	Oppression	Rest or Rule
Othniel	3:7-11	Judah	Cushan-rishathaim of Mesopotamia	8 years	40 years rest
Ehud	3:12-30	Benjamin	Eglon of Moab	18 years	80 years rest
Shamgar	3:31	Unknown	Philistines	Not stated	Not stated
Deborah and Barak	4-5	Ephraim / Naphtali	Jabin of Canaan; Sisera	20 years	40 years rest
Gideon	6-8	Manasseh	Midian and Amalek	7 years	40 years rest
(Abimelech, a usurper)	9	Manasseh	Civil strife		3 years
Tola	10:1-2	Issachar			23 years
Jair	10:3-5	Gilead (Manasseh)			22 years
Jephthah	10:6-12:7	Gilead	Ammon	18 years	6 years
Ibzan	12:8-10	Bethlehem (Judah or Zebulun)			7 years
Elon	12:11-12	Zebulun			10 years

Judge	Judges	Tribe	Oppressor	Oppression	Rest or Rule
Abdon	12:13-15	Ephraim			8 years
Samson	13-16	Dan	Philistines	40 years	20 years

Eli (1 Samuel 4:18) and Samuel (1 Samuel 7:15) also judged Israel, bringing the period to a close.

Outline of Judges

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Cause: Incomplete Obedience	1:1-3:6	Why Israel failed
Military failure	1	The tribes do not drive out the Canaanites
Spiritual failure	2:1-3:6	Bochim; the new generation; the cycle explained
II. The Cycles: The Judges	3:7-16:31	Israel's repeated apostasy and God's deliverance
Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar	3	Early deliverers
Deborah and Barak	4-5	Victory over Sisera; the Song of Deborah
Gideon	6-8	The 300; the snare of the ephod
Abimelech	9	A self-made king
Tola, Jair, Jephthah and others	10-12	Ammon; Jephthah's vow
Samson	13-16	Strength and weakness
III. The Consequences: Moral Chaos	17-21	No king in Israel
Religious corruption: Micah and the Danites	17-18	Idolatry in a family and a tribe
Moral corruption: Gibeah and civil war	19-21	Sodom in Israel; Benjamin nearly destroyed

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Cause — Incomplete Obedience (Chapters 1:1-3:6)

Chapter 1 — The Incomplete Conquest

"Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first?" (1:1). The book starts well: Israel sought God, and God answered, "Judah shall go up" (1:2). Judah and Simeon fought together and defeated Adoni-bezek, who had cut off the thumbs and big toes of seventy kings. When the same was done to him, he said, "As I have done, so God hath requited me" (1:7). Caleb's nephew Othniel took Kirjath-sepher and married Achsah (1:11-15; Joshua 15:16-19).

But the rest of the chapter is a list of failures. Judah "could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron" (1:19), though Joshua had told Joseph's tribes they could (Joshua 17:18). Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites of Jerusalem (1:21). Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali all left Canaanites in their territories, often putting them under tribute (1:27-33). Dan was pushed back into the mountains by the Amorites (1:34). The repeated phrase is "neither did... drive out." Partial obedience became the root of everything that followed.

Chapter 2 — Bochim, the New Generation, and the Cycle

"An angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim" (2:1) and spoke as God Himself: "I made you to go up out of Egypt... and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land... but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?" (2:1-2). Because of their disobedience, God would no longer drive the nations out: "they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you" (2:3; Numbers 33:55; Joshua 23:13). The people wept, so the place was called Bochim, "weepers" (2:4-5), but their tears did not produce lasting change.

The writer looks back to Joshua's death (2:6-9) and then records the turning point of the book:

> *And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.*
>
> **Judges 2:10**

One generation's failure to pass on the faith led to national apostasy within a single lifetime (compare Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm 78:5-8). Verses 11-19 summarise the whole cycle of the book: they served Baalim and Ashtaroth, God's anger burned, He sold them to their enemies, they were "greatly distressed," "the LORD raised up judges," and "it repented the LORD because of their groanings" (2:18). But when the judge died they returned to worse sin (2:19).

Chapter 3 — Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar

God left certain nations in the land "to prove Israel by them" (3:1, 4) and so that the new generation "might know, to teach them war" (3:2). Instead of conquering them, Israel intermarried with them and served their gods (3:5-6), exactly as Moses warned (Deuteronomy 7:3-4).

Othniel (3:7-11). Israel served Baalim and the groves and was oppressed eight years by Cushan-rishathaim of Mesopotamia. When they cried, God raised up Othniel, Caleb's nephew. "And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel" (3:10), the first of several times this phrase appears in Judges. The land had rest forty years. Othniel, from Judah, is the model judge, with no recorded faults.

Ehud (3:12-30). Eglon king of Moab, "a very fat man," oppressed Israel eighteen years with Ammon and Amalek. God raised up Ehud, a left-handed Benjamite. He made a two-edged dagger a cubit long, hid it on his right thigh where guards would not check, and delivered Israel's tribute. Alone with the king, he said, "I have a message from God unto thee" (3:20), and killed him. Ehud escaped, rallied Ephraim, seized the fords of the Jordan, and Israel killed about 10,000 Moabites. The land had rest eighty years. God uses the unexpected: a left-handed man from Benjamin, which means "son of my right hand."

Shamgar (3:31). He killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad, a farmer's tool. God can use whatever is in our hand (compare Exodus 4:2; 1 Samuel 17:40). Deborah's song mentions that in his days "the highways were unoccupied" (5:6).

Chapter 4 — Deborah, Barak and Jael

After Ehud died, Israel did evil again and was oppressed twenty years by Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor, and his general Sisera, who had 900 chariots of iron (4:1-3). "And Deborah, a prophetess... she judged Israel at that time" (4:4), sitting under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel, where Israel came to her for judgment (4:5). She summoned Barak of Naphtali with God's command to take 10,000 men to Mount Tabor (4:6-7). Barak replied, "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go" (4:8). Deborah agreed but said the honour would go to a woman (4:9).

The LORD "discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host" at the river Kishon (4:15); the Song of Deborah suggests a storm flooded the river and made the chariots useless (5:4, 20-21). Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite, whose clan was at peace with Jabin (4:17). She gave him milk, covered him, and when he slept, drove a tent peg through his temple into the ground (4:18-21). Barak arrived to find Sisera dead. "So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel" (4:23). Barak is listed among the heroes of faith (Hebrews 11:32).

Deborah's role. Deborah is presented as a prophetess and judge raised up by God in an unusual time. She did not lead the army; she called a man to do so, and she gave God the glory. Bible-believing Christians differ on what her example means for leadership roles today; all agree that God gifted and used her mightily.

Chapter 5 — The Song of Deborah

One of the oldest poems in the Bible, a victory hymn sung by Deborah and Barak. It opens, "Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves" (5:2). It describes the LORD marching from Seir and the earth trembling (5:4-5), the misery before the war, when "the highways were unoccupied" and "they chose new gods; then was war in the gates" (5:6-8), and Deborah arising "a mother in Israel" (5:7). It praises the tribes who came (Zebulun and Naphtali "jeoparded their lives unto the death," 5:18) and rebukes those who stayed home: Reuben had "great searchings of heart" but did nothing; Gilead, Dan and Asher stayed put (5:15-17).

> *They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The river of Kishon swept them away*
>
> **Judges 5:20-21**

"Curse ye Meroz... because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty" (5:23). Neutrality in the LORD's battle is condemned. Jael is called "blessed above women" (5:24). The song ends by imagining Sisera's mother waiting at the window for a son who will never return (5:28-30), and closes: "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years" (5:31).

Chapter 6 — The Call of Gideon

Israel did evil again, and for seven years the Midianites, Amalekites and eastern peoples swarmed the land "as grasshoppers for multitude" at harvest time, destroying crops and livestock, so that Israel hid in dens and caves (6:1-6). When they cried, God first sent a prophet to remind them of their sin (6:7-10): God deals with the cause before the symptoms.

The Angel of the LORD sat under an oak at Ophrah, where Gideon was secretly threshing wheat in a winepress to hide it from the Midianites (6:11).

> *And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.*
>
> **Judges 6:12**

God saw what Gideon would become, not only what he was. Gideon replied honestly: "if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?" (6:13). "The LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might... have not I sent thee?" (6:14). Gideon protested, "my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house" (6:15). "Surely I will be with thee" (6:16). Gideon brought an offering; the Angel touched it with his staff, fire consumed it, and He vanished (6:19-21). Gideon feared he would die for seeing the Angel of the LORD face to face, but God said, "Peace be unto thee" (6:22-23). He built an altar called Jehovah-shalom, "The LORD is peace" (6:24).

That night God told Gideon to tear down his father's altar to Baal and the grove beside it, and build an altar to the LORD (6:25-26). He obeyed, though he did it at night "because he feared" (6:27). When the townsmen demanded his death, his father Joash replied, "Will ye plead for Baal?... if he be a god, let him plead for himself" (6:31), and named Gideon Jerubbaal, "let Baal plead" (6:32). Reformation must

begin at home.

When Midian gathered again, "the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon" (6:34; the Hebrew says the Spirit "clothed Himself with" Gideon). Gideon blew the trumpet and gathered the tribes. Still uncertain, he asked for signs with a fleece: first wet with dew on dry ground, then dry on wet ground (6:36-40). God patiently gave both. The fleece shows God's patience with weak faith, though it is not a pattern for making decisions; God had already spoken clearly (6:14, 16).

Chapter 7 — Gideon's Three Hundred

Gideon had 32,000 men against 135,000 (8:10). God said, "The people that are with thee are too many... lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me" (7:2). Following Deuteronomy 20:8, the fearful were sent home: 22,000 left (7:3). Of the 10,000 remaining, God took only those who lapped water from their hands, 300 men, and sent the rest home (7:4-8). God sometimes reduces our resources so that the glory is clearly His (2 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

God encouraged Gideon by letting him overhear a Midianite soldier's dream of a barley cake that rolled into the camp and flattened a tent, and his companion's interpretation: "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon... into his hand hath God delivered Midian" (7:13-14). Gideon worshipped (7:15). He divided the 300 into three companies, each man with a trumpet and a lamp hidden inside an empty pitcher (7:16). At the middle watch they surrounded the camp, blew the trumpets, broke the pitchers so the lamps blazed out, and cried, "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon" (7:19-20). The Midianites panicked, "and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow" (7:22). Ephraim captured the princes Oreb and Zeeb (7:24-25).

The lamps shone only when the pitchers were broken. Paul writes, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:6-7). Isaiah later spoke of "the day of Midian" as a model of God's sudden deliverance (Isaiah 9:4; 10:26).

Chapter 8 — Gideon's Victory and Downfall

Ephraim complained they had not been called; Gideon calmed them with humility: "Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?" (8:1-3; compare Proverbs 15:1). The men of Succoth and Penuel refused bread to his exhausted troops; Gideon punished them on his return (8:4-17). He captured and killed the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna, who had killed his brothers (8:18-21).

Then came the test of success. The Israelites asked Gideon to rule over them and found a dynasty. He answered rightly:

> *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.*
>
> **Judges 8:23**

But he asked for the gold earrings from the spoil, about 1,700 shekels, and made an ephod (a priestly garment) and put it in his city Ophrah. "And all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house" (8:27). The man who tore down Baal's altar set up a new object of false worship. Victory can be more dangerous than defeat. Gideon had many wives and seventy sons, and a concubine in Shechem bore him a son named Abimelech, "my father is king" (8:30-31). As soon as Gideon died, Israel turned to Baal-berith ("lord of the covenant") and forgot both

the LORD and Gideon's family (8:33-35).

Chapter 9 — Abimelech, the Bramble King

Abimelech persuaded his mother's relatives in Shechem to make him king, hired "vain and light persons" with money from Baal-berith's temple, and murdered his seventy half-brothers "upon one stone" (9:1-5). Only the youngest, Jotham, escaped. From Mount Gerizim, Jotham told the first parable in the Bible (9:7-15): the trees wanted a king. The olive tree, fig tree and vine all refused to leave their fruitful work to rule, but the bramble accepted, saying, "come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon" (9:15). Worthless men seek power that productive people decline, and they bring destruction. Jotham pronounced a curse: fire would come out between Abimelech and Shechem and destroy both (9:20).

After three years, "God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem" (9:23). Gaal son of Ebed stirred up revolt (9:26-41); Abimelech destroyed Shechem, sowed it with salt, and burned about a thousand people who had taken refuge in the tower of the temple of Berith (9:42-49). Attacking the tower of Thebez, he was struck on the head by a millstone thrown by a woman, and had his armourbearer kill him so it would not be said a woman slew him (9:50-54; recalled in 2 Samuel 11:21). "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech... and upon them came the curse of Jotham" (9:56-57). God's justice may wait, but it comes.

Chapter 10 — Tola, Jair, and Deeper Apostasy

Tola of Issachar judged 23 years and Jair of Gilead 22 years; Jair had thirty sons who rode thirty donkeys and ruled thirty cities (10:1-5). Then Israel sank lower than ever, serving the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon and the Philistines: seven sets of gods (10:6). God sold them to the Philistines and the Ammonites, who oppressed them eighteen years (10:7-9). When they cried, God answered with a rebuke: "Ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation" (10:13-14). For the first time, Israel's repentance went beyond words: "they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (10:16). God's heart is moved by His people's suffering even when it is the result of their sin (Isaiah 63:9; Hosea 11:8).

Chapter 11 — Jephthah and His Vow

Jephthah was a "mighty man of valour," but the son of a harlot, driven out by his half-brothers. He lived in the land of Tob, gathering "vain men" around him (11:1-3). When Ammon attacked, the elders of Gilead came begging him to lead them. He agreed on condition that he would be their head (11:4-11). The rejected one became the deliverer (compare Psalm 118:22).

Jephthah first tried diplomacy. He sent the king of Ammon a careful historical argument: Israel took the land from the Amorites, not Ammon; "the LORD God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites"; and Israel had held it "three hundred years" without challenge (11:12-26). "The LORD the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon" (11:27). Jephthah knew the history of Numbers 20-21 in detail.

"Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah" (11:29). Before the battle he made a vow: "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace... shall surely be the LORD'S,

and I will offer it up for a burnt offering" (11:30-31). God gave a great victory (11:32-33). When Jephthah came home, his daughter, his only child, came out to meet him with timbrels and dances (11:34). He tore his clothes: "I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back" (11:35). She submitted, asking only two months to "bewail my virginity" with her friends (11:36-38). "He did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man" (11:39). The daughters of Israel lamented her four days every year (11:40).

What happened to Jephthah's daughter? Bible-believing Christians hold two views:

- **She was offered as a burnt offering.** This is the plain sense of "burnt offering." If so, it was a terrible sin, since God expressly forbade human sacrifice (Leviticus 18:21; Deuteronomy 12:31). The vow was rash, and Jephthah should have broken it and sought atonement for a foolish oath (Leviticus 5:4-6). It would show how deeply Canaanite thinking had infected Israel.
- **She was dedicated to lifelong virginity in the LORD's service.** The Hebrew connecting word in 11:31 can be read "or": "shall surely be the LORD'S, or I will offer it up." The text stresses her virginity, not her death ("bewail my virginity," "she knew no man"), and no priest in Israel would have performed a human sacrifice.

Either way, the lesson is clear: rash vows are dangerous (Ecclesiastes 5:2-6; Matthew 5:33-37). Hebrews 11:32 commends Jephthah's faith in fighting God's battle, not every act of his life.

Chapter 12 — Shibboleth and the Minor Judges

The men of Ephraim again complained they had not been called, and threatened to burn Jephthah's house (12:1). This time there was no soft answer. Civil war followed. The Gileadites held the fords of the Jordan, and anyone who could not pronounce "Shibboleth" correctly, saying "Sibboleth," was identified as an Ephraimite and killed: 42,000 died (12:4-6). Pride and tribal jealousy led brother to kill brother. Jephthah judged six years (12:7). Three minor judges followed: Ibzan of Bethlehem, with thirty sons and thirty daughters (12:8-10); Elon of Zebulun (12:11-12); and Abdon of Ephraim, with forty sons and thirty grandsons on seventy donkeys (12:13-15).

Chapter 13 — The Birth of Samson

Israel did evil again, and God gave them to the Philistines for forty years, the longest oppression in the book (13:1). This time there is no record that Israel even cried out. God acted in grace anyway. The Angel of the LORD appeared to the barren wife of Manoah of Dan and announced a son: "no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (13:5). She too was to avoid wine and unclean food (13:4, 7, 14). Samson would only "begin" the deliverance; David would complete it (2 Samuel 5:17-25; 8:1).

Manoah prayed, "O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born" (13:8), a model prayer for parents. The Angel returned. When Manoah asked His name, He said, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" (13:18). The Hebrew word for "secret" is pele, "wonderful," the same word in Isaiah 9:6: "his name shall be called Wonderful." When Manoah offered a sacrifice, "the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar" (13:20). Manoah said, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God" (13:22). His wife reasoned wisely that if God meant to kill them He would not have accepted their offering or told them these things (13:23). The Angel of the LORD is the pre-incarnate Son of God.

Samson was born, "and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times" (13:24-25).

Chapter 14 — Samson's Marriage and Riddle

Samson saw a Philistine woman in Timnath and told his parents, "Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well" (14:1-3), ignoring God's law against marrying Canaanites (Deuteronomy 7:3) and his parents' protest. "But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines" (14:4): God was sovereignly working through even Samson's wrong desires to bring judgment on the oppressors, without approving the sin. On the way, "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent" a young lion with his bare hands (14:5-6). Later he scooped honey from the lion's carcass and ate it, giving some to his parents without telling them where it came from (14:8-9), breaking his Nazarite separation from dead bodies.

At the seven-day wedding feast, he posed a riddle to thirty Philistine companions: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (14:14). They threatened his bride, who pressured him with tears for seven days until he told her (14:15-17). When they answered, Samson said, "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle" (14:18). The Spirit came on him and he killed thirty Philistines at Ashkelon to pay the debt (14:19). His bride was given to his best man (14:20). His weakness for women would be his undoing.

Chapter 15 — Foxes, Fire and the Jawbone

When Samson found his wife given to another, he caught 300 foxes, tied them tail to tail with firebrands, and burned the Philistines' grain fields, vineyards and olive groves (15:1-5). The Philistines burned his wife and her father (15:6). Samson took revenge and then hid in the rock of Etam (15:7-8). When the Philistines invaded Judah to capture him, 3,000 men of Judah came to hand him over: "Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us?" (15:11). Israel had accepted its bondage. Samson let his own people bind him with new ropes and deliver him to the enemy (15:12-13). At Lehi, "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him," the ropes melted like burnt flax, and with the fresh jawbone of a donkey he killed a thousand men (15:14-16).

Afterwards, desperately thirsty, he prayed for the first time recorded: "Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst?" God split open a hollow place and water came out; he called it En-hakkore, "the well of him that called" (15:18-19). Samson judged Israel twenty years (15:20).

Chapter 16 — Samson and Delilah

At Gaza, a Philistine city, Samson went in to a harlot. The men of Gaza waited to kill him at dawn, but at midnight he tore off the city gates, posts and bar, and carried them "to the top of an hill that is before Hebron," possibly a journey of nearly 40 miles (16:1-3). Then he loved Delilah, a woman in the valley of Sorek (16:4). The Philistine lords each offered her 1,100 pieces of silver to discover the secret of his strength (16:5). Three times Samson lied (seven green withs, new ropes, weaving his hair into a loom), and three times she called "The Philistines be upon thee," and he broke free (16:6-14). Yet he kept coming back. "When she pressed him daily with her words... his soul was vexed unto death" (16:16), and "he told her all his heart": "There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb" (16:17).

Delilah lulled him to sleep on her knees and had his seven locks shaved (16:19). "And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him" (16:20). The strength was never in the hair but in the LORD; the hair was the sign of his separation, and when he gave up the sign, he had long since given up the substance. The Philistines put out his eyes, bound him with fetters of brass, and made him grind grain in the prison house of Gaza (16:21). Sin blinds, binds and grinds.

"Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven" (16:22). At a great feast to their god Dagon, the Philistines brought Samson out to mock him (16:23-25). Placed between the two central pillars of the temple, with about 3,000 people on the roof, he prayed:

> *O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.*
>
> **Judges 16:28**

"Let me die with the Philistines" (16:30). He pushed the pillars, the house fell, "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life" (16:30). His family buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol (16:31). Hebrews 11:32-34 lists Samson among those who "out of weakness were made strong." God answered the prayer of a broken, repentant man.

Section III: The Consequences — Moral Chaos (Chapters 17-21)

Chapter 17 — Micah's Private Religion

A man of Ephraim named Micah stole 1,100 shekels of silver from his mother, then confessed when he heard her curse the thief. She blessed him "of the LORD" and dedicated the silver "unto the LORD" to make a graven image and a molten image (17:1-4). Micah set up "an house of gods," made an ephod and household idols, and consecrated one of his sons as priest (17:5). The writer explains: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17:6). When a wandering young Levite from Bethlehem came by, Micah hired him as his priest for ten shekels a year, clothes and food (17:7-12), and said, "Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest" (17:13). This is self-made religion: the LORD's name mixed with idols, a hired priest, and confidence in religious objects instead of obedience to God's Word (Deuteronomy 12:8; Exodus 20:4).

Chapter 18 — The Danites Steal Micah's Gods

The tribe of Dan, having failed to take its allotted land (1:34), sent five spies looking for an easier territory (18:1-2). At Micah's house they recognised the Levite and asked him to inquire of God; he gave them a pleasing answer (18:3-6). They found Laish, a quiet, unprotected city far to the north (18:7-10). Six hundred Danites marched north, stole Micah's idols and ephod, and persuaded the Levite to become priest to a whole tribe instead of one household; "the priest's heart was glad" (18:14-20). When Micah protested, "Ye have taken away my gods which I made... and what have I more?" (18:24), they threatened him. They slaughtered the people of Laish, rebuilt it as Dan, and set up the graven image (18:27-31).

The priest is identified: "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan" (18:30). Gershom was Moses' son (Exodus 2:22). The Hebrew text writes the name with a small raised letter "n," turning "Moses" into "Manasseh," apparently to spare Moses' name the shame that his own grandson led Israel's first tribal idolatry. Dan remained a centre of false worship: Jeroboam later placed one of his golden calves there (1 Kings 12:29-30). Some Bible teachers connect Dan's idolatry with its absence from the list of tribes in Revelation 7:4-8.

Chapter 19 — The Outrage at Gibeah

A Levite from Ephraim went to Bethlehem to bring back his concubine, who had left him (19:1-3). After days of hospitality from her father, they set out late and stopped for the night at Gibeah of Benjamin rather than at Jebus, a foreign city, thinking Israelites would be safer (19:10-14). No one in Gibeah took them in except an old man from Ephraim (19:15-21). That night "certain sons of Belial" surrounded the house and demanded the Levite, as the men of Sodom had (19:22; Genesis 19:4-5). The old man offered his virgin daughter and the concubine instead; the Levite pushed his concubine out, and they abused her all night (19:24-25). In the morning she lay dead at the door. The Levite's words, "Up, and let us be going" (19:28), show his cold heart. He cut her body into twelve pieces and sent them throughout Israel (19:29). All who saw it said, "There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day" (19:30). Israel had become Sodom. Hosea later said, "They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah" (Hosea 9:9; 10:9).

Chapter 20 — Civil War with Benjamin

All Israel, 400,000 men, gathered "as one man" at Mizpeh (20:1-2). They demanded that Benjamin hand over the guilty men of Gibeah, but Benjamin refused and gathered 26,000 soldiers, including 700 left-handed slingers who "could sling stones at an hair breadth, and not miss" (20:12-16). Israel asked God which tribe should go first (20:18), but they had not humbled themselves. They lost 22,000 men the first day (20:21). They wept and asked again, and lost 18,000 more (20:23-25). Then all the people went to Bethel, "and wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings" (20:26). Phinehas the priest inquired, and God promised victory (20:27-28). Repentance came before deliverance. On the third day, by ambush, Israel destroyed Benjamin's army and cities; only 600 men escaped to the rock Rimmon (20:29-48).

Chapter 21 — Wives for Benjamin

Israel had sworn not to give their daughters to Benjamin (21:1). Now they wept: "O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel?" (21:3). To solve one rash oath they made more terrible decisions. Since Jabesh-gilead had not come to the assembly, they destroyed it and took 400 virgins for Benjamin (21:8-14). For the remaining 200, they told the Benjamites to hide in the vineyards at Shiloh and seize girls who came out to dance at the yearly feast (21:19-23). The book closes with its verdict:

> *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
>
> **Judges 21:25**

Two links to the coming kingdom: Saul, Israel's first king, came from Gibeah of Benjamin (1 Samuel 10:26), and his first act as king was to rescue Jabesh-gilead (1 Samuel 11). The men of Jabesh later

risked their lives to bury Saul (1 Samuel 31:11-13). David, the godly king, would come from Bethlehem, the town mentioned in both stories of the appendix (17:7; 19:1).

Part Three: Christ in Judges

The Angel of the LORD

The Angel of the LORD appears at Bochim speaking as God who brought Israel out of Egypt (2:1), to Gideon as "the LORD" (6:11-24), and to Manoah and his wife with the name "Wonderful" (13:18), ascending in the flame of the altar (13:20). He is the pre-incarnate Christ, the true Deliverer behind all the judges (compare Isaiah 9:6; 63:9).

The Judges and the Perfect Deliverer

Each judge was a Spirit-empowered saviour raised up by God to deliver His people from bondage, a picture of Christ, on whom "the Spirit of the Lord" rested "to preach deliverance to the captives" (Luke 4:18). But every judge had flaws, and every deliverance was temporary. The book shows the need for a perfect Deliverer whose salvation is complete and permanent, "able also to save them to the uttermost" (Hebrews 7:25).

The Judges	Christ
Raised up by God when the people cried out	Sent by the Father when "the fulness of the time was come" (Galatians 4:4)
Empowered by the Spirit "at times"	The Spirit given "not by measure" (John 3:34)
Delivered from earthly oppressors	Delivers from sin, death and Satan (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 2:14-15)
Flawed men and women	"Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26)
Deliverance lasted until the judge died	"He ever liveth"; eternal salvation (Hebrews 7:25; 5:9)
Often rejected first (Jephthah)	"The stone which the builders rejected" (Matthew 21:42)
Used weak means (ox goad, pitchers, jawbone)	The weakness of the cross is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

Samson: A Flawed Picture of Christ

Samson's sins were real and he died partly because of them, but his life contains striking parallels to Christ:

Samson	Judges	Christ	New Testament
Birth announced by the Angel of the LORD	13:3	Birth announced by the angel Gabriel	Luke 1:26-31
Born to a woman who could not naturally conceive	13:2	Born of a virgin	Matthew 1:23
Set apart to God from the womb	13:5	Holy from conception	Luke 1:35
Would "begin to deliver Israel"	13:5	"He shall save his people from their sins"	Matthew 1:21

Samson	Judges	Christ	New Testament
Bound by his own people and handed to the Gentile rulers	15:11-13	Bound by the leaders of Israel and delivered to Pilate	Matthew 27:2
Betrayed for silver by one close to him	16:5, 18	Betrayed by Judas for thirty pieces of silver	Matthew 26:14-16
Mocked by his enemies	16:25	Mocked by soldiers and rulers	Matthew 27:29, 41
Arms stretched out between two pillars	16:29	Arms stretched out on the cross	John 19:18
Won his greatest victory in his death	16:30	Through death destroyed the devil's power	Hebrews 2:14; Colossians 2:15

The great difference: Samson died because of his own sins; Christ, who knew no sin, died for ours (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The Need for a King

"No king in Israel" (17:6; 21:25) explains the chaos of Judges. The book prepares for David, the shepherd-king from Bethlehem, and ultimately for Christ, the Son of David, born in Bethlehem, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:16). When Christ reigns in a heart, no one does "that which is right in his own eyes" but what is right in His. Jotham's parable (9) contrasts the worthless "bramble" king with the true King under whose shadow people truly find rest (Psalm 91:1; Song of Solomon 2:3).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy or Promise	Source	Fulfillment in Judges
The remaining Canaanites would be thorns and snares	Numbers 33:55; Joshua 23:13	2:3; 3:5-6
After Moses' death Israel would turn to other gods	Deuteronomy 31:16, 29	2:11-13
Turning to idols would bring defeat and oppression	Deuteronomy 28:25, 48	2:14-15 and every cycle
God would deliver Israel when they cried	Deuteronomy 4:29-31	3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:7; 10:10
Sisera would be delivered into the hand of a woman	4:9	4:21
The Midianite's dream of the barley cake	7:13-14	7:19-22
Jotham's curse on Abimelech and Shechem	9:20	9:45-57
Samson would begin to deliver Israel	13:5	14-16; completed under David (2 Samuel 5:17-25)
Benjamin would be defeated on the third day	20:28	20:35

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Judges 2:10 — The Generation That Knew Not the LORD

How could Israel fall so far so fast? One generation saw God's works; the next "knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done." Parents had failed to teach as Moses commanded (Deuteronomy 6:6-9), and the people had failed to separate from the Canaanites (2:2). Faith is always one generation from extinction if it is not passed on. Psalm 78:5-8 gives the remedy: make God's works known to the children, "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God."

Judges 6-8 — Gideon: From Fear to Faith to Failure

Gideon's story shows God's patience with weak faith. He began hiding in a winepress, needed repeated signs, and obeyed at night out of fear; yet God called him a mighty man of valour, clothed him with His Spirit, and won a great victory through 300 men with lamps and pitchers. But his story ends in failure: the gold ephod became a snare. Many believers finish worse than they start. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Judges 16 — Samson: Strength Without Self-Control

Samson had supernatural strength but no moral strength. He was controlled by his eyes ("she pleaseth me well," 14:3; "saw there an harlot," 16:1) and his passions. He played with temptation repeatedly, thinking he could always escape. His tragedy is in 16:20: "he wist not that the LORD was departed from him." Yet his final prayer shows that God's grace can still use a broken, repentant servant. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Judges 17-21 — Everyone Right in His Own Eyes

The appendix shows the bottom of the spiral: religious corruption (a private idol shrine, a hired priest, a tribe's idolatry) and moral corruption (Gibeah acting like Sodom, a near-genocide of a tribe, and kidnapped brides). It happened not under a foreign oppressor but among God's own people. Without God's rule, a culture defines right by personal preference. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). Paul describes the same downward spiral of a society that rejects God (Romans 1:21-32).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Judges

1. The Danger of Incomplete Obedience

Chapter 1's repeated "neither did... drive out" leads to everything else. Sin tolerated becomes sin that dominates (Romans 6:12-16).

2. The Downward Spiral of Sin

Each cycle goes lower. Sin is not static; it grows (James 1:14-15; 2 Timothy 3:13).

3. God's Discipline

God "sold them" into their enemies' hands (2:14). Oppression was not accident but loving discipline designed to bring them back (Hebrews 12:6-11).

4. God's Patience and Grace

Again and again God heard their cries, even when their repentance was shallow, and "his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (10:16). He even raised up Samson when they did not cry (13). "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed" (Lamentations 3:22).

5. The Work of the Holy Spirit

"The Spirit of the LORD came upon" Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson (3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14). Real deliverance comes "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit" (Zechariah 4:6).

6. God Uses the Weak and Unlikely

A left-handed man, a woman, a farmer with an ox goad, a fearful man from the least family, a harlot's son, and a flawed Nazarite. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

7. The Importance of Godly Leadership

When godly judges lived, the land had rest; when they died, Israel relapsed. The book points to the need for a righteous king (21:25).

8. The Danger of Compromise in Marriage

Intermarriage with the Canaanites led to idolatry (3:6), and Samson's attraction to Philistine women led to his downfall. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

9. Rash Words and Oaths

Jephthah's vow (11:30-31) and Israel's oath against Benjamin (21:1) both led to tragedy. "Be not rash with thy mouth" (Ecclesiastes 5:2).

10. Religion Without Truth

Micah's shrine (17), the Danite priesthood (18) and Gideon's ephod (8:27) show that sincerity and religious objects without obedience to God's Word are idolatry.

Part Seven: Connections — How Judges Links to the Rest of the Bible

Judges in the New Testament

Judges	New Testament	Use
4-5; 6-8; 11; 13-16	Hebrews 11:32-34	Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah as examples of faith: "out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens"
The period of the judges	Acts 13:20	"He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel"
13:3-5	Luke 1:13-17, 31	Birth announcements to barren women; John the Baptist set apart like a Nazarite
7 (Gideon's 300)	1 Corinthians 1:27-29; 2 Corinthians 12:9	God's strength in weakness
7:16-20 (lamps in pitchers)	2 Corinthians 4:6-7	Treasure in earthen vessels
2:10-19; 17-21 (spiral of sin)	Romans 1:21-32	A society given over to its own way
16:20	1 Corinthians 10:12	Overconfidence before a fall
18 (Dan's idolatry)	Revelation 7:4-8	Dan absent from the list of sealed tribes (a possible connection)

Judges in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Jacob's prophecy over Dan, "a serpent by the way" (49:16-17); Sodom (19) mirrored in Gibeah (Judges 19)
Exodus	Gideon's call echoes Moses' call (3:11-12); "certainly I will be with thee" (Exodus 3:12; Judges 6:16)
Numbers	The Nazarite law (6) applied to Samson; Israel's history east of the Jordan (20-21) recited by Jephthah (Judges 11:15-26); "thorns in your sides" (33:55)
Deuteronomy	Warnings against intermarriage and idolatry (7:1-5); sending home the fearful (20:8); the curses for disobedience (28)
Joshua	Direct continuation; Joshua's death recounted (Judges 2:6-9; Joshua 24:29-31); Caleb, Othniel and Achsah (Joshua 15:13-19; Judges 1:10-15); the incomplete conquest (Joshua 13-19)
Ruth	"In the days when the judges ruled" (Ruth 1:1); a story of faithfulness from the same dark period, also linked to Bethlehem
1 Samuel	Eli and Samuel, the last judges (4:18; 7:15); Samuel lists Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah and Samuel (12:11); the demand for a king (8); Saul from Gibeah rescues Jabesh-gilead (11)

Book	Link
2 Samuel	Abimelech's death recalled (11:21); David completes Samson's work against the Philistines (5:17-25; 8:1)
1 Kings	Jeroboam's golden calf at Dan (12:29-30)
Nehemiah	The cycle of sin, oppression, crying and deliverance recalled in prayer (9:26-28)
Psalms	"Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison... Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna" (83:9-11); the cycle described (78:56-66; 106:34-46)
Isaiah	"As in the day of Midian" (9:4); "the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb" (10:26)
Hosea	"As in the days of Gibeah" (9:9; 10:9)

Themes That Run from Judges Through Scripture

Theme	In Judges	Developed	Fulfilled
The need for a king	17:6; 21:25	1 Samuel 8; 2 Samuel 7	Matthew 2:2; Revelation 19:16
The Spirit empowering deliverers	3:10; 6:34	1 Samuel 16:13; Isaiah 11:2; 61:1	Luke 4:18; Acts 1:8
God's strength in weakness	7; 16:28-30	1 Samuel 17	2 Corinthians 12:9-10
The cycle of sin and grace	2:11-19	2 Chronicles 36:15-16; Nehemiah 9:26-31	Romans 5:20
Passing on the faith	2:10	Psalm 78:4-8	2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15
The Nazarite set apart	13:5	1 Samuel 1:11; Amos 2:11-12	Luke 1:15; Hebrews 7:26
Moral relativism	17:6; 21:25	Proverbs 12:15; 14:12; Isaiah 5:20	Romans 1:21-32; 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Finish what God tells you to do.** Partial obedience is disobedience (1).
- **Tears are not the same as repentance.** Bochim's weeping changed nothing (2:4-5).
- **Teach the next generation,** or they will not know the LORD (2:10).
- **Sin always takes you lower** than you planned (2:19).
- **God can use whatever is in your hand** (3:31; 7:20; 15:15).
- **Don't stay neutral in the LORD's battles** (5:23).
- **God sees what you can become in Him** (6:12).
- **Start obedience at home** (6:25-27).
- **God's victories leave no room for pride** (7:2).
- **Beware of success.** Gideon fell after his greatest victory (8:27).
- **Ambitious, unqualified leaders bring ruin** (9).
- **Real repentance puts away idols** (10:16).
- **Don't make rash vows** (11:30-31).
- **A soft answer turns away wrath; a harsh one starts wars** (8:1-3; 12:1-6).
- **Guard your eyes and your heart.** Samson was led by what pleased him (14:3; 16:1).
- **Don't play with temptation.** Delilah succeeded on the fourth try (16).
- **It is never too late to call on God** (16:28).
- **Doing what is right in your own eyes leads to chaos** (17:6; 21:25).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:10	There arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.
2:18	And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies
5:31	So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.
6:12	The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.
7:2	Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.
8:23	I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.
10:16	And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.
16:20	And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.
16:28	O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once
21:25	In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Conclusion

Judges is one of the darkest books in the Bible, and one of the most honest. It shows God's people, only a generation after Joshua, falling into a cycle of idolatry, oppression, crying out and deliverance, each turn lower than the last, until the nation looks like Sodom and nearly destroys one of its own tribes. Yet through it all, God remained faithful. He heard His people's cries, grieved over their misery, and raised up deliverers by His Spirit: weak, flawed people through whom He won great victories. The book leaves us longing for a righteous King, fulfilled first in David and perfectly in Jesus Christ, the Deliverer who never fails and the King whose rule brings true rest.

> *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
>
> **Judges 21:25**

Ruth

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (traditionally Samuel) • Date: c. 1000 BC • Chapters: 4

> *Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God*
>
> **Ruth 1:16**

Part One: Introduction to Ruth

The Book and Its Name

Ruth is one of only two books of the Bible named after a woman (the other is Esther). Ruth was a Moabite who married into an Israelite family, while Esther was a Jew who married a Gentile king. The meaning of the name Ruth is uncertain; many connect it with the Hebrew for "friendship" or "companion," which fits her loyal love for Naomi. In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth is placed among the Writings, often directly after Proverbs, whose last chapter praises "a virtuous woman" (Proverbs 31:10); Boaz uses the same phrase of Ruth (Ruth 3:11). In the English Bible it follows Judges, because its events happened "in the days when the judges ruled" (1:1). Jewish tradition reads Ruth at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), the wheat harvest festival, since the story takes place during the barley and wheat harvests (1:22; 2:23).

Author and Date

The author is not named; the Talmud attributes the book to Samuel. The book was written after the events it records: the writer explains a custom that was "in former time in Israel" (4:7). The closing genealogy ends with David but does not mention Solomon (4:17, 22), which suggests it was written during or soon after David's reign, around 1000 BC. One purpose was to record the godly ancestry of Israel's great king, including his Moabite great-grandmother.

Setting

The story is set during the dark days of the judges, perhaps around 1100 BC. Matthew 1:5 names Boaz as the son of Salmon and Rahab, which would place Boaz relatively early in that period; since the time from Rahab to David is about 400 years, the genealogy in Ruth 4 likely names only the key generations. The contrast with Judges is striking. Judges shows a nation where "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Ruth, from the same era, shows ordinary people living with faithfulness, kindness and integrity. Both Judges 17-21 and Ruth involve people from Bethlehem; Judges shows Bethlehem's shame, and Ruth shows its honour.

Purpose and Theme

Ruth shows **God's loving providence** working through ordinary lives, and **redemption by a kinsman**. Three themes stand out:

- **Hesed (lovingkindness).** The Hebrew word for loyal, covenant love appears at key points (1:8; 2:20; 3:10). Ruth shows it to Naomi, Boaz shows it to Ruth, and God shows it to all of them.
- **Redemption.** The word "redeem" and its forms (from goel, "kinsman-redeemer") appear over twenty times in this short book.
- **Grace to the Gentiles.** A Moabite widow, from a people excluded from Israel's assembly (Deuteronomy 23:3), comes "under the wings" of the LORD (2:12) and becomes an ancestor of David and of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5).

> *And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God*
>
> **Ruth 1:16**

God's Hidden Hand

God works mostly behind the scenes in Ruth. The narrator says directly that God acted only twice: "the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread" (1:6), and "the LORD gave her conception" (4:13). Everything else happens through ordinary choices and apparent chance: "her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz" (2:3). Yet the characters constantly speak of God, blessing one another in His name (2:4, 12, 20; 3:10; 4:11-14). The book is a lesson in providence: "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28).

Outline of Ruth

Chapter	Scene	Ruth's Experience	Theme
1	Moab and the road to Bethlehem	Weeping: Ruth's decision	Love decides
2	The field of Boaz	Working: Ruth gleans	Love serves
3	The threshing floor	Waiting: Ruth's request	Love rests and asks
4	The city gate	Wedding: Ruth redeemed	Love redeems

The Characters

Name	Meaning (commonly given)	Role
Elimelech	"My God is King"	Naomi's husband; left Bethlehem for Moab and died there
Naomi	"Pleasant"	Widow who returned bitter but was restored
Mahlon and Chilion	Often given as "sickly" and "pining"	Naomi's sons; married Moabite women and died
Orpah	Uncertain	Daughter-in-law who returned to Moab and her gods
Ruth	Possibly "friendship"	The Moabite who chose Naomi's God
Boaz	Possibly "in him is strength"	Wealthy kinsman of Elimelech; the redeemer
The nearer kinsman	Called "such a one" (4:1)	Had the first right but refused to redeem
Obed	"Servant" or "worshipper"	Son of Boaz and Ruth; grandfather of David

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — Ruth's Choice: Loss, Loyalty and Return

Leaving the House of Bread (1:1-5)

"There was a famine in the land" (1:1), likely a judgment for Israel's sin in the days of the judges (Deuteronomy 28:23-24). A man of Bethlehem-judah, whose name means "house of bread," left the land of promise to live in Moab, the land of Israel's enemies, descendants of Lot's incest (Genesis 19:30-37). He went to "sojourn," but they "continued there" (1:2). Elimelech died; his sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth, and after about ten years both sons died (1:3-5). Naomi was left without husband or sons, in a foreign land, with no means of support. Leaving God's place to escape hardship brought far greater loss.

The Decision on the Road (1:6-18)

Naomi heard "that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread" (1:6), and set out to return. She urged her daughters-in-law to go back to their mothers' houses: "The LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest" (1:8-9). They wept and refused. Naomi argued that she had no more sons to give them as husbands, and "the hand of the LORD is gone out against me" (1:11-13). "And Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her" (1:14). The word "clave" is the same used of marriage in Genesis 2:24. Orpah went back "unto her people, and unto her gods" (1:15). Then Ruth made one of the greatest confessions of loyalty and faith in Scripture:

> *Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.*
>
> **Ruth 1:16-17**

Ruth's choice was costly: she left her country, family, gods and future prospects for a poor, widowed, bitter mother-in-law and a God she had come to trust. It was a conversion: "thy God my God." She swore by the covenant name of Israel's God, "the LORD" (Jehovah). Jesus calls for the same wholehearted commitment: "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren... for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matthew 19:29). Orpah shows that emotion and good intentions are not the same as true faith; Ruth shows the faith that follows to the end.

Return to Bethlehem (1:19-22)

When they arrived, "all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?" (1:19). She answered:

> *Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty*
>
> **Ruth 1:20-21**

Naomi was honest with God in her grief, like Job and the psalmists. She saw God's hand in her suffering, but she could not yet see His purpose. And she was not empty: Ruth was beside her. The chapter ends with a quiet note of hope: "they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest" (1:22).

Chapter 2 — Ruth's Service: Gleaning in the Field of Boaz

"Her Hap Was to Light" (2:1-7)

The writer introduces Boaz: "a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech" (2:1). Ruth asked Naomi's permission to glean (2:2). God's law commanded farmers to leave the corners of the field and the gleanings for "the poor and the stranger" (Leviticus 19:9-10; 23:22; Deuteronomy 24:19). Ruth was both. She humbly took the place of the poor and worked hard to support Naomi.

> *And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz*
>
> **Ruth 2:3**

What looked like chance was God's providence (Proverbs 16:9, 33). Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted his workers, "The LORD be with you," and they answered, "The LORD bless thee" (2:4). Here was a godly employer whose faith shaped his workplace. He noticed Ruth and asked about her; his foreman reported that she was the Moabitess who came back with Naomi, that she had asked permission, and that she had worked steadily since morning (2:5-7).

Boaz's Kindness (2:8-16)

Boaz told Ruth to stay in his field with his maidens, assured her the young men would not touch her, and told her to drink from the water the servants had drawn (2:8-9). Ruth fell on her face: "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" (2:10). Grace is unmerited favour to the undeserving. Boaz had heard of her loyalty to Naomi and blessed her:

> *The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.*
>
> **Ruth 2:12**

The picture of sheltering under God's wings appears throughout the Psalms (17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 91:4), and Jesus used it of Himself: "how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" (Matthew 23:37). At mealtime, Boaz invited Ruth to eat with the reapers, dip her bread in the vinegar, and he himself handed her parched corn, "and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left" (2:14). He secretly told his young men to let her glean among the sheaves and to "let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her" (2:15-16). He provided abundantly while protecting her dignity.

Naomi Sees God's Hand (2:17-23)

Ruth gleaned until evening and beat out about an ephah of barley, probably around 20 litres or more, enough for several weeks (2:17). When Naomi heard it was Boaz's field, her bitterness began to lift:

> *Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.*
>
> **Ruth 2:20**

"Kinsmen" here is goel, the kinsman-redeemer. For the first time, Naomi saw hope. Ruth stayed close to Boaz's maidens "unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest" (2:23), roughly seven weeks, from Passover to Pentecost.

Chapter 3 — Ruth's Request: At the Threshing Floor

Naomi's Plan (3:1-5)

Naomi now sought "rest" for Ruth, a secure home through marriage (3:1; compare 1:9). She told her that Boaz would be winnowing barley at the threshing floor that night. Ruth was to wash, anoint herself, put on her garment, go down, and after Boaz had eaten and lain down, "uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do" (3:3-4). This was not a seduction; it was a culturally understood way for a widow to ask a kinsman to fulfil his duty and marry her, done privately so as not to shame him if he declined. Ruth answered, "All that thou sayest unto me I will do" (3:5).

The Proposal at Midnight (3:6-13)

At midnight Boaz woke, startled to find a woman at his feet (3:8). "Who art thou?" She answered:

> *I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.*
>
> **Ruth 3:9**

The word "skirt" (kanaph) is the same word translated "wings" in 2:12. Ruth was asking Boaz to be the answer to his own prayer: to bring her under his protection as God had brought her under His. In Ezekiel 16:8, God uses the same picture of His covenant with Israel: "I spread my skirt over thee... and entered into a covenant with thee... and thou becamest mine." Boaz blessed her for choosing him rather than a younger man: "thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning" (3:10).

> *And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.*
>
> **Ruth 3:11**

"A virtuous woman" (eshet chayil, "a woman of strength and worth") is the same phrase as Proverbs 31:10, and Boaz is described with the related word as "a mighty man of wealth" (2:1). They were well matched in character. But there was a nearer kinsman with the first right (3:12). Boaz promised, "if he will not do to thee the part of a kinsman, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD

liveth" (3:13).

Waiting (3:14-18)

Boaz protected Ruth's reputation, sending her home before dawn "before one could know another" (3:14), and gave her six measures of barley so she would not return to Naomi empty (3:15-17; compare 1:21). Naomi said, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day" (3:18). Ruth had done her part; now she must wait while the redeemer worked. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD" (Exodus 14:13).

Chapter 4 — Ruth's Reward: Redemption at the Gate

The Nearer Kinsman Refuses (4:1-8)

Boaz went to the city gate, where legal business was done, sat down, and called the nearer kinsman ("Ho, such a one!" 4:1). He gathered ten elders as witnesses (4:2). He explained that Naomi was selling Elimelech's land, and the kinsman had the first right to redeem it (4:3-4). The man said, "I will redeem it" (4:4). Then Boaz added: "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance" (4:5). The kinsman withdrew: "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance" (4:6). A son born to Ruth would inherit the land in Mahlon's name, so his money would buy land for another family line. As was the custom then, he drew off his shoe and gave it to Boaz to confirm the transfer of the right (4:7-8; compare Deuteronomy 25:7-10).

Boaz Redeems Ruth (4:9-12)

> *Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance*
>
> **Ruth 4:9-10**

The elders and people blessed the marriage: "The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel... and let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah" (4:11-12). Tamar, like Ruth, had been a foreign widow whose child continued the line of Judah through a kinsman (Genesis 38).

The Son and the Line of David (4:13-22)

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife... the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son" (4:13). Ruth had been childless for ten years in Moab (1:4-5); now God gave life. The women of Bethlehem, who had heard Naomi's bitterness, now praised God:

> *Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.*

Ruth 4:14-15

Naomi, who went out full and came back empty, now held a grandson in her arms and became his nurse (4:16). "There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David" (4:17). The book ends with a genealogy of ten generations from Pharez to David (4:18-22). The private story of a widow's loyalty turns out to be part of the history of Israel's royal line, and of the Messiah.

Part Three: The Kinsman-Redeemer

The Law of the Goel

The Hebrew word goel means "kinsman-redeemer," the nearest male relative responsible to protect and restore a family member in need. The law gave him several duties:

Duty	Law	Purpose
Redeem family land that had been sold	Leviticus 25:23-28	Keep the inheritance in the family
Redeem a relative sold into slavery	Leviticus 25:47-55	Set the family member free
Avenge the blood of a murdered relative	Numbers 35:19-21	Execute justice
Marry a dead brother's childless widow (levirate marriage)	Deuteronomy 25:5-10	Raise up a name for the dead and continue the family line

Boaz was not Mahlon's brother, so the strict levirate law did not bind him; he chose to fulfil its spirit along with the land redemption. Ruth combines two forms of redemption: the land and the widow.

The Qualifications of a Redeemer and Christ

A Kinsman-Redeemer Had To Be	Boaz	Christ
A near relative	"One of our next kinsmen" (2:20)	Became our kinsman by taking flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14-17; Galatians 4:4-5)
Able to pay the price	"A mighty man of wealth" (2:1)	Paid with "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19)
Willing to redeem	"I will do to thee all that thou requirest" (3:11)	"I lay down my life... No man taketh it from me" (John 10:17-18)
Free himself, not in need of redemption	A free and prosperous Israelite	Sinless, needing no redemption (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22)

The Nearer Kinsman

The nearer kinsman had the first right but could not redeem without ruining his own inheritance. Many Bible teachers see in him a picture of the law: it had a prior claim, but "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh... condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). The law could not save a Moabite (Deuteronomy 23:3); only grace could. Another view sees the nearer kinsman as any human helper who is unwilling or unable to pay the full cost of redemption.

Boaz as a Type of Christ

Boaz	Ruth	Christ	New Testament
From Bethlehem	2:4	Born in Bethlehem	Matthew 2:1; Micah 5:2
Lord of the harvest	2:3-4	The Lord of the harvest	Matthew 9:38
Noticed the poor stranger first	2:5	"We love him, because he first loved us"	1 John 4:19
Showed grace to a foreigner	2:10	Grace to the Gentiles	Ephesians 2:12-13
Gave her a place under God's wings	2:12	Gathers His people under His wings	Matthew 23:37
Fed her at his table until she was satisfied	2:14	The bread of life; "they did all eat, and were filled"	John 6:35; Mark 6:42
Provided "handfuls of purpose"	2:16	Supplies all our need	Philippians 4:19
Spread his covering over her	3:9	Covers us with His righteousness	Isaiah 61:10
Promised to redeem, and would not rest until it was done	3:13, 18	"It is finished"	John 19:30
Paid the price publicly before witnesses	4:9-10	Redeemed us openly on the cross	Colossians 2:14-15
Purchased her to be his bride	4:10	Purchased the church with His own blood	Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25
Restored the lost inheritance	4:9	Obtained an inheritance for us	Ephesians 1:11, 14; 1 Peter 1:4
Gave life where there was death and barrenness	4:13	Gives eternal life	John 10:10
Became the ancestor of David	4:17	The Son of David	Matthew 1:1

Part Four: Christ in Ruth

Ruth in the Genealogy of Jesus

Matthew's genealogy of Jesus names four women besides Mary: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba ("her that had been the wife of Urias") (Matthew 1:3-6). Each was either a Gentile or connected with scandal: Tamar (a Canaanite who disguised herself as a harlot), Rahab (a Canaanite harlot), Ruth (a Moabite) and Bathsheba (wife of a Hittite, taken in adultery). Their presence shows that Jesus came for sinners and for all nations, and that God's grace overrides human failure. Ruth's story leads from Bethlehem to David to the Son of David born in Bethlehem.

The Gentile Bride

Ruth is a picture of the church, largely gathered from the Gentiles: once a stranger with no rights (Ephesians 2:12), she came by faith to the God of Israel, found grace in the eyes of the lord of the harvest, was redeemed at a price, and became his bride. "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

Rest

Naomi sought "rest" for Ruth (1:9; 3:1), and Boaz would "not be in rest" until he had finished the work (3:18). Christ finished the work of redemption so that His people might enter His rest: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:9-10).

Grace Overcoming the Law's Exclusion

"An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation" (Deuteronomy 23:3). Jewish teachers later held that this applied to Moabite men, not women, which allowed Ruth's marriage. More deeply, Ruth was received because she came in faith and love to Israel's God. Nehemiah later enforced the exclusion against unconverted foreigners who brought idolatry (Nehemiah 13:1-3, 23-27); Ruth was the opposite, having left her gods. God's grace, received by faith, brought a Moabite into the very line of the Messiah, as it brings Gentile sinners into His family today (Galatians 3:28-29).

Part Five: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Ruth contains no direct prophecies, but it shows God's earlier promises being worked out.

Promise	Source	Development in Ruth
The sceptre and royal line from Judah	Genesis 49:10	The line of Judah continues through Pharez, Boaz and Obed to David (4:18-22)
All families of the earth blessed in Abraham's seed	Genesis 12:3	A Moabite is blessed by coming to Israel's God (1:16; 2:12)
Provision for the poor and stranger through gleaning	Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 24:19	Ruth gleans in Boaz's field (2)
The kinsman-redeemer	Leviticus 25:25	Boaz redeems Naomi's land and Ruth (4)
Raising up a name for the dead	Deuteronomy 25:5-6	Mahlon's name preserved (4:10)
The blessing of Rachel, Leah and Pharez	Ruth 4:11-12	Fulfilled in David's royal house

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

Ruth 1:16-17 — The Confession of Faith

Ruth's words have four parts: **commitment to a person** ("whither thou goest, I will go"), **commitment to a people** ("thy people shall be my people"), **commitment to God** ("thy God my God"), and **commitment until death** ("where thou diest, will I die"). Saving faith is not merely agreeing with facts; it is a turning from false gods to the true God, joining His people, and following to the end. "They... turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

Ruth 2:12 — Under His Wings

Boaz pictured Ruth's conversion as a chick taking shelter under a mother bird's wings: dependence, protection, warmth and refuge. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust" (Psalm 91:4). In 3:9 Ruth asked Boaz to spread his "wing" over her, and he became God's answer to his own prayer. God often answers our prayers for others through us.

Ruth 3:9 — "Spread Thy Skirt Over Thine Handmaid"

Ruth's request was a request for marriage, protection and redemption. It was bold, humble and based on Boaz's right as kinsman. It pictures the sinner coming to Christ, the only one with the right and ability to redeem, and asking to be covered and received. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

Ruth 4:14-17 — From Emptiness to Fullness

Naomi said, "I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty" (1:21). The book ends with her holding a grandson, with a redeemer, a restored inheritance and a place in the line of kings. God's providence turned bitterness (Mara) back into pleasantness (Naomi). "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Ruth

1. The Providence of God

God works through famine, death, grief, a "chance" field and ordinary decisions to accomplish His purposes, including the birth of David and, ultimately, Christ (Romans 8:28; Proverbs 16:9).

2. Redemption

The book's central act is redemption by a qualified kinsman who pays the price. It is one of the clearest Old Testament pictures of redemption through Christ (Galatians 4:4-5; Titus 2:14).

3. Lovingkindness (Hesed)

Loyal, covenant love that goes beyond duty is shown by Ruth to Naomi, by Boaz to Ruth, and above all by God to His people. "Thy lovingkindness is better than life" (Psalm 63:3).

4. Faith That Chooses God

Ruth chose the God of Israel over the gods of Moab, at great personal cost. Orpah turned back. Every person must choose (Joshua 24:15).

5. Grace to the Gentiles

God's plan always included the nations. A Moabite became great-grandmother of David (Isaiah 56:3-7; Acts 10:34-35; Revelation 5:9).

6. Godly Character in a Dark Age

In the age of Judges, Ruth, Boaz and Naomi lived with integrity, purity, kindness and faithfulness. Godliness is possible in any culture (Philippians 2:15).

7. Work, Diligence and Humility

Ruth worked hard and humbly as a gleaner (2:7, 17); Boaz was a diligent, godly employer (2:4). Faith shows itself in faithful daily work (Colossians 3:23).

8. Care for the Poor, the Widow and the Stranger

The gleaning laws and Boaz's generosity show God's concern for the vulnerable (James 1:27; Deuteronomy 10:18).

9. Purity and Integrity in Relationships

Boaz protected Ruth's reputation and followed the proper legal process, doing everything openly before witnesses (3:14; 4:1-10). Their relationship stands in contrast to the sexual chaos of Judges 19.

10. God's Care in Grief

Naomi's complaint (1:20-21) was honest, and God did not rebuke her; He restored her. God is near to the brokenhearted (Psalm 34:18).

Part Eight: Connections — How Ruth Links to the Rest of the Bible

Ruth in the New Testament

Ruth	New Testament	Use
4:13-22	Matthew 1:3-6	Boaz, Ruth, Obed, Jesse and David in the genealogy of Jesus
4:18-22	Luke 3:31-33	The line from Judah to David in Luke's genealogy
The kinsman-redeemer (3-4)	Hebrews 2:14-17; Galatians 4:4-5; 1 Peter 1:18-19	Christ took our nature to redeem us
A Gentile brought in (1:16; 2:12)	Ephesians 2:11-19; Romans 15:9-12	Gentiles made fellowheirs
Under His wings (2:12)	Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34	Christ gathering His people
The harvest (2)	Matthew 9:37-38; John 4:35	The Lord of the harvest
Providence (2:3)	Romans 8:28	All things work together for good
Bethlehem, the house of bread (1:1, 19)	John 6:35; Luke 2:4-7	The bread of life born in Bethlehem
Rest (1:9; 3:1, 18)	Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:9-10	Rest in Christ's finished work
The bride purchased (4:10)	Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-27	The church purchased with His blood

Ruth in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Moab's origin from Lot (19:30-37); Rachel and Leah (29-30); Rachel buried near Bethlehem (35:19); Tamar and Pharez (38)
Leviticus	Gleaning laws (19:9-10; 23:22); the redemption of land and of persons (25:25-55)
Numbers	Moab's seduction of Israel at Baal-peor (25), the background to Moab's exclusion
Deuteronomy	Moabites excluded from the assembly (23:3-6); levirate marriage and the shoe (25:5-10); gleaning (24:19-22)
Joshua	Rahab, mother of Boaz (Joshua 2; 6:25; Matthew 1:5)
Judges	Ruth is set "in the days when the judges ruled" (1:1); Bethlehem in Judges 17:7 and 19:1
1 Samuel	David of Bethlehem, son of Jesse (16:1, 18); David entrusts his parents to the king of Moab (22:3-4), perhaps because of his Moabite ancestry
2 Samuel	The Davidic covenant (7), the promised fruit of the line in Ruth 4

Book	Link
1 Chronicles	The genealogy from Judah to David (2:3-15)
Job	"I know that my redeemer [goel] liveth" (19:25)
Psalms	Refuge under His wings (17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 63:7; 91:4)
Proverbs	"Who can find a virtuous woman?" (31:10), the same phrase used of Ruth (3:11)
Isaiah	The LORD as Israel's Redeemer (goel) (41:14; 43:14; 44:6; 54:5); Moab's refugees and the throne in the tabernacle of David (16:1-5)
Jeremiah	The kinsman's right of redemption (32:6-12); Rachel weeping (31:15)
Ezekiel	"I spread my skirt over thee" (16:8)
Micah	Bethlehem Ephratah, from which the Ruler comes (5:2)

Themes That Run from Ruth Through Scripture

Theme	In Ruth	Developed	Fulfilled
The kinsman-redeemer	2:20; 3-4	Job 19:25; Isaiah 59:20	Galatians 4:4-5; Titus 2:14; Revelation 5:9
Grace to the Gentiles	1:16; 2:10-12	Isaiah 49:6; 56:6-7	Acts 10; Ephesians 2:11-22
The line of David	4:17-22	2 Samuel 7; Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 1:1; Revelation 22:16
Bethlehem	1:1; 4:11	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-11
Refuge under God's wings	2:12	Psalm 91:4	Matthew 23:37
Providence	2:3	Esther 4:14; Proverbs 16:9	Romans 8:28
Lovingkindness	1:8; 2:20; 3:10	Psalm 136; Hosea 2:19	Ephesians 2:4-7; Titus 3:4-5
The bridegroom and bride	3-4	Song of Solomon; Isaiah 54:5	Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **Don't leave the place of God's blessing to escape hardship.** Moab cost Naomi everything (1:1-5).
- **Choose God wholeheartedly.** Ruth went all the way; Orpah turned back (1:14-17).
- **Be honest with God in grief,** and trust that He is not finished (1:20-21).
- **Take humble work faithfully.** Ruth gleaned behind the reapers (2:2-7).
- **God guides ordinary steps.** "Her hap was to light" on the right field (2:3).
- **Let your faith shape your workplace.** "The LORD be with you" (2:4).
- **Show kindness beyond what is required.** Boaz dropped handfuls on purpose (2:16).
- **Reputation matters.** "All the city... doth know that thou art a virtuous woman" (3:11).
- **Protect the honour of others** and keep relationships pure (3:14).
- **Do things properly and openly.** Boaz followed due process at the gate (4:1-10).
- **Be willing to pay the cost of love.** The nearer kinsman would not risk his own inheritance (4:6).
- **Sit still and wait when you've done your part** (3:18).
- **God can turn bitterness into blessing** (1:21; 4:14-17).
- **Your faithfulness may affect generations.** Ruth's choice led to David and to Christ (4:17).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:16	Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God
1:21	I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty
2:3	And her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz
2:12	The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.
2:20	Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead.
3:9	Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.
3:11	All the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.
3:18	The man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.
4:14	Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman
4:17	He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Conclusion

Ruth is a short book with a vast reach. In the darkest period of Israel's history, God quietly worked through a grieving widow, a loyal Moabite daughter-in-law and a godly farmer to bring blessing out of loss. A foreigner from a cursed nation took refuge under the wings of the God of Israel, found grace in the eyes of the lord of the harvest, and was redeemed by a kinsman who paid the price and made her his bride. Their son became the grandfather of David, and from David came Jesus Christ, our Kinsman-Redeemer, who took our flesh, paid the price with His own blood, and brings all who trust Him, Jew and Gentile alike, into His family and His inheritance.

> *And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age*
>
> **Ruth 4:15**

1 Samuel

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (Samuel, Nathan, Gad; 1 Chronicles 29:29) • Date: c. 930 BC or later • Chapters: 31

> *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*
>
> **1 Samuel 15:22**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Samuel

The Name

1 and 2 Samuel were originally one book in the Hebrew Bible, named after Samuel, the prophet who anointed both of Israel's first two kings. The Greek Septuagint divided it into two books, called "1 and 2 Kingdoms" (or "Reigns"), along with 1 and 2 Kings as "3 and 4 Kingdoms." The King James Version preserves this in its heading: "The First Book of Samuel, otherwise called, The First Book of the Kings."

Author and Date

Samuel could not have written the whole book, since his death is recorded in 25:1. 1 Chronicles 29:29 names three sources: "the book of Samuel the seer, and... the book of Nathan the prophet, and... the book of Gad the seer." Samuel likely recorded the early history, and the prophets Nathan and Gad, who served David, continued it. The note that Ziklag "pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day" (27:6) shows the final form was completed after the kingdom divided (around 930 BC).

Period Covered

1 Samuel covers about a century, from the birth of Samuel (around 1105 BC) to the death of Saul (around 1010 BC). Saul reigned forty years (Acts 13:21). It is a book of transition: from the judges to the kings, from the tabernacle at Shiloh to the ark's long exile, and from the failed reign of Saul to the rise of David.

Purpose and Theme

1 Samuel shows how Israel's monarchy began and contrasts two kinds of leaders: the king the people wanted and the king God chose. Its great themes are:

- **God honours those who honour Him.** "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed" (2:30). Hannah, Samuel and David rise; Eli's house and Saul fall.
- **Obedience matters more than ritual.** "To obey is better than sacrifice" (15:22).
- **God looks on the heart.** "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (16:7).
- **God is sovereign over kings and kingdoms.** "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up" (2:7).

> *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*
>
> **1 Samuel 15:22**

Three Main Characters

Person	Chapters	Description	Lesson
Samuel	1-25	Last judge, prophet and priestly servant; born in answer to prayer; faithful from childhood to old age	A life of prayer and integrity
Saul	9-31	Israel's first king; impressive outwardly, but fearful, disobedient, jealous and finally rejected	Outward gifts without inward obedience end in ruin
David	16-31	Shepherd anointed as king; faithful under persecution; refuses to seize the throne	A heart after God's own heart

Outline of 1 Samuel

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Samuel: The Last Judge	1-7	Revival of the prophetic word
Samuel's birth and childhood	1-3	Hannah's prayer; God calls Samuel
The ark lost and returned	4-7	Ichabod; Dagon falls; Ebenezer
II. Saul: The People's King	8-15	The monarchy begins and fails
Israel demands a king	8	Rejecting God's rule
Saul chosen and confirmed	9-12	Anointed, proclaimed, victorious; Samuel's farewell
Saul's failures	13-15	Unlawful sacrifice; rash oath; disobedience over Amalek
III. Saul and David: The Rejected King and the Chosen King	16-31	God's king in waiting
David anointed and victorious	16-17	The shepherd; Goliath
David in Saul's court	18-20	Jealousy; Jonathan's covenant
David the fugitive	21-27	Nob, Adullam, En-gedi, Abigail, Ziklag
Saul's last days	28-31	The witch of Endor; Gilboa

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Samuel, the Last Judge (Chapters 1-7)

Chapter 1 — Hannah's Prayer

Elkanah, a Levite living in Ephraim's hill country (1 Chronicles 6:26-28, 33-34), had two wives: Peninnah, who had children, and Hannah, whom he loved but who was barren, "for the LORD had shut up her womb" (1:5). Every year at Shiloh, Peninnah "provoked her sore, for to make her fret" (1:6). Elkanah's comfort, "am not I better to thee than ten sons?" (1:8), could not heal her pain. In the temple courts, "in bitterness of soul," Hannah prayed and wept and made a vow:

> *O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me... but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*
>
> **1 Samuel 1:11**

Her lips moved without sound, and Eli the priest thought she was drunk (1:12-14). She answered, "I have poured out my soul before the LORD" (1:15). Eli blessed her, and "her countenance was no more sad" (1:17-18): she left her burden with God before she saw the answer. God remembered her, and she bore a son, naming him Samuel, "Because I have asked him of the LORD" (1:19-20). When he was weaned, perhaps around age three, she brought him to Shiloh with sacrifices: "For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition... therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD" (1:27-28). She kept her vow at great personal cost.

Chapter 2 — Hannah's Song; Eli's Wicked Sons

Hannah's prayer of praise is one of the great songs of Scripture:

> *My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD... There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.*
>
> **1 Samuel 2:1-2**

Her song celebrates God's reversals: the proud brought low, the humble raised. "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (2:6). "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes" (2:8). It ends with a prophecy: "the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed" (2:10). There was no king in Israel yet. This is the first time Scripture calls the king God's "anointed" (Hebrew mashiach, Messiah). Mary's song, the Magnificat, closely echoes Hannah's (Luke 1:46-55), and Zacharias spoke of "an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David" (Luke 1:69).

In sharp contrast, Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas "were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD" (2:12). They took the best of the sacrifices by force before the fat was burned to God, "for men abhorred the offering of the LORD" (2:13-17), and committed immorality with women who served at the tabernacle door (2:22). Eli rebuked them weakly but did not remove them (2:23-25). Meanwhile, "the

child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men" (2:26), the same words used of Jesus (Luke 2:52). His mother made him a little coat every year (2:19).

A man of God pronounced judgment on Eli's house: "thou... honourest thy sons above me" (2:29). God declared:

> *Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*
>
> **1 Samuel 2:30**

Eli's descendants would die young, both his sons would die on the same day as a sign (2:31-34), and God would "raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind" (2:35). This was fulfilled in the line of Zadok (1 Kings 2:27, 35), and ultimately in Christ, the perfectly faithful High Priest (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1-2).

Chapter 3 — God Calls Samuel

"And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision" (3:1). Spiritual darkness lay over Israel, and Eli's eyes were growing dim (3:2). But "ere the lamp of God went out in the temple," the LORD called Samuel as he lay near the ark (3:3-4). Three times Samuel ran to Eli, "Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him" (3:7). Eli finally understood and told him what to say. The fourth time:

> *And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.*
>
> **1 Samuel 3:10**

God's first message to the boy was hard: judgment on Eli's house "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (3:13). Samuel was afraid to tell Eli, but did so fully. Eli answered, "It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good" (3:18). "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD" (3:19-20). God broke the silence by raising a faithful prophet.

Chapter 4 — The Ark Captured: Ichabod

Israel fought the Philistines at Aphek and lost 4,000 men (4:1-2). Instead of seeking God, the elders said, "Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies" (4:3). They treated the ark as a lucky charm. Israel shouted so the earth rang, and the Philistines were afraid, but fought harder (4:5-9). Israel lost 30,000 men, the ark was captured, and Hophni and Phinehas died on the same day, as foretold (4:10-11). When the 98-year-old Eli heard that the ark was taken, he fell backward from his seat by the gate, broke his neck and died; he had judged Israel forty years (4:15-18). Phinehas' wife died in childbirth, naming her son Ichabod, "The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken" (4:19-22). Shiloh itself was evidently destroyed, and God later pointed to it as a warning: "go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh... and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel" (Jeremiah 7:12; Psalm 78:60-64).

Chapter 5 — The Ark Among the Philistines

The Philistines set the ark in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod as a trophy. The next morning Dagon had fallen on his face before the ark. They set him up again, and the next morning his head and both hands were cut off on the threshold (5:1-4). Israel's God had defeated the Philistine god in his own house, even when Israel had been defeated. God struck the people of Ashdod with emerods (tumours), and when the ark was moved to Gath and then Ekron, the plague followed: "the hand of God was very heavy there" (5:6-12). God does not need His people's armies to defend His glory.

Chapter 6 — The Ark Returned

After seven months, the Philistines sent the ark back with a trespass offering of five golden emerods and five golden mice, one for each lord (6:1-5, 17-18). As a test, they put it on a new cart pulled by two milk cows separated from their calves. If the cows went against nature straight to Israel's border, they would know the plague was from God (6:7-9). "And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh... lowing as they went, and turned not aside" (6:12). The people of Beth-shemesh rejoiced and offered the cows as a burnt offering (6:13-15). But some men looked into the ark, and God struck them (6:19; the KJV reads "fifty thousand and threescore and ten men," while some ancient manuscripts and historians give a much smaller number, 70). They asked, "Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God?" (6:20). The ark went to Kirjath-jearim, to the house of Abinadab, where it stayed about twenty years (6:21-7:2).

Chapter 7 — Revival at Mizpeh: Ebenezer

"All the house of Israel lamented after the LORD" (7:2). Samuel called for real repentance:

> *If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*
>
> **1 Samuel 7:3**

The people put away their idols, gathered at Mizpeh, poured out water before the LORD, fasted, and confessed, "We have sinned against the LORD" (7:4-6). When the Philistines attacked, the people begged Samuel not to stop praying. He offered a lamb, cried to the LORD, "and the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them" (7:8-10). Samuel set up a stone and called it Ebenezer, "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us" (7:12). The Philistines were subdued all the days of Samuel, and Israel regained its cities (7:13-14). Samuel judged Israel all his life on a yearly circuit of Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpeh, returning home to Ramah, where he built an altar (7:15-17). This was revival: repentance, putting away idols, prayer, sacrifice and God's intervention.

Section II: Saul, the People's King (Chapters 8-15)

Chapter 8 — "Make Us a King"

When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges, but they "turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (8:1-3). Like Eli, he failed with his sons. The elders demanded, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (8:5). Samuel was displeased and prayed. God answered:

> *Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*
>
> **1 Samuel 8:7**

Moses had foreseen this request and given laws for a king (Deuteronomy 17:14-20). The problem was not having a king, which God intended (Genesis 49:10), but the motive: to be "like all the nations," and to trust a human king instead of God. Samuel warned them of "the manner of the king": he would take their sons for his chariots and army, their daughters as servants, their best fields, a tenth of their produce and flocks, and they would cry out because of him (8:11-18). Solomon's heavy burdens fulfilled this (1 Kings 4:7; 12:4). "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations" (8:19-20). Hosea later recorded God's verdict: "I gave thee a king in mine anger" (Hosea 13:11).

Chapter 9 — Saul Meets Samuel

Saul, son of Kish the Benjamite, was "a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people" (9:2). He was exactly what people look for. Searching for his father's lost donkeys, he came to Samuel on his servant's suggestion (9:3-10). "He that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer" (9:9). God had told Samuel the day before, "To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines" (9:15-16). Saul began humbly: "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least?" (9:21). Samuel honoured him at a feast with the reserved portion (9:22-24).

Chapter 10 — Saul Anointed and Proclaimed

Samuel anointed Saul privately: "Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" (10:1). He gave him three signs, all fulfilled that day (10:2-9). "God gave him another heart," and when he met a company of prophets, "the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them" (10:9-10). People asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (10:11-12). At Mizpeh, Samuel rebuked the people again for rejecting God (10:18-19), then the lot fell on Saul, but he could not be found; "Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff" (10:22). When he stood up, head and shoulders above all, the people shouted, "God save the king" (10:24). Samuel wrote "the manner of the kingdom" in a book before the LORD (10:25). Some "children of Belial" despised him, "But he held his peace" (10:27).

Chapter 11 — Saul's First Victory: Jabesh-gilead

Nahash the Ammonite besieged Jabesh-gilead and offered peace only if he could thrust out every man's right eye as a reproach on Israel (11:1-2). When messengers reached Gibeah, "the Spirit of God came upon Saul" (11:6). He cut a yoke of oxen in pieces and sent them through Israel (echoing Judges 19:29, but this time to save), and 330,000 men gathered (11:7-8). Saul rescued Jabesh (11:11). When the people wanted to execute those who had despised him, Saul refused: "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel" (11:13). The kingdom was renewed at Gilgal with great rejoicing (11:14-15). This was Saul at his best: Spirit-filled, decisive and gracious.

Chapter 12 — Samuel's Farewell

Samuel called all Israel to witness his integrity: "Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded?... or of whose hand have I received any bribe?" (12:3). No one could accuse him (12:4-5). He reviewed God's faithfulness from Moses to the judges (12:6-11) and their sin in demanding a king (12:12). Yet if king and people would fear and obey God, all would be well (12:14-15). To confirm his words, Samuel called on God, who sent thunder and rain at wheat harvest, when rain almost never falls (12:16-18). The people, terrified, confessed their sin (12:19). Samuel answered with grace:

> *Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart... For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake... Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way.*
>
> **1 Samuel 12:20-23**

To Samuel, prayerlessness for God's people was sin. He warned: "if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king" (12:25).

Chapter 13 — Saul's First Failure: The Unlawful Sacrifice

Jonathan struck a Philistine garrison, and the Philistines gathered a huge army with chariots and horsemen (13:3-5). The Israelites hid "in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks" (13:6). Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days at Gilgal for him to offer sacrifices (10:8). Saul waited, but as the deadline ran out and his army scattered, he offered the burnt offering himself (13:8-9). Samuel arrived as he finished. Saul's excuses: the people were scattering, Samuel was late, the Philistines were gathering, "I forced myself therefore" (13:11-12). Samuel answered:

> *Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God... now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people*
>
> **1 Samuel 13:13-14**

Saul's sin was impatience and disobedience under pressure, and intruding into the priestly role (compare 2 Chronicles 26:16-21). Paul quotes this verse of David (Acts 13:22). The chapter notes that the Philistines had banned blacksmiths in Israel, so only Saul and Jonathan had swords (13:19-22).

Chapter 14 — Jonathan's Faith and Saul's Rash Oath

Jonathan and his armourbearer went alone to attack a Philistine garrison on a cliff. Jonathan said:

> *Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.*
>
> **1 Samuel 14:6**

They asked for a sign, climbed up on hands and feet, and killed about twenty men; God sent an earthquake and panic through the Philistine camp (14:8-15). "So the LORD saved Israel that day" (14:23). But Saul had made a rash oath: anyone who ate food before evening would be cursed (14:24). The army fought faint and hungry. Jonathan, not knowing, ate some honey and was refreshed: "My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened" (14:27-30). In their hunger the people slaughtered animals and ate them with the blood, sinning against God's law (14:32-34). When God did not answer Saul, lots revealed Jonathan, and Saul was ready to execute his own son (14:36-44). The people rescued Jonathan: "there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day" (14:45). Saul's leadership was becoming self-centred: "that I may be avenged on mine enemies" (14:24). The chapter ends with Saul's victories and family (14:47-52).

Chapter 15 — Saul Rejected

God commanded Saul to carry out the long-promised judgment on Amalek, who had attacked Israel from behind in the wilderness (Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19): "utterly destroy all that they have" (15:2-3). Saul won the battle, "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen... and would not utterly destroy them" (15:9). God said to Samuel, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me" (15:11). Samuel was grieved and "cried unto the LORD all night."

Saul had set up a monument to himself at Carmel (15:12). He greeted Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of the LORD." Samuel replied, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears?" (15:13-14). Saul blamed the people and claimed the animals were for sacrifice to God (15:15, 21). Samuel answered:

> *Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*
>
> **1 Samuel 15:22-23**

Saul said, "I have sinned... because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice" (15:24), but his chief concern was his image: "honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people" (15:30). As Samuel turned away, Saul grabbed his robe and it tore. Samuel said, "The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent" (15:27-29). Samuel himself executed Agag (15:32-33). "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul" (15:35). Partial obedience is disobedience. Centuries later, Haman "the Agagite," a descendant of the

spared king, tried to destroy all the Jews (Esther 3:1, 6).

Section III: Saul and David (Chapters 16-31)

Chapter 16 — David Anointed

"How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?" (16:1). God sent Samuel to Bethlehem, to Jesse, "for I have provided me a king among his sons." Samuel thought the tall eldest son Eliab must be the one, but God said:

> *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*
>
> **1 Samuel 16:7**

Seven sons passed by. The youngest had not even been invited; he was "keeping the sheep" (16:11). When David came, "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance," God said, "Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (16:12). "And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward" (16:13). At the same time, "the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him" (16:14). God permitted a tormenting spirit as judgment. Saul's servants sought a harpist, and one described David: "cunning in playing, and a mighty man of valour, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him" (16:18). David's music refreshed Saul, and he became his armourbearer (16:21-23). The anointed king entered the court as a servant.

Chapter 17 — David and Goliath

The Philistines and Israel faced each other across the valley of Elah. Goliath of Gath, about nine and a half feet tall ("six cubits and a span"), in a bronze coat of mail weighing about 125 pounds, with a spear whose iron head weighed about 15 pounds, challenged Israel to send a champion: winner takes all (17:4-10). For forty days, morning and evening, he defied Israel, and "they were dismayed, and greatly afraid" (17:11, 16). Saul, the tallest man in Israel, did nothing.

David, sent by his father with food for his brothers, heard the giant and asked, "who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (17:26). His brother Eliab accused him of pride (17:28). "Is there not a cause?" (17:29). Before Saul, David recounted how God had helped him kill a lion and a bear while protecting his sheep: "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (17:37). He refused Saul's armour, which he had not tested, and chose five smooth stones and his sling (17:38-40). To Goliath's curses, David answered:

> *Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S*
>
> **1 Samuel 17:45-47**

The stone sank into Goliath's forehead, and he fell on his face (17:49). David cut off his head with the giant's own sword (17:51). The Philistines fled, and Israel pursued (17:52-53). Saul asked Abner, "whose son is this youth?" (17:55-58). Since David had already served Saul (16:21), many explain that Saul was asking about David's family background, since he had promised to make the victor's father's house free (17:25), or that chapter 16:14-23 is arranged by topic rather than strict time order.

Chapter 18 — Jonathan's Love and Saul's Jealousy

"The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (18:1). Jonathan, the heir to the throne, made a covenant with David and gave him his robe, garments, sword, bow and girdle (18:3-4), symbolically giving up his own claim. When the women sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," Saul was very angry: "what can he have more but the kingdom?" (18:7-8). "And Saul eyed David from that day and forward" (18:9). Twice he threw a javelin at David as he played (18:10-11). "Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul" (18:12). Saul promised his daughter Merab, then gave her to another (18:17-19). Michal loved David, and Saul set a bride price of a hundred Philistine foreskins, hoping David would die; David brought two hundred (18:20-27). Throughout, "David behaved himself wisely" (18:5, 14, 15, 30).

Chapter 19 — Saul Tries to Kill David

Saul openly ordered David's death. Jonathan pleaded for him and Saul swore not to kill him (19:1-7), but after another victory, Saul threw his javelin again (19:9-10). Michal let David down through a window and put an image (teraphim) in his bed to deceive the messengers (19:11-17). David fled to Samuel at Naioth in Ramah. Three groups of Saul's messengers came and began to prophesy; then Saul himself came, and the Spirit came on him so that he stripped off his royal garments and lay prophesying all day and night (19:18-24). God protected David by overwhelming his pursuers.

Chapter 20 — Jonathan's Covenant with David

David asked Jonathan, "what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?... there is but a step between me and death" (20:1-3). They agreed on a test at the new moon feast: if Saul was angry at David's absence, Jonathan would warn him by shooting arrows (20:5-23). They renewed their covenant, with Jonathan asking David to show kindness to his descendants for ever (20:14-17, 42; fulfilled in 2 Samuel 9). Saul raged at Jonathan, "Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman... as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom" (20:30-31), and threw a javelin at his own son (20:33). The arrow signal was given, and the friends wept and parted: "the LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever" (20:41-42).

Chapter 21 — David at Nob and Gath

Alone and hungry, David went to Ahimelech the priest at Nob, claiming to be on a secret mission for the king. Ahimelech gave him the hallowed shewbread, the only bread there, and Goliath's sword (21:1-9). Jesus cited this to show that human need can take precedence over ceremonial law (Matthew 12:3-4; Mark 2:25-26). Doeg the Edomite, Saul's chief herdsman, was there and saw it (21:7). David then fled to Achish king of Gath, Goliath's city; recognised and afraid, he pretended to be insane, scrabbling on the gate and letting spittle run down his beard (21:10-15). Psalms 34 and 56 come from this time: "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4).

Chapter 22 — The Cave of Adullam and the Massacre at Nob

David escaped to the cave of Adullam. His family came to him, "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them" (22:1-2), about 400 men. These became David's mighty men. David took his parents to the king of Moab for safety (22:3-4), perhaps because of his great-grandmother Ruth. The prophet Gad told him to return to Judah (22:5).

Saul accused his servants of conspiracy (22:6-8). Doeg reported that Ahimelech had helped David (22:9-10). Saul ordered the priests killed; his guards refused to lift their hands against the LORD's priests, but Doeg killed 85 priests and destroyed Nob, men, women, children and animals (22:17-19). Saul did to God's priests what he had refused to do to Amalek. This fulfilled the judgment on Eli's house (2:31-33). Only Abiathar escaped to David, who said, "I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house... abide thou with me" (22:20-23). Psalm 52 was written about Doeg.

Chapter 23 — Keilah, Ziph and Jonathan's Last Visit

David rescued the city of Keilah from the Philistines after inquiring of the LORD twice (23:1-5). When he learned through the ephod that the people of Keilah would betray him to Saul, he left (23:6-13). In the wilderness of Ziph, "Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand" (23:14). Jonathan came secretly "and strengthened his hand in God" (23:16): "Fear not... thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee" (23:17). It was their last meeting. The Ziphites betrayed David's location (Psalm 54), and Saul nearly caught him at a mountain, but a Philistine raid forced Saul to withdraw; the place was called Sela-hammahlekoth, "the rock of divisions" (23:19-28).

Chapter 24 — David Spares Saul at En-gedi

Saul entered a cave at En-gedi to relieve himself, not knowing David and his men were hiding deep inside (24:1-3). David's men said God had delivered his enemy into his hand. David secretly cut off the edge of Saul's robe, but "David's heart smote him" (24:4-5):

> *The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.*
>
> **1 Samuel 24:6**

Outside, David showed Saul the piece of robe as proof: "The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee" (24:12). Saul wept: "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil... I know well that thou shalt surely be king" (24:17, 20). David swore not to destroy Saul's descendants (24:21-22). Psalms 57 and 142 come from David's time in the cave. David left vengeance to God (Romans 12:19).

Chapter 25 — Samuel's Death; Nabal and Abigail

"And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah" (25:1). In the wilderness of Paran, David's men had protected the flocks of Nabal, a rich man of Carmel, "churlish and evil in his doings" (25:2-3, 15-16). When David asked for provisions at sheep-shearing time, Nabal insulted him: "Who is David?" (25:10-11). David, furious, set out with 400 men to kill every male in Nabal's house (25:13, 21-22). Nabal's wife Abigail, "a woman of good

understanding, and of a beautiful countenance" (25:3), quickly brought food and met David on the road. She took the blame, appealed to David's future as king, and urged him not to have "shed blood causeless" (25:23-31): "the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God" (25:29). David said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: And blessed be thy advice" (25:32-33). When Nabal sobered up and heard, "his heart died within him, and he became as a stone," and ten days later the LORD struck him (25:37-38). God avenged David without David staining his hands. David married Abigail (25:39-42). Saul had given Michal to another man (25:44).

Chapter 26 — David Spares Saul Again

The Ziphites again betrayed David (26:1). At night, David and Abishai crept into Saul's camp, where Saul slept with his spear stuck in the ground by his head, for "a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them" (26:7, 12). Abishai asked to kill Saul with one stroke. David refused: "who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?... the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish" (26:9-10). He took Saul's spear and water jug instead. From a distant hill he rebuked Abner for failing to guard the king (26:13-16). Saul confessed, "I have sinned... behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly" (26:21). David answered, "The LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness" (26:23). It was their last meeting.

Chapter 27 — David Among the Philistines

In a moment of discouragement, "David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul" (27:1). Instead of seeking God, he took his 600 men and their families to Achish of Gath, who gave him the town of Ziklag (27:2-6). There he lived sixteen months, raiding the Geshurites, Gezrites and Amalekites, leaving no survivors to report, and deceiving Achish into thinking he was raiding Judah (27:8-12). Faith had given way to fear, and fear led to deception.

Chapter 28 — Saul and the Witch of Endor

The Philistines gathered at Shunem to fight Israel, and David was expected to march with Achish (28:1-2). When Saul saw their army, "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets" (28:5-6). Saul had earlier expelled mediums from the land, as God's law required (28:3; Deuteronomy 18:10-12). Now, in disguise, he went to a woman with a familiar spirit at Endor and asked her to bring up Samuel (28:7-11). When she saw Samuel she cried out in terror (28:12), which suggests something happened that she did not expect or control. Samuel asked, "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" and repeated God's judgment: the kingdom given to David because Saul did not obey concerning Amalek, "and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me" (28:15-19). Saul collapsed in fear (28:20).

Was it really Samuel? Christians hold different views. Many believe God sovereignly allowed the real Samuel to appear, as shown by the woman's shock and the accurate prophecy. Others believe a demonic spirit impersonated Samuel. All agree that consulting the dead is forbidden and that Saul's act was the final step in his rebellion: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD... and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; And enquired not of the LORD" (1 Chronicles 10:13-14).

Chapter 29 — David Sent Away by the Philistines

The Philistine lords refused to let David fight with them, fearing he would turn against them in battle to win back Saul's favour: "Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?" (29:4-5). Achish sent David back (29:6-11). In His providence, God rescued David from having to fight against his own people and the LORD's anointed.

Chapter 30 — Ziklag Burned; David Recovers All

Returning to Ziklag, David's men found it burned by the Amalekites, and their wives and children taken captive (30:1-3). They wept until they could weep no more, and the men spoke of stoning David. "But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God" (30:6). This was the turning point: David returned to seeking God. Through Abiathar and the ephod, he asked, "Shall I pursue?" and God answered, "Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all" (30:7-8). An abandoned Egyptian servant led them to the Amalekite camp (30:11-16). David attacked, "And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away... there was nothing lacking to them" (30:18-19). When some men refused to share the spoil with the 200 who had been too exhausted to continue, David established a law: "as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike" (30:24). He sent gifts of the spoil to the elders of Judah (30:26-31). David did against Amalek what Saul had failed to do.

Chapter 31 — The Death of Saul on Mount Gilboa

On the same days, the Philistines defeated Israel on Mount Gilboa. Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchishua, Saul's sons, were killed (31:1-2). Saul, badly wounded by archers, asked his armourbearer to kill him; when he refused, "Saul took a sword, and fell upon it," and his armourbearer did the same (31:3-5). "So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together" (31:6), exactly as Samuel had said (28:19). The Philistines cut off his head, put his armour in the temple of Ashtaroth, and fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan (31:8-10). The men of Jabesh-gilead, whom Saul had rescued at the start of his reign (11), marched all night, took down the bodies, burned them, buried the bones under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days (31:11-13). Saul began with the Spirit's power and Jabesh's rescue and ended by his own sword, with only Jabesh's gratitude to honour him. (2 Samuel 1 records an Amalekite claiming to have killed Saul, evidently a lie told in hope of reward.)

Part Three: Christ in 1 Samuel

The Anointed King

Hannah first prophesied of God's "king" and "anointed" (2:10). The Hebrew word mashiach (Messiah) and its Greek equivalent Christos both mean "anointed one." 1 Samuel is the story of the first two anointed kings: Saul, who failed, and David, the man after God's heart, whose greater Son would be the true Messiah. "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him" (Psalm 89:20; Acts 13:22-23).

David as a Type of Christ

David	1 Samuel	Christ	New Testament
Born in Bethlehem	16:1, 18	Born in Bethlehem	Matthew 2:1; John 7:42
The overlooked youngest son	16:11	"Is not this the carpenter?"	Mark 6:3
A shepherd who risked his life for the sheep	16:11; 17:34-35	The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep	John 10:11
Anointed and filled with the Spirit	16:13	Anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power	Acts 10:38; Luke 3:22
Ministered to the troubled	16:23	Healed the oppressed	Luke 4:18
Despised by his brothers	17:28	His brethren did not believe in Him	John 7:5
Fought the enemy alone as the people's champion	17	Defeated Satan alone on our behalf	Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15
Killed the giant with the giant's own sword	17:51	Through death destroyed him that had the power of death	Hebrews 2:14
His victory became the people's victory	17:52	"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory"	1 Corinthians 15:57
Loved by Jonathan, who gave him his robe	18:1-4	Loved by His own; John said "He must increase"	John 3:30
Hated and hunted by the ruling king	18-26	Hated and plotted against by the rulers	John 11:53
Anointed king, but rejected before reigning	16-31	Rejected before His kingdom comes	Luke 19:12-14; Acts 1:6-11
Gathered the distressed, indebted and discontented	22:2	"This man receiveth sinners"	Luke 15:2; Matthew 11:28
Spared his enemy and returned good for evil	24; 26	"Father, forgive them"	Luke 23:34
Recovered all that was lost	30:18-19	Came "to seek and to save that which was lost"	Luke 19:10
Shared the spoil with those who stayed behind	30:24	Gave gifts unto men	Ephesians 4:8

Saul and David Contrasted

Saul	David
Chosen by the people's desire (8:19)	Chosen by God's heart (13:14; 16:1)
Impressive outwardly (9:2)	God looked on his heart (16:7)
Feared the people (15:24)	Feared God (17:45; 24:6)
Disobeyed and excused himself (13:12; 15:20-21)	Inquired of the LORD (23:2, 4; 30:8)
Jealous of another's success (18:8-9)	Loyal to the LORD's anointed (24:6; 26:9)
Grieved the Spirit and lost Him (16:14)	The Spirit remained on him (16:13)
Sought a medium when God was silent (28:7)	"Encouraged himself in the LORD" (30:6)
Spared Amalek (15:9)	Defeated Amalek (30:17)
Died by his own sword (31:4)	Became king by God's timing (2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3)

The Faithful Priest

"I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart" (2:35). Fulfilled historically in Zadok's line (1 Kings 2:35), and perfectly in Christ, "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Hebrews 2:17).

Samuel as a Picture of Christ

Samuel was dedicated to God from birth, grew "in favour both with the LORD, and also with men" (2:26; Luke 2:52), served as prophet, priest-like intercessor and judge, prayed for the people (7:5; 12:23), and anointed the king. He points to Christ, who unites the offices of Prophet, Priest and King.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	1 Samuel	Fulfillment
A son for Hannah	1:17	1:20
God will exalt the horn of His anointed king	2:10	David (2 Samuel 7); Christ (Luke 1:69)
Hophni and Phinehas will die on the same day	2:34	4:11
Eli's house cut off from the priesthood	2:31-33; 3:12-14	Priests of Nob killed (22:18-19); Abiathar removed (1 Kings 2:27)
A faithful priest raised up	2:35	Zadok (1 Kings 2:35); Christ (Hebrews 2:17)
A king will take your sons, fields and a tenth	8:11-18	14:52; Solomon's burdens (1 Kings 4:7; 12:4)
Three signs to Saul	10:2-7	10:9-10
Thunder and rain at wheat harvest	12:17	12:18
Saul's kingdom will not continue	13:14	31; 2 Samuel 5
The kingdom given to a better neighbour	15:28	David
David will be king	16:1, 13; 23:17; 24:20	2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3
Saul and his sons will die tomorrow	28:19	31:2-6
David will "without fail recover all"	30:8	30:18-19

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Samuel 1-2 — Hannah: Prayer in Pain

Hannah shows how to bring deep pain to God: she went to God's house, prayed honestly "in bitterness of soul," made a vow, endured being misunderstood, and left her burden with God before seeing the answer (1:18). She kept her promise when God answered, and her praise looked beyond herself to God's coming King. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

1 Samuel 3 — "Speak; for Thy Servant Heareth"

God spoke when His word was rare, not to the aged high priest but to a child who was willing to listen. Samuel's response is the right posture of every believer before Scripture: ready to hear and obey (James 1:22). He then delivered a hard message faithfully, a mark of a true prophet (Jeremiah 23:28).

1 Samuel 15 — Partial Obedience Is Disobedience

Saul obeyed most of God's command and believed he had obeyed it all (15:13, 20). He blamed others, used religious excuses, and cared more for his reputation than for God. Samuel's answer, "to obey is better than sacrifice," is repeated through Scripture (Psalm 51:16-17; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 9:13). Rebellion is compared to witchcraft because both reject God's authority for another source of direction.

1 Samuel 16:7 — The LORD Looks on the Heart

Israel chose Saul for his height; God chose David for his heart. God's standards for leaders are spiritual, not physical or social (1 Corinthians 1:26-29). "The LORD searcheth all hearts" (1 Chronicles 28:9).

1 Samuel 17 — The Battle Is the LORD's

David's confidence rested on God's past faithfulness (17:37), God's honour ("the armies of the living God," 17:26), and God's name (17:45). He refused borrowed armour and used what God had trained him with. His purpose was that "all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (17:46). The giants in our lives are defeated the same way: by faith in the living God (1 John 5:4).

1 Samuel 24 and 26 — Refusing to Take Vengeance

Twice David had the opportunity, the justification and the encouragement of his men to kill Saul, and twice he refused. He respected God-given authority and trusted God's timing for the throne God had promised. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19). Christ likewise "when he was reviled, reviled not again... but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Samuel

1. The Sovereignty of God

God raises and humbles (2:6-8), opens and closes wombs (1:5, 19), chooses and rejects kings (15:28; 16:1), and directs events through providence (9:15-16; 23:26-28).

2. The Power of Prayer

Hannah's prayer brought Samuel (1); Samuel's prayer brought victory (7:9-10) and thunder (12:18); Samuel considered prayerlessness a sin (12:23); David repeatedly inquired of the LORD (23; 30).

3. The Word of the LORD

The book begins with God's word being rare (3:1) and shows its restoration through Samuel, whose words never fell to the ground (3:19). Saul's downfall came because he "rejected the word of the LORD" (15:23, 26).

4. Obedience Over Ritual

The ark as a lucky charm (4) and Saul's sacrifices (13; 15) show that religious acts cannot replace obedience.

5. The Heart

God looks on the heart (16:7). David's heart toward God, not his perfection, made him the king God wanted (13:14; Acts 13:22).

6. The Holiness of God

God's holiness was shown at Dagon's temple (5), at Beth-shemesh (6:19-20) and in the judgment of Eli's house (2-4). "There is none holy as the LORD" (2:2).

7. Parental Responsibility

Eli honoured his sons above God and failed to restrain them (2:29; 3:13); Samuel's sons also went astray (8:3). Godliness in public ministry does not excuse neglect at home (1 Timothy 3:4-5).

8. Godly Friendship

Jonathan's covenant love for David, giving up his own claim to the throne, is one of the Bible's great pictures of friendship (18:1-4; 20; 23:16-18). "A friend loveth at all times" (Proverbs 17:17).

9. Respect for God-Given Authority

David honoured Saul as "the LORD's anointed" even while Saul sought his life (24; 26). Submission does not mean approving sin, but leaving judgment to God (Romans 13:1-2; 1 Peter 2:17-23).

10. The Dangers of Jealousy, Fear and the Occult

Saul's jealousy led him to attempted murder and the massacre of priests (18-22). His fear of people led to disobedience (15:24), and his fear of the Philistines led him to a medium (28). "The fear of man bringeth a snare" (Proverbs 29:25).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Samuel Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Samuel in the New Testament

1 Samuel	New Testament	Use
2:1-10 (Hannah's song)	Luke 1:46-55	Mary's Magnificat echoes Hannah
2:10	Luke 1:69	The horn of salvation in David's house
2:26	Luke 2:52	Growing in favour with God and man
3; 7; 12 (Samuel)	Acts 3:24; 13:20; Hebrews 11:32	Samuel as the beginning of the prophets and a hero of faith
8-10 (the request for a king)	Acts 13:21	God gave them Saul for forty years
13:14; 16:1, 12-13	Acts 13:22	A man after mine own heart
16:1; 17:12 (Jesse of Bethlehem)	Matthew 1:5-6; Luke 3:32; John 7:42; Romans 15:12	David's line and town; the root of Jesse
16:7	Luke 16:15; Acts 15:8	God knows the heart
17 (Goliath)	Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Corinthians 1:27-28	The champion who defeats the enemy; God uses the weak
21:1-6 (the shewbread)	Matthew 12:3-4; Mark 2:25-26; Luke 6:3-4	Mercy and the Sabbath
24; 26 (sparing Saul)	Romans 12:19; 1 Peter 2:23	Leaving vengeance to God
28 (the medium)	Galatians 5:20; Revelation 21:8	Witchcraft condemned
30:24 (equal shares)	1 Corinthians 12:21-26	Every member valued

1 Samuel in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	God's command to blot out Amalek (17:14-16), carried out in 1 Samuel 15 and 30
Numbers	The Nazarite vow (6), taken by Hannah for Samuel (1:11); the Levites' genealogy (Samuel was a Levite, 1 Chronicles 6:33-34)
Deuteronomy	The law of the king (17:14-20); the judgment on Amalek (25:17-19); the ban on mediums (18:10-12)
Judges	Continues the age of the judges; Samson and Samuel both Nazarites; Gibeah and Jabesh-gilead (Judges 19-21; 1 Samuel 10:26; 11); "no king in Israel" answered
Ruth	David's ancestry in Bethlehem; David entrusts his parents to Moab (22:3-4)
2 Samuel	Direct continuation: David's reign; David's lament for Saul and Jonathan (1); kindness to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (9)

Book	Link
1 Kings	Abiathar removed, fulfilling the word against Eli (2:27); Zadok as the faithful priest (2:35)
1 Chronicles	Saul's death and its cause (10:13-14); the sources of Samuel, Nathan and Gad (29:29)
Esther	Haman the Agagite, from the line of the spared king (3:1)
Psalms	Titles linking Psalms to events: 34 and 56 (Gath), 52 (Doeg), 54 (Ziph), 57 and 142 (the cave), 59 (Saul's men watching David's house), 18 (deliverance from Saul); 78:60-72 (Shiloh forsaken; David chosen from the sheepfolds); 89:20 (David anointed); 99:6 (Samuel among those who call on God's name)
Isaiah	The root and stem of Jesse (11:1, 10)
Jeremiah	Shiloh as a warning (7:12-14); "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me" (15:1)
Hosea	"I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath" (13:10-11)
Micah	The ruler from Bethlehem (5:2)

Themes That Run from 1 Samuel Through Scripture

Theme	In 1 Samuel	Developed	Fulfilled
The Anointed King (Messiah)	2:10; 16:13	2 Samuel 7; Psalm 2; Isaiah 11	Luke 2:11; Acts 2:36
God reverses human fortunes	2:4-8	Psalm 113:7-8	Luke 1:51-53; James 4:6
Obedience over sacrifice	15:22	Psalm 51:16-17; Hosea 6:6	Matthew 9:13; Romans 12:1
God looks on the heart	16:7	1 Chronicles 28:9; Jeremiah 17:10	Luke 16:15; Revelation 2:23
The faithful priest	2:35	Zechariah 6:13	Hebrews 2:17; 7:26
The Good Shepherd-King	16:11; 17:34-35	Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34:23	John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20
The champion over the enemy	17	Isaiah 53:12	Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14
Intercessory prayer	7:5; 12:23	Jeremiah 15:1	Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:1

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Pour out your heart to God** in your deepest pain (1:15).
- **Keep your promises to God** (1:27-28).
- **Honour God above your children** and correct them (2:29; 3:13).
- **Be ready to listen to God's Word** (3:10).
- **God is not a lucky charm** (4:3).
- **True revival means putting away idols** (7:3-4).
- **Remember how far God has brought you:** "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us" (7:12).
- **Don't demand to be like the world** (8:5, 20).
- **Never stop praying for others** (12:23).
- **Wait for God under pressure** (13:8-14).
- **God can save by many or by few** (14:6).
- **Partial obedience is disobedience** (15:22-23).
- **Look at the heart, not appearances** (16:7).
- **Face your giants in the name of the LORD** (17:45).
- **Be a faithful friend** who strengthens others in God (23:16).
- **Leave vengeance to God** (24:6, 12).
- **Listen to wise counsel** (25:32-33).
- **When everything is lost, encourage yourself in the LORD** (30:6).
- **Value those who serve behind the scenes** (30:24).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:27	For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him
2:2	There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.
2:30	Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.
3:10	Speak; for thy servant heareth.
7:12	Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.
12:23	God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you
14:6	There is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.
15:22	Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.
16:7	For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.
17:47	For the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.
30:6	But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

Conclusion

1 Samuel marks the great turning point from the judges to the kings. It opens with a barren woman's prayer and the birth of a prophet who restored God's word to Israel. It shows a nation demanding a king "like all the nations" and receiving Saul, impressive outwardly but disobedient, fearful and jealous, who ended his life by his own sword. Alongside him rises David, the shepherd from Bethlehem, chosen for his heart, anointed by the Spirit, victorious over the giant, hunted but faithful, refusing to grasp the throne before God's time. The book points beyond David to his greater Son, the Anointed King, the Good Shepherd, the Champion who defeated our enemy, and the One who "will raise up a faithful priest" and reign for ever.

> *For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*
>
> **1 Samuel 16:7**

2 Samuel

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (Nathan, Gad) • Date: c. 930 BC or later • Chapters: 24

> *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*
>
> **2 Samuel 7:16**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Samuel

The Book

2 Samuel continues directly from 1 Samuel; in the Hebrew Bible they were one book. The King James Version calls it "The Second Book of Samuel, otherwise called, The Second Book of the Kings." Samuel himself had died (1 Samuel 25:1), so this part was written by the prophets who served David, Nathan and Gad (1 Chronicles 29:29), with the final form completed after the kingdom divided around 930 BC.

Period Covered

2 Samuel covers the forty-year reign of David, from Saul's death (around 1010 BC) to David's last years (around 970 BC). "David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah" (5:4-5).

Purpose and Theme

2 Samuel shows God establishing David's kingdom and making an everlasting covenant with him, and then shows the painful consequences when the king sins. It has a clear two-part shape: **David's triumphs** (chapters 1-10) and **David's troubles** (chapters 11-24), with chapter 11, his sin with Bathsheba, as the turning point. Its central passage is the Davidic Covenant:

> *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*
>
> **2 Samuel 7:16**

This promise is the foundation of all later Messianic hope. The prophets, the Psalms and the New Testament all look to "the Son of David" whose throne will be eternal, fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Luke 1:32-33).

The Character of David

David is the most fully described person in the Old Testament. He was a shepherd, warrior, poet, musician, prophet and king; a man of deep faith, worship and generosity; and also a man capable of adultery, murder, deceit and weak fatherhood. Scripture does not hide his sins. Yet he is called "a man after mine own heart" (Acts 13:22) because when confronted he repented genuinely (12:13; Psalm 51), loved God's presence, trusted God's covenant, and never turned to idols (1 Kings 15:5).

Outline of 2 Samuel

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. David's Triumphs	1-10	The kingdom established
King over Judah at Hebron	1-4	Mourning Saul; civil war with Saul's house
King over all Israel in Jerusalem	5	Zion captured; Philistines defeated
The ark brought to Jerusalem	6	Uzzah; David dances before the LORD
The Davidic Covenant	7	An everlasting house, throne and kingdom
Victories and kindness	8-10	Enemies subdued; Mephibosheth
II. David's Sin	11-12	The turning point
Bathsheba and Uriah	11	Adultery and murder
Nathan's rebuke	12	"Thou art the man"; forgiveness and consequences
III. David's Troubles	13-20	The sword in his house
Amnon, Tamar and Absalom	13-14	Rape, revenge, exile and return
Absalom's rebellion	15-18	David flees; Absalom dies
David's return and Sheba's revolt	19-20	Restoration and further division
IV. Appendix: David's Reign in Review	21-24	Not in time order
Famine and giants	21	The Gibeonites; Philistine giants slain
David's song and last words	22-23:7	Psalm 18; the everlasting covenant
David's mighty men	23:8-39	Heroes of faith and loyalty
The census and the altar	24	Plague stayed at Araunah's threshing floor

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: David's Triumphs (Chapters 1-10)

Chapter 1 — David Mourns Saul and Jonathan

Three days after David returned to Ziklag, an Amalekite arrived with torn clothes, bringing Saul's crown and bracelet, claiming he had killed Saul at Saul's own request (1:1-10). His story contradicted 1 Samuel 31:4-5; he was lying in hope of a reward. David and his men mourned, wept and fasted (1:11-12). David asked, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" and had him executed: "thy mouth hath testified against thee" (1:14-16). David did not rejoice at his enemy's fall (Proverbs 24:17).

David then composed "the song of the bow," written in the book of Jasher (1:17-18):

> *The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon*
>
> **2 Samuel 1:19-20**

"Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided" (1:23). Of Jonathan: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (1:26), describing the loyal covenant love of a friend who gave up a throne for him. David honoured even the man who tried to kill him.

Chapter 2 — King Over Judah; Civil War

David asked the LORD, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" and was told to go to Hebron (2:1). There "the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah" (2:4). He blessed the men of Jabesh-gilead for burying Saul (2:5-7). But Abner, Saul's general, made Saul's son Ish-bosheth king over the rest of Israel at Mahanaim (2:8-10). At the pool of Gibeon, twelve men from each side fought and all died together; in the battle that followed, Abner reluctantly killed Asahel, Joab's swift brother, who would not stop pursuing him (2:12-23). Abner called out, "Shall the sword devour for ever?" (2:26), and Joab stopped the pursuit.

Chapter 3 — Abner Defects and Is Murdered

"Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker" (3:1). Six sons were born to David in Hebron, by six wives, including Amnon and Absalom (3:2-5), sowing seeds of future trouble (Deuteronomy 17:17). When Ish-bosheth accused Abner over Saul's concubine Rizpah, Abner turned to David (3:6-12). David required that Michal, his first wife, be returned; her second husband Phaltiel followed her weeping (3:13-16). Abner persuaded Israel's elders to accept David (3:17-21). But Joab, seeking revenge for Asahel and perhaps fearing for his own position, murdered Abner at Hebron's gate (3:27). David declared his innocence, mourned openly, and fasted: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" (3:38). He confessed, "I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me" (3:39). David's failure to discipline Joab

would cost him for years (1 Kings 2:5-6).

Chapter 4 — The Murder of Ish-bosheth

Two of Ish-bosheth's captains, Rechab and Baanah, murdered him in his bed and brought his head to David, expecting a reward (4:5-8). David answered, "As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity," and had them executed for killing "a righteous person in his own house upon his bed" (4:9-12). David would not take the throne by murder. The chapter also introduces Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, lame in both feet since a fall at age five when his nurse fled at news of Saul's death (4:4).

Chapter 5 — King Over All Israel; Jerusalem Captured

All the tribes came to Hebron: "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh... the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel" (5:1-2). They anointed David king over Israel (5:3), the third time he was anointed (1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:4). Matthew 2:6 echoes this shepherd language of the coming Ruler.

David then captured Jerusalem, a Jebusite stronghold so secure its people mocked that even the blind and lame could defend it (5:6). He took "the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David" (5:7), entering, it seems, by the water shaft ("the gutter," 5:8). Jerusalem was neutral, on the border of Judah and Benjamin, and became Israel's political and spiritual capital. Zion becomes one of the great words of Scripture, pointing finally to "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 21:2). "And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him" (5:10). Hiram king of Tyre built him a house, and "David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake" (5:11-12): his position was for others' sake. But "David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem" (5:13), against Deuteronomy 17:17.

Twice the Philistines attacked, and both times David inquired of the LORD. At Baal-perazim, "The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters" (5:20). The second time God gave a different strategy: wait behind the mulberry trees, "when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee" (5:23-24). Yesterday's method is not a substitute for today's guidance.

Chapter 6 — The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

David gathered 30,000 men to bring the ark from Kirjath-jearim, where it had stayed for about twenty years (1 Samuel 7:1-2). They placed it on a new cart, copying the Philistines (1 Samuel 6:7). When the oxen stumbled, Uzzah reached out and steadied it, "and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God" (6:6-7). God's law required the ark to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, and no one was to touch it (Numbers 4:15). David was angry and afraid, "How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?" (6:8-9), and left it at the house of Obed-edom, whom the LORD blessed for three months (6:10-12).

The second time, David did it God's way: "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites" (1 Chronicles 15:2, 13-15). After six steps they sacrificed (6:13). "And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod" (6:14), bringing up the ark "with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet" (6:15). Psalm 24 ("Lift up your heads, O ye gates") may have been sung on this occasion. Michal, Saul's daughter, "despised him in her heart" (6:16) and mocked him for shamelessly uncovering himself before the servants (6:20). David answered, "It was before the LORD...

therefore will I play before the LORD. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight" (6:21-22). Michal had no child to the day of her death (6:23). True worship is wholehearted and does not care about human dignity before God.

Chapter 7 — The Davidic Covenant

Settled in his cedar palace, David told Nathan the prophet he wanted to build a house for the ark of God (7:1-2). Nathan said yes, but that night God spoke: "Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" (7:5). God reminded David, "I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people" (7:8), and then turned the tables: David would not build God a house; God would build David a house, a dynasty (7:11).

> *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee... and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men... But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul... And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*
>
> **2 Samuel 7:12-16**

The covenant promised David a **house** (an enduring dynasty), a **throne** (the right to rule), and a **kingdom** (a realm), all **for ever**. Its first fulfillment was Solomon, who built the temple and was chastened for sin. Its ultimate fulfillment is Jesus Christ, the Son of David, of whom the angel said, "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). Hebrews 1:5 applies "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" to Christ. The covenant is unconditional: sin in David's line would bring chastening, but God's mercy would not be withdrawn.

David's response is one of the great prayers of Scripture. He "sat before the LORD" and said:

> *Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?*
>
> **2 Samuel 7:18**

He marvelled that God spoke "of thy servant's house for a great while to come," and asked, "is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD?" (7:19). He praised God's greatness and His redemption of Israel (7:22-24) and asked God to do as He had said (7:25-29). True prayer takes God's promises and asks Him to fulfil them.

Chapter 8 — David's Victories

David subdued the Philistines (8:1), Moab (8:2), Hadadezer of Zobah as far as the Euphrates (8:3-4), the Syrians of Damascus (8:5-6), and Edom, where he put garrisons (8:14). This fulfilled Balaam's prophecy that a Sceptre from Israel would smite Moab and possess Edom (Numbers 24:17-18), and extended Israel toward the borders promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18). Twice the text says, "the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went" (8:6, 14). David dedicated the captured silver, gold and brass to the LORD (8:11-12); Solomon would later use it for the temple (1 Chronicles 18:8). "And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people" (8:15). The

chapter lists his officials, including Joab over the army, Zadok and Ahimelech as priests, and Benaiah over the royal bodyguard (8:16-18). Psalm 60's title refers to these wars.

Chapter 9 — Kindness to Mephibosheth

At the height of his power, David remembered his covenant with Jonathan:

> *Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?*
>
> **2 Samuel 9:1**

Ziba, Saul's former servant, told him of Jonathan's son, "lame on his feet," living at Lo-debar ("no pasture") (9:3-4). David sent for him. Mephibosheth fell on his face in fear, since kings usually wiped out the families of former dynasties. David said:

> *Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.*
>
> **2 Samuel 9:7**

Mephibosheth answered, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (9:8). David restored his land, assigned Ziba's family to work it, and Mephibosheth "did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet" (9:13), "as one of the king's sons" (9:11).

This is one of the clearest gospel pictures in the Old Testament. Mephibosheth was from a rebel house, crippled by a fall, living in a barren place, afraid of the king, and with nothing to offer. The king sought him out, for the sake of another (Jonathan, as believers are accepted for Christ's sake, Ephesians 4:32), restored his inheritance, and seated him at his table as a son. His lameness was covered under the table. David called it "the kindness of God" (9:3).

Chapter 10 — War with Ammon and Syria

When Nahash king of Ammon died, David sent ambassadors to comfort his son Hanun (10:1-2). Hanun's princes accused them of spying, and Hanun humiliated them by shaving half their beards and cutting their garments to the buttocks (10:3-4). David told them, "Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown" (10:5). Ammon hired Syrian armies. Facing enemies on two fronts, Joab divided his forces with his brother Abishai and said, "Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good" (10:12). Israel won, and later David defeated the Syrians decisively (10:15-19). The unfinished war against Ammon set the scene for chapter 11.

Section II: David's Sin (Chapters 11-12)

Chapter 11 — David, Bathsheba and Uriah

> *And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab... But David tarried still at Jerusalem.*
>
> **2 Samuel 11:1**

David was in the wrong place at the wrong time, idle when he should have been at his post. Walking on his roof one evening, he saw a woman washing, "very beautiful to look upon" (11:2). He inquired, and was told she was Bathsheba, "the wife of Uriah the Hittite" (11:3). That should have stopped him. Uriah was one of David's own mighty men (23:39), and Bathsheba's father Eliam was the son of Ahithophel, David's counsellor (23:34). David sent for her and lay with her (11:4). Then came the message: "I am with child" (11:5).

David tried to cover his sin. He called Uriah home from the front, hoping he would sleep with his wife, but Uriah refused: "The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife?" (11:11). Even when David made him drunk, Uriah, the foreigner, showed more integrity than the king (11:12-13). So David wrote a letter to Joab, carried by Uriah himself, ordering him put in the hottest battle and abandoned (11:14-15). Uriah died along with other soldiers (11:17). Joab sent a report, anticipating David's anger by recalling Abimelech's death at a wall (11:21). David replied coldly, "the sword devoureth one as well as another" (11:25). After her mourning, Bathsheba became his wife and bore a son. "But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD" (11:27).

The progression: idleness, lust, adultery, deception, murder and hardness of heart. David broke at least four of the Ten Commandments: coveting, adultery, false witness and murder. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

Chapter 12 — "Thou Art the Man"

About a year later, God sent Nathan with a parable: a rich man with many flocks took a poor man's only ewe lamb, which was like a daughter to him, to feed a guest (12:1-4). David burned with anger: "the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold" (12:5-6; Exodus 22:1). Nathan replied:

> *Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul... and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight?*
>
> **2 Samuel 12:7-9**

God pronounced judgment: "the sword shall never depart from thine house" (12:10), and "I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour... for thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun" (12:11-12). David answered simply, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan said, "The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (12:13). Under the law, adultery and murder deserved death (Leviticus 20:10; 24:17); David was forgiven by grace. But because he had "given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme," the child would die (12:14; compare Romans 2:24).

David fasted and lay on the ground seven days praying for the child. When it died, he washed, worshipped, and ate (12:16-20). He explained: "now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (12:23). Many Christians draw comfort from this verse that children who die in infancy are with the Lord. Then Bathsheba bore Solomon, "and the LORD loved him," naming him Jedidiah, "beloved of the LORD" (12:24-25). From this marriage, born of sin but redeemed by grace, came the line of Christ (Matthew 1:6). Joab then summoned David to complete the capture of Rabbah (12:26-31).

David's prayer of repentance is preserved in Psalm 51 ("Have mercy upon me, O God... Wash me throughly from mine iniquity... Create in me a clean heart, O God"), and the joy of forgiveness in Psalm 32 ("Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered"). Paul quotes Psalm 32 as an example of justification by faith (Romans 4:6-8). Many Bible teachers note that David's own sentence, "fourfold," was carried out in the deaths of four of his sons: the infant, Amnon (13), Absalom (18) and Adonijah (1 Kings 2:25).

Section III: David's Troubles (Chapters 13-20)

Chapter 13 — Amnon, Tamar and Absalom's Revenge

The sword began in David's house. Amnon, his eldest son, became obsessed with his half-sister Tamar, Absalom's full sister (13:1-2). On the advice of his cousin Jonadab, "a very subtil man," he pretended to be sick and asked that Tamar bring him food (13:3-10). He forced her, ignoring her pleas, "for no such thing ought to be done in Israel" (13:12-14). Then "Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her" (13:15). Lust, once satisfied, turns to contempt. Tamar tore her royal robe and lived "desolate in her brother Absalom's house" (13:19-20). "But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth" (13:21), yet he did nothing. His own sin had perhaps silenced his authority. Absalom waited two years, then had Amnon killed at a sheep-shearing feast (13:23-29). Absalom fled to his grandfather Talmai, king of Geshur, for three years, and David "longed to go forth unto Absalom" (13:37-39).

Chapter 14 — Absalom Returns

Joab, seeing David's heart, sent a wise woman from Tekoah with a made-up story of a widow whose one son had killed the other, asking that the survivor be spared (14:1-11). When David ruled in her favour, she applied it to Absalom (14:12-13), saying:

> *For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.*
>
> **2 Samuel 14:14**

This beautifully describes the gospel: God has devised a way, through Christ, for banished sinners to be brought back to Him. But David brought Absalom back without repentance or justice: "let him not see my face" (14:24). For two years Absalom was in Jerusalem but not reconciled. Absalom was the most handsome man in Israel, with hair so heavy it weighed 200 shekels when cut yearly (14:25-26). He burned Joab's barley field to force a meeting (14:29-32). David finally kissed him (14:33), but the reconciliation was shallow.

Chapter 15 — Absalom's Conspiracy; David Flees

Absalom prepared chariots, horses and fifty men to run before him (15:1). He stood by the city gate, intercepting people coming for judgment: "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee... Oh that I were made judge in the land" (15:3-4). He kissed those who bowed to him, "so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (15:6). Using a vow as a pretext, he went to Hebron and proclaimed himself king, and Ahithophel, David's wisest counsellor, joined him (15:7-12).

David fled Jerusalem: "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom" (15:14). His loyal men went with him, including 600 Gittites (Philistines from Gath) under Ittai, who declared, "As the LORD liveth... surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be" (15:21). "The king also himself passed over the brook Kidron" (15:23), as Jesus would cross it on the night of His betrayal (John 18:1). David sent the ark back to Jerusalem with Zadok, trusting God: "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again... let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" (15:25-26). "And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot" (15:30). When told Ahithophel had joined Absalom, he prayed, "O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness" (15:31). At once God answered: Hushai the Archite came, and David sent him back to Jerusalem to defeat Ahithophel's counsel from within (15:32-37). Psalm 3 was written "when he fled from Absalom his son": "But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me" (Psalm 3:3).

Chapter 16 — Ziba, Shimei and Ahithophel's Counsel

Ziba met David with provisions and accused Mephibosheth of hoping to regain Saul's kingdom; David hastily gave Ziba all Mephibosheth's property (16:1-4). Shimei, a relative of Saul, cursed David and threw stones: "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial" (16:5-8). Abishai wanted to cut off his head. David refused: "let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David... It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day" (16:10-12). David accepted rebuke as from God's hand. In Jerusalem, Ahithophel advised Absalom to sleep with his father's concubines publicly to make the break irreversible. They pitched a tent on the roof (the very roof where David had first seen Bathsheba) "in the sight of all Israel" (16:21-22), fulfilling Nathan's prophecy (12:11-12). "And the counsel of Ahithophel... was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God" (16:23).

Chapter 17 — Hushai Defeats Ahithophel's Counsel

Ahithophel advised attacking at once with 12,000 men, striking David while he was weary and killing only him (17:1-4). It was excellent advice. Hushai countered with flattering, frightening alternatives: David was a seasoned warrior and would be hidden; better to gather all Israel and let Absalom lead them in person (17:7-13). Absalom chose Hushai's plan, "For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom" (17:14). Prayer (15:31) was answered. Messages reached David through the priests' sons, who hid in a well (17:15-22). When Ahithophel saw his counsel rejected, he went home, "put his household in order, and hanged himself" (17:23). Ahithophel, David's trusted friend who betrayed him and then hanged himself, is a striking picture of Judas (Matthew 27:5). David may have had him in mind in Psalm 41:9 ("mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me"), which Jesus applied to Judas (John 13:18), and Psalm 55:12-14. At Mahanaim, David was refreshed by gifts

from Shobi of Ammon, Machir (who had cared for Mephibosheth), and the aged Barzillai (17:27-29).

Chapter 18 — The Death of Absalom

David organised his army in three divisions under Joab, Abishai and Ittai, and charged them all, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom" (18:1-5). In the forest of Ephraim, Absalom's army was defeated, "and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured" (18:8). Absalom's head (perhaps his famous hair) caught in the branches of an oak as his mule ran on, leaving him hanging (18:9). Joab, ignoring the king's order, thrust three darts into his heart, and his armourbearers finished him (18:14-15). They threw his body into a pit under a great heap of stones (18:17). He had earlier set up a pillar to keep his name alive, because he had no son (18:18). Runners brought the news. David's only question was, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" (18:29, 32). When he heard, he went up to the chamber over the gate and wept:

> *O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!*
>
> **2 Samuel 18:33**

David's grief is one of the most moving moments in Scripture, a father's love for a rebellious son. He wished he could die in his son's place, but could not. The greater Son of David did die for His rebellious people: "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Chapter 19 — David Restored

Joab rebuked David sharply: his grief was shaming the men who had saved his life, "thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends" (19:5-7). David went and sat in the gate (19:8). The tribes debated bringing him back; David appealed to Judah and made Amasa, Absalom's general, commander in place of Joab (19:11-15). On the return:

- **Shimei** came with a thousand Benjamites and confessed his sin; David spared him (19:16-23).
- **Mephibosheth** came unwashed, his feet and beard untended since the day David left, and explained Ziba's deception. When David divided the land, Mephibosheth said, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house" (19:24-30). He loved the king more than the gifts.
- **Barzillai**, 80 years old, declined to come to court but sent his son Chimham (19:31-39).

The northern tribes and Judah quarrelled over who had more right to the king (19:41-43), a sign of the division to come (1 Kings 12).

Chapter 20 — Sheba's Revolt

Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjamite, blew a trumpet: "We have no part in David... every man to his tents, O Israel" (20:1), and Israel followed him. David put his ten concubines, defiled by Absalom, in a house in widowhood (20:3). Joab murdered Amasa, taking him by the beard as if to kiss him and stabbing him (20:9-10), and took back command. Sheba took refuge in Abel-beth-maachah; a wise woman negotiated with Joab from the wall, and the city threw Sheba's head over (20:15-22). The chapter ends with a list of David's officials (20:23-26).

Section IV: Appendix — David's Reign in Review (Chapters 21-24)

These chapters are arranged by topic, not time: two disasters (21:1-14; 24), two lists of heroes (21:15-22; 23:8-39), and two poems at the centre (22; 23:1-7).

Chapter 21 — Famine for the Gibeonites; the Giants Slain

A three-year famine came, and the LORD revealed, "It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites" (21:1). Saul had broken Israel's oath made in Joshua's day (Joshua 9:15-20). At the Gibeonites' request, seven of Saul's descendants were hanged; David spared Mephibosheth because of his oath to Jonathan (21:7). Rizpah, mother of two of them, kept watch over the bodies from the beginning of harvest until the rains, driving off birds and beasts (21:10). Moved, David buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan in their family tomb, and "God was intreated for the land" (21:12-14). God takes oaths seriously, even across generations.

David nearly died fighting the giant Ishbi-benob; Abishai saved him, and his men made him promise not to go to battle again, "that thou quench not the light of Israel" (21:15-17). Four Philistine giants of Gath were slain by David's men, including Goliath's brother (21:19; 1 Chronicles 20:5) and a giant with six fingers and six toes (21:20-22).

Chapter 22 — David's Song of Deliverance

This song, almost identical to Psalm 18, was sung "in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul" (22:1).

> *The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.*
>
> **2 Samuel 22:2-3**

"In my distress I called upon the LORD... and he did hear my voice" (22:7). God came down in storm and earthquake (22:8-16): "He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters" (22:17). "As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him" (22:31). "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (22:36). The song ends: "Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen" (22:50; quoted in Romans 15:9 of the Gentiles praising God through Christ), and "He is the tower of salvation for his king: and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore" (22:51). Hebrews 2:13 applies "I will put my trust in him" to Christ.

Chapter 23 — David's Last Words and His Mighty Men

"Now these be the last words of David" (23:1):

> *The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds*
>
> **2 Samuel 23:2-4**

David claims inspiration for his words (compare Acts 1:16; 2:30; Matthew 22:43). He describes the ideal righteous ruler, like a cloudless sunrise after rain, a picture fulfilled in Christ, "the Sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2). Then he confesses: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire" (23:5). His hope rested not in his family's goodness but in God's covenant.

The rest of the chapter honours David's mighty men (23:8-39): Adino, who killed 800 at once; Eleazar, who fought until his hand "clave unto the sword" (23:10); Shammah, who stood alone in a field of lentils (23:11-12). Three of them broke through the Philistine lines to bring David water from the well of Bethlehem because he longed for it; David refused to drink it and poured it out to the LORD: "is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" (23:15-17). Benaiah "slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow" (23:20). The list ends with "Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all" (23:39), a quiet reminder of David's great sin. Like these men, Christ's servants will be named and rewarded (Romans 16; 2 Timothy 4:8).

Chapter 24 — The Census and the Threshing Floor of Araunah

"And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah" (24:1). The parallel account says, "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel" (1 Chronicles 21:1). Both are true: as with Job, God permitted Satan to act as the instrument of His judgment on Israel's sin, while David was fully responsible for his pride in trusting numbers. Even Joab objected (24:3). The count took almost ten months (24:8-9). (The numbers differ from 1 Chronicles 21:5, likely because they count different groups.) Then "David's heart smote him... I have sinned greatly" (24:10).

Through the prophet Gad, God offered three punishments: famine, three months of flight from enemies, or three days of pestilence (24:12-13). David chose: "let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man" (24:14). A plague killed 70,000 (24:15). As the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem, "the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand" (24:16). The angel stood by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. David pleaded, "Lo, I have sinned... but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house" (24:17). Gad told him to build an altar there. Araunah offered the land and animals free, but David insisted on paying:

> *Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.*
>
> **2 Samuel 24:24**

"So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel" (24:25). This threshing floor was on Mount Moriah, where Abraham had offered Isaac (Genesis 22:2), and where Solomon would build the temple (2 Chronicles 3:1). The book ends where judgment is stopped by sacrifice at the place God chose, pointing to the cross, where God's wrath was satisfied and mercy flows.

Part Three: Christ in 2 Samuel

The Davidic Covenant Fulfilled in Christ

Promise to David	2 Samuel	Fulfillment in Christ
"I will set up thy seed after thee"	7:12	Jesus "made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8)
"He shall build an house for my name"	7:13	"Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18); "he shall build the temple of the LORD" (Zechariah 6:12-13)
"I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever"	7:13, 16	"Of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33)
"I will be his father, and he shall be my son"	7:14	"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" (Hebrews 1:5)
"Thine house... shall be established for ever"	7:16	"God had sworn with an oath to him... he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:30)
"Thou shalt feed my people Israel"	5:2	"A Governor, that shall rule [shepherd] my people Israel" (Matthew 2:6)
"An everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure"	23:5	"The sure mercies of David" given in the resurrection (Isaiah 55:3; Acts 13:34)
"Mercy to his anointed... to his seed for evermore"	22:51	Jesus the Christ (Anointed), Son of David (Matthew 1:1)

David in His Sufferings: A Picture of Christ

David	2 Samuel	Christ	New Testament
Rejected by his own people while a usurper ruled	15:6, 13	"We will not have this man to reign over us"	Luke 19:14
Crossed the brook Kidron on his way out of Jerusalem	15:23	Crossed the brook Cedron the night of His betrayal	John 18:1
Went up the Mount of Olives weeping	15:30	Wept over Jerusalem; prayed on the Mount of Olives	Luke 19:41; 22:39-44
Submitted to God's will: "let him do to me as seemeth good"	15:26	"Not my will, but thine, be done"	Luke 22:42
Betrayed by a trusted friend and counsellor	15:12, 31	Betrayed by Judas, a familiar friend	John 13:18; Psalm 41:9
The betrayer hanged himself	17:23	Judas hanged himself	Matthew 27:5
Cursed and stoned, but did not retaliate	16:5-13	"When he was reviled, reviled not again"	1 Peter 2:23
Accompanied by faithful Gentiles (Ittai)	15:19-22	Gentiles who follow Him "whether in death or life"	Romans 14:8
Wished to die in his rebellious son's place	18:33	Died for His enemies	Romans 5:8-10

David	2 Samuel	Christ	New Testament
Returned as king and was welcomed back	19	Will return and be received by Israel	Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:26
Pardoned enemies at his return	19:23	Forgives those who repent	Luke 23:34; Acts 2:38

Mephibosheth: Grace at the King's Table

Mephibosheth	2 Samuel 9	The Sinner Saved by Grace
From the house of Saul, the enemy king	9:1-3	By nature enemies of God (Romans 5:10)
Crippled by a fall	4:4	Crippled by the fall of Adam (Romans 5:12)
Lived in Lo-debar, "no pasture"	9:4	Living in a spiritually barren world (Ephesians 2:12)
The king sought him out	9:5	"The Son of man is come to seek" (Luke 19:10)
Shown kindness for Jonathan's sake	9:1, 7	Forgiven "for Christ's sake" (Ephesians 4:32)
Called himself a dead dog	9:8	"Dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1)
Told "Fear not"	9:7	"Fear not, little flock" (Luke 12:32)
Restored his lost inheritance	9:7	An inheritance incorruptible (1 Peter 1:4)
Ate at the king's table as one of the king's sons	9:11, 13	Adopted as sons, seated with Christ (Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 2:6)
His lameness hidden under the table	9:13	Our weakness covered by grace (2 Corinthians 12:9)
Loved the king more than the land	19:30	"Christ is all" (Colossians 3:11)

Other Pictures of Christ

- **The king who brought the ark to Zion (6).** God's presence brought to His people; Christ is Immanuel (Matthew 1:23).
- **The righteous ruler like the morning sun (23:3-4).** The Sun of righteousness (Malachi 4:2; Luke 1:78).
- **The threshing floor where judgment was stopped (24).** The place of sacrifice on Moriah, the site of the temple, near where Christ died. "It is enough" (24:16).
- **"Would God I had died for thee" (18:33).** David's wish is Christ's accomplished work.
- **The wise woman's words (14:14).** God "doth devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him": the gospel of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment
The kingdom given to David	1 Samuel 15:28; 16:1	2:4; 5:3
"By the hand of my servant David I will save my people... out of the hand of the Philistines"	3:18	5:17-25; 8:1
A Sceptre will smite Moab and possess Edom	Numbers 24:17-18	8:2, 14
Israel's borders to the Euphrates	Genesis 15:18	8:3
David's son will build the temple	7:12-13	1 Kings 6; 8:20
The sword will not depart from David's house	12:10	13:28-29; 18:14-15; 1 Kings 2:25
Evil from his own house; his wives taken publicly	12:11-12	16:21-22
The child of adultery will die	12:14	12:18
The counsel of Ahithophel turned to foolishness	15:31	17:14, 23
An eternal throne for David's seed	7:16	Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30-36

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Samuel 7 — The Davidic Covenant

This is one of the most important chapters in the Old Testament. It narrows the promise of the Seed: from the woman (Genesis 3:15), to Abraham (Genesis 12:3), to Judah (Genesis 49:10), and now to David's line. From here on, the Messiah is known as "the Son of David" (Matthew 1:1; 9:27; 21:9). God's covenants build on each other:

Covenant	Promise	Fulfilled in Christ
Abrahamic (Genesis 12; 15)	Land, seed, blessing to all nations	The Seed in whom all nations are blessed (Galatians 3:16)
Davidic (2 Samuel 7)	An eternal house, throne and kingdom	The King on David's throne for ever (Luke 1:32-33)
New (Jeremiah 31:31-34)	A new heart, forgiveness, knowing God	Established in Christ's blood (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8)

Psalm 89 meditates on this covenant ("I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever," 89:3-4), as does Psalm 132:11-12. The prophets looked to a future David (Isaiah 9:7; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:17, 20-21; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11).

2 Samuel 11-12 — The Anatomy of Sin and Repentance

David's sin shows how far a godly person can fall: from idleness to lust to adultery to deception to murder. It also shows true repentance: immediate confession without excuse ("I have sinned against the LORD," 12:13), acceptance of God's discipline, and restored worship (12:20). Forgiveness was immediate and complete, yet consequences followed for years. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Saul and David both said "I have sinned" (1 Samuel 15:24; 2 Samuel 12:13), but Saul's repentance was about his image, David's about his God.

2 Samuel 9 — The Kindness of God

David's question, "Is there yet any... that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" (9:3), shows the heart of covenant love: it seeks the undeserving, for another's sake, and lifts them to the king's table. It is a living parable of grace (Ephesians 2:4-7).

2 Samuel 24:24 — Worship That Costs

David refused to offer God what cost him nothing. True worship and giving involve sacrifice (Mark 12:41-44; Romans 12:1). God gave His Son at infinite cost (John 3:16).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Samuel

1. God's Covenant Faithfulness

God kept His promise to make David king and made an everlasting covenant that rests on His faithfulness, not David's (7; 23:5).

2. The Messianic Hope

The Davidic covenant is the root of the hope of a coming King, fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30-36).

3. True Worship

David brought the ark to Jerusalem, worshipped with all his might (6:14), wanted to build God a house (7:2), and refused to offer what cost him nothing (24:24). Worship must also be done God's way (6:6-7, 13).

4. The Devastating Power of Sin

One sinful season brought death, family breakdown, rebellion and national suffering. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

5. Forgiveness and Consequences

God forgave David completely (12:13), yet the consequences unfolded in his family. Forgiveness removes guilt but does not always remove the results of sin.

6. Grace

Mephibosheth (9), the wise woman's words (14:14), David's restoration after sin (12:13), and the stayed plague (24:16) all show grace triumphing over judgment (James 2:13).

7. Godly Leadership

David "executed judgment and justice unto all his people" (8:15), and his last words describe the ideal ruler "just, ruling in the fear of God" (23:3). Yet his failures to discipline Joab and his sons show how private weakness affects public leadership.

8. Family and Parenting

David's polygamy, his failure to act against Amnon (13:21), and his half-reconciliation with Absalom (14) led to family disaster. Leaders must "rule well" their own house (1 Timothy 3:4-5).

9. God's Sovereignty Over Human Plans

God turned Ahithophel's counsel to foolishness in answer to prayer (15:31; 17:14). "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand" (Proverbs 19:21).

10. Loyalty and Friendship

Jonathan's covenant honoured (9), Ittai's devotion (15:21), Hushai's courage (15:32-37), Barzillai's generosity (17:27-29; 19:31-39), and the mighty men's sacrifice (23:13-17) show the beauty of loyalty, pointing to devotion to the true King.

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Samuel Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Samuel in the New Testament

2 Samuel	New Testament	Use
5:2	Matthew 2:6	The Ruler who will shepherd God's people
5:7 (Zion, the city of David)	Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 14:1	The heavenly Zion
7:12-16	Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30; 13:22-23	The eternal throne of David's Son
7:14	Hebrews 1:5; 2 Corinthians 6:18	"I will be to him a Father"
11-12 (Bathsheba)	Matthew 1:6	"Her that had been the wife of Urias" in Christ's genealogy
12 (forgiveness; Psalm 32)	Romans 4:6-8	The blessedness of forgiveness without works
12:14	Romans 2:24	Causing God's name to be blasphemed
15:23	John 18:1	Crossing the Kidron
17:23	Matthew 27:5	The betrayer hangs himself
22:3	Hebrews 2:13	"I will put my trust in him"
22:50	Romans 15:9	Praise among the Gentiles
23:2	Matthew 22:43; Acts 1:16; 2:30	David spoke by the Spirit as a prophet
The Son of David	Matthew 1:1; 9:27; 21:9; 22:42-45; Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5; 22:16	Jesus, the root and offspring of David
David's faith	Hebrews 11:32-34	Among the heroes of faith

2 Samuel in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Moriah (22:2), where Araunah's threshing floor stood (24); the borders promised to Abraham (15:18; 2 Samuel 8:3); the sceptre from Judah (49:10)
Exodus	The fourfold restitution for a stolen sheep (22:1; 2 Samuel 12:6)
Numbers	The ark carried by Levites only (4:15; 2 Samuel 6:6-7); the Sceptre that smites Moab and Edom (24:17-18; 2 Samuel 8)
Deuteronomy	The king must not multiply wives (17:17; 2 Samuel 3:2-5; 5:13); the place God chooses for His name (12:5)
Joshua	Israel's oath to the Gibeonites (9; 2 Samuel 21); Jerusalem not yet taken (15:63)
Ruth	David's Bethlehem roots; the well of Bethlehem (2 Samuel 23:15)
1 Samuel	Direct continuation; David's covenant with Jonathan fulfilled (1 Samuel 20:14-17; 2 Samuel 9); Jabesh-gilead (1 Samuel 31; 2 Samuel 2:5)

Book	Link
1 Kings	David's death; Adonijah, Joab and Shimei dealt with (1-2); Solomon builds the temple (6-8); the kingdom divides as Sheba's cry is repeated (12:16)
1 Chronicles	Parallel account of David's reign (11-29), focusing on the ark, worship and temple preparations, and omitting the Bathsheba affair; "Satan stood up against Israel" (21:1)
2 Chronicles	The temple built on Araunah's (Ornan's) threshing floor on Mount Moriah (3:1)
Psalms	Psalm 3 (fleeing Absalom); 18 (= 2 Samuel 22); 24 and 68 (the ark's procession); 32 and 51 (repentance); 60 (the wars of chapter 8); 89 and 132 (the Davidic covenant); 41:9 and 55:12-14 (the betrayer)
Isaiah	The throne of David for ever (9:7); the rod from the stem of Jesse (11:1); "the sure mercies of David" (55:3)
Jeremiah	The righteous Branch of David (23:5; 33:15); David's covenant as sure as day and night (33:17-26)
Ezekiel	"My servant David... shall be their shepherd" (34:23-24; 37:24-25)
Hosea	Israel will seek "David their king" in the latter days (3:5)
Amos	"I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen" (9:11; Acts 15:16)
Zechariah	The house of David and the fountain opened for sin (12:8-10; 13:1)

Themes That Run from 2 Samuel Through Scripture

Theme	In 2 Samuel	Developed	Fulfilled
The Son of David	7:12-16	Psalm 89; Isaiah 9:7; 11:1	Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 22:16
Zion, the city of God	5:7; 6	Psalm 48; 87; Isaiah 2:3	Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 21:2
Repentance and forgiveness	12:13	Psalm 32; 51	Romans 4:6-8; 1 John 1:9
God's presence among His people	6 (the ark)	1 Kings 8; Psalm 132:8, 13-14	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3
The shepherd -king	5:2	Psalm 78:70-72; Ezekiel 34:23	John 10:11; 1 Peter 5:4
Grace to the undeserving	9	Isaiah 55:1	Luke 14:21-23; Ephesians 2:4-7
The betrayed king	15-17	Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14	John 13:18; Matthew 26:47-50; 27:5
Mount Moriah and sacrifice	24	2 Chronicles 3:1	Hebrews 9:26; 10:12

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Don't rejoice when your enemy falls** (1:11-12).
- **Seek God before every decision,** even when last time's method worked (2:1; 5:19, 23).
- **Wait for God's timing** rather than seizing what He has promised (4:9-12).
- **Do God's work God's way** (6:6-7, 13).
- **Worship wholeheartedly,** regardless of what people think (6:14, 22).
- **Let God build your house** (7:11).
- **Show the kindness of God** to the helpless (9).
- **Idleness opens the door to temptation** (11:1).
- **Sin always goes further than you planned** (11).
- **Confess your sin without excuse** (12:13).
- **God forgives, but sin has consequences** (12:10-14).
- **Parents must act against evil in their homes** (13:21).
- **Beware of flatterers who steal hearts** (15:6).
- **Pray when betrayed;** God can turn the counsel of the wise to foolishness (15:31).
- **Accept rebuke humbly,** even when unfairly given (16:10-12).
- **Love the King more than His gifts** (19:30).
- **Honour those who serve sacrificially** (23:13-17).
- **Don't trust in numbers** (24:1-10).
- **Never offer God what costs you nothing** (24:24).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:19	The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!
7:16	And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.
7:18	Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?
9:7	Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake... and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.
12:7	Thou art the man.
12:13	I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin
12:23	I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.
14:14	Yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.
18:33	O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee
22:2	The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer
22:31	As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried
24:24	Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.

Conclusion

2 Samuel tells the story of Israel's greatest king. In the first half, God establishes David over all Israel, gives him Jerusalem, brings the ark to Zion, and makes with him an everlasting covenant: his house, throne and kingdom will endure for ever. In the second half, David's sin with Bathsheba brings the sword into his house, and the king who conquered giants is driven from his city by his own son. Yet David repents, God forgives, and the book ends with judgment stayed by sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Through all of it, the covenant stands. David's line leads to Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the righteous King who never sinned, who wept on the Mount of Olives, was betrayed by a friend, died for His rebellious people, and now reigns on David's throne for ever.

> *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds*
>
> **2 Samuel 23:3-4**

1 Kings

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (traditionally Jeremiah) • Date: c. 560-540 BC • Chapters: 22

> *How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.*
>
> **1 Kings 18:21**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Kings

The Book

1 and 2 Kings were originally one book in the Hebrew Bible. The Greek Septuagint divided it in two and called the books "3 and 4 Kingdoms," following 1 and 2 Samuel. The King James Version heading reflects this: "The First Book of the Kings, commonly called the Third Book of the Kings." Together, Kings traces Israel's history from the death of David to the Babylonian exile, about 400 years.

Author and Date

The author is not named. Jewish tradition (the Talmud) credits Jeremiah, and the book's style and outlook are close to his. The final events recorded in 2 Kings, the release of King Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon in the 37th year of his captivity (2 Kings 25:27-30), place the completion around 560 BC, during the exile. The author drew on written records he names: "the book of the acts of Solomon" (11:41), "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel" (14:19) and "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah" (14:29), as well as prophetic records.

Period Covered

1 Kings covers about 120 years, from David's last days and Solomon's accession (around 970 BC) to the death of Ahab and the beginning of Ahaziah's reign in Israel (around 853 BC). It includes the glory of Solomon's reign, the building of the temple, the division of the kingdom (around 930 BC), and the ministry of Elijah.

Purpose and Theme

Kings is not simply political history. It is prophetic history, written to explain why Israel and Judah went into exile. Every king is judged by one standard: faithfulness to the LORD and His covenant, measured against David ("did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father") or against Jeroboam ("walked in the way of Jeroboam... wherewith he made Israel to sin"). Military and economic success are mentioned briefly; spiritual faithfulness is the focus. Omri, a powerful king remembered in Assyrian records, gets only eight verses (16:21-28).

> *And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness... Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever... But if ye shall at all turn from following me... Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them*
>
> **1 Kings 9:4-7**

Key themes include: the blessing that follows obedience and the judgment that follows idolatry; the faithfulness of God to His promise to David ("for David's sake," 11:12-13, 32-36; 15:4); the central role of the temple; and the power of God's word through His prophets, whose predictions are repeatedly shown fulfilled.

The Divided Kingdom

After Solomon, the kingdom split in two:

	Israel (Northern Kingdom)	Judah (Southern Kingdom)
Tribes	Ten tribes	Judah and Benjamin
Capital	Shechem, then Tirzah, then Samaria	Jerusalem
First king	Jeroboam I	Rehoboam
Dynasties	Several, often ended by assassination	One: the house of David
Worship	Golden calves at Bethel and Dan	The temple in Jerusalem
Kings	19 kings, all evil	20 kings, some good
End	Fell to Assyria, 722 BC	Fell to Babylon, 586 BC

Kings in 1 Kings

Dates are approximate.

King	Kingdom	Reign	Years	Verdict
David	United	c. 1010-970 BC	40	A man after God's heart (2:10-11)
Solomon	United	c. 970-930 BC	40	Began well; turned to idols in old age (11)
Rehoboam	Judah	c. 931-913 BC	17	Evil (14:21-24)
Abijam (Abijah)	Judah	c. 913-911 BC	3	Evil (15:1-3)
Asa	Judah	c. 911-870 BC	41	Good (15:9-15)
Jehoshaphat	Judah	c. 872-848 BC	25	Good (22:41-43)
Jeroboam I	Israel	c. 931-910 BC	22	Evil; made Israel to sin (12:28-33)
Nadab	Israel	c. 910-909 BC	2	Evil; assassinated (15:25-28)
Baasha	Israel	c. 909-886 BC	24	Evil (15:33-34)
Elah	Israel	c. 886-885 BC	2	Evil; assassinated (16:8-10)
Zimri	Israel	c. 885 BC	7 days	Evil; suicide (16:15-19)
Omri	Israel	c. 885-874 BC	12	Worse than all before him (16:25)
Ahab	Israel	c. 874-853 BC	22	The most wicked yet (16:30, 33)
Ahaziah	Israel	c. 853-852 BC	2	Evil (22:51-53)

Outline of 1 Kings

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The United Kingdom under Solomon	1-11	Glory and decline
Solomon becomes king	1-2	Adonijah's plot; David's charge; the kingdom secured
Solomon's wisdom	3-4	The dream at Gibeon; the two mothers; wealth and fame
The temple built and dedicated	5-8	Preparation, construction, the glory, Solomon's prayer
Solomon's splendour	9-10	God's warning; the queen of Sheba
Solomon's fall	11	Foreign wives, idolatry and adversaries
II. The Divided Kingdom	12-22	Decline and the prophets
The kingdom divides	12-14	Rehoboam's folly; Jeroboam's calves; the man of God
Kings of Judah and Israel	15-16	Asa; a succession of evil northern kings; Omri and Ahab
Elijah and Ahab	17-19	Drought; Carmel; Horeb
Ahab's wars and crimes	20-22	Syria; Naboth's vineyard; Micaiah; Ahab's death

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The United Kingdom Under Solomon (Chapters 1-11)

Chapter 1 — Solomon Made King

David was old and could not keep warm; a young woman, Abishag, was brought to care for him (1:1-4). His son Adonijah, the eldest surviving son and very handsome, exalted himself, saying, "I will be king" (1:5). "And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" (1:6). David's failure as a father showed again, as with Amnon and Absalom. Joab and Abiathar the priest supported Adonijah; Zadok, Benaiah, Nathan and David's mighty men did not (1:7-10). Nathan and Bathsheba reminded David of his oath that Solomon would reign (1:11-27; compare 1 Chronicles 22:9-10). David acted at once: Solomon rode on the king's own mule to Gihon, Zadok anointed him, the trumpet sounded, and the people cried, "God save king Solomon" (1:32-40). Adonijah's guests scattered, and he fled to the horns of the altar; Solomon spared him on condition of good behaviour (1:49-53).

Chapter 2 — David's Charge and Solomon's Kingdom Secured

Before he died, David charged Solomon:

> *I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes... as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest*
>
> **1 Kings 2:2-3**

He reminded Solomon of God's conditional promise of an unbroken line (2:4) and gave instructions about Joab, who had murdered Abner and Amasa, about showing kindness to Barzillai's sons, and about Shimei (2:5-9). David died after reigning forty years (2:10-11).

Solomon secured the kingdom. Adonijah asked, through Bathsheba, to marry Abishag, which amounted to a claim on the throne (compare 2 Samuel 16:21-22), and Solomon had him executed (2:13-25). Abiathar was removed from the priesthood "that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh" (2:27; 1 Samuel 2:31-35). Joab fled to the altar and was executed there for his murders (2:28-34). Benaiah replaced him, and Zadok became priest (2:35). Shimei was confined to Jerusalem on his oath; when he left to chase runaway slaves, he was executed (2:36-46). "And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (2:46).

Chapter 3 — Solomon Asks for Wisdom

Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt (3:1), an early sign of compromise. "And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places" (3:3). At Gibeon, where the tabernacle then stood (2 Chronicles 1:3), he offered a thousand burnt offerings, and God appeared to him in a dream: "Ask what I shall give thee" (3:5). Solomon answered with humility:

> *And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in... Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad*
>
> **1 Kings 3:7, 9**

"And the speech pleased the Lord" (3:10). Because he did not ask for long life, riches or the death of his enemies, God gave him "a wise and an understanding heart" and also riches and honour beyond any king, and long life if he obeyed (3:11-14). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5).

Solomon's wisdom was soon tested. Two harlots who lived together each had a baby; one baby died, and both claimed the living child (3:16-22). Solomon called for a sword: "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other" (3:25). The true mother cried out to give the child to the other woman; the false mother agreed to divide it. Solomon gave the child to the true mother (3:26-27). "And all Israel heard of the judgment... and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment" (3:28).

Chapter 4 — Solomon's Administration and Wisdom

Solomon organised his government with officials and twelve district governors who supplied the royal court one month each (4:1-19, 27-28). It was a golden age: "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry" (4:20). His dominion stretched from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and the border of Egypt (4:21), the borders promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18). "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree" (4:25), a picture later used of the Messiah's kingdom (Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10). But he also had many horses and chariots (4:26), which Deuteronomy 17:16 forbade multiplying.

> *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.*
>
> **1 Kings 4:29**

He spoke 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs (4:32), and taught about trees, animals, birds, reptiles and fish (4:33). Some of his proverbs are preserved in the book of Proverbs, and his songs in the Song of Solomon and Psalms 72 and 127. People came from all nations to hear his wisdom (4:34).

Chapter 5 — Preparations for the Temple

Hiram king of Tyre, David's friend, sent congratulations. Solomon told him he would now build the house David could not build because of his wars, and asked for cedar from Lebanon (5:1-6). Hiram agreed in exchange for wheat and oil (5:7-12). Solomon raised a levy of 30,000 Israelites working a month in Lebanon and two at home, plus 70,000 carriers and 80,000 stonecutters, with 3,300 overseers (5:13-16). They quarried "great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house" (5:17).

Chapter 6 — The Temple Built

> *And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.*
>
> **1 Kings 6:1**

This verse, dating the Exodus to about 1446 BC, is a key anchor for Bible chronology. The temple was 60 cubits long, 20 wide and 30 high (about 90 by 30 by 45 feet), twice the size of the tabernacle and following its pattern, with a porch, side chambers on three levels, and windows (6:2-10). "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building" (6:7). Many see a picture of the church, built of "lively stones" shaped in this world and fitted into God's house without noise (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21-22).

In the middle of construction, God reminded Solomon that obedience mattered more than the building: "if thou wilt walk in my statutes... then will I perform my word with thee... And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel" (6:12-13). The interior was lined with cedar and overlaid with gold (6:14-22). The Most Holy Place (the oracle) was a perfect cube of 20 cubits, entirely overlaid with gold, containing two cherubim of olive wood, each 10 cubits high, whose wings touched the walls and each other (6:19-28). Carvings of cherubim, palm trees and open flowers decorated the walls and doors (6:29-35), recalling the garden of Eden. It took seven years to build (6:38).

Chapter 7 — Solomon's Palace and the Temple Furnishings

Solomon spent thirteen years building his own house (7:1), nearly twice as long as the temple. He also built the house of the forest of Lebanon, the porch of judgment with his throne, and a house for Pharaoh's daughter (7:2-12). Hiram, a skilled bronze worker from Tyre whose mother was a widow of Naphtali, "filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass" (7:13-14), made the temple's bronze furnishings:

- **Two pillars** at the porch, named Jachin ("he shall establish") and Boaz ("in it is strength") (7:15-22).
- **The molten sea**, a huge bronze basin for the priests' washing, standing on twelve bronze oxen facing the four directions (7:23-26).
- **Ten bronze bases and lavers** for washing sacrifices (7:27-39).
- Gold furnishings for inside: the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, ten candlesticks, and many vessels (7:48-50).

Solomon brought in the gold, silver and vessels David had dedicated (7:51).

Chapter 8 — The Dedication of the Temple

At the Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month, the priests brought the ark from the city of David into the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim (8:1-6). "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb" (8:9). Then:

> *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.*
>
> **1 Kings 8:10-11**

As at the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35), God's glory came to dwell among His people. Solomon blessed the people and praised God for keeping His word to David (8:14-21). Then, standing and later kneeling before the altar with hands spread toward heaven (8:22, 54), he prayed one of the longest prayers in Scripture. He confessed God's uniqueness and faithfulness (8:23-26) and His greatness:

> *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?*
>
> **1 Kings 8:27**

He asked God to hear prayers made toward this house in seven situations: oaths and justice (8:31-32); defeat by enemies because of sin (8:33-34); drought (8:35-36); famine and plague (8:37-40); the prayer of a foreigner, "that all people of the earth may know thy name" (8:41-43); battle (8:44-45); and captivity in a foreign land, "for there is no man that sinneth not," if they repent and pray toward the land, the city and the house (8:46-53). Daniel later prayed toward Jerusalem from Babylon three times a day (Daniel 6:10), and God answered in the return from exile. Solomon blessed the people: "there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant" (8:56), and prayed "That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else" (8:60). Huge sacrifices and a fourteen-day feast followed (8:62-66).

Chapter 9 — God's Answer and Warning

God appeared to Solomon a second time: "I have heard thy prayer... I have hallowed this house... and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually" (9:3). But He gave a solemn warning: if Solomon and his descendants turned to other gods, "Then will I cut off Israel out of the land... and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight... And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss" (9:6-8). This was fulfilled when Babylon destroyed the temple in 586 BC (2 Kings 25:9). The chapter then lists Solomon's building projects and forced labour of the remaining Canaanites (9:15-24), including the fortified cities Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer (9:15). Archaeologists have found similar six-chambered gates at all three sites, often attributed to Solomon's era, though their dating is debated. Hiram was not pleased with the twenty cities Solomon gave him, calling them Cabul ("as nothing") (9:11-13). Solomon's fleet at Ezion-geber brought 420 talents of gold from Ophir (9:26-28).

Chapter 10 — The Queen of Sheba and Solomon's Splendour

The queen of Sheba, probably from southern Arabia, heard of Solomon's fame "concerning the name of the LORD" and came "to prove him with hard questions" (10:1). She brought spices, gold and precious stones. "And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king" (10:3). When she saw his wisdom, his house, his servants and "his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her" (10:4-5).

> *It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me*
>
> **1 Kings 10:6-7**

"Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel" (10:9). She gave him 120 talents of gold. Jesus said, "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42). A Gentile travelled far to hear wisdom; Israel rejected the One who is Wisdom itself.

Solomon's wealth was staggering: 666 talents of gold came in each year (10:14), apart from trade revenue. (The number 666 appears elsewhere in Scripture only in Ezra 2:13 as a family count and in Revelation 13:18; some have noted the link with Solomon's later decline, though Scripture does not draw it.) He made 200 large and 300 small shields of gold (10:16-17), an ivory throne overlaid with gold with six steps and twelve lions (10:18-20). "None were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon" (10:21). His ships of Tharshish brought gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks every three years (10:22). "So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom" (10:23). Yet the chapter ends with warning signs: he multiplied horses and chariots, bringing horses out of Egypt (10:26-29), as Deuteronomy 17:16 forbade. Jesus later said, "even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" lilies (Matthew 6:29).

Chapter 11 — Solomon's Heart Turned Away

> *But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites... Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.*
>
> **1 Kings 11:1-3**

God had forbidden marriage to these peoples "for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods" (11:2; Deuteronomy 7:3-4), and the king was not to "multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away" (Deuteronomy 17:17). "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father" (11:4). He built high places for Ashtoreth of the Zidonians, Milcom and Molech of the Ammonites, and Chemosh of Moab "in the hill that is before Jerusalem" (11:5-8), the Mount of Olives, later called "the mount of corruption" (2 Kings 23:13). Solomon broke all three of Deuteronomy's laws for kings: horses, wives and gold (Deuteronomy 17:16-17). Nehemiah later warned, "Did not Solomon

king of Israel sin by these things?... even him did outlandish women cause to sin" (Nehemiah 13:26).

"And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice" (11:9). God would tear the kingdom from him, but not in his days and not all of it, "for David thy father's sake," leaving one tribe "for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen" (11:11-13). God raised up adversaries: Hadad the Edomite (11:14-22), Rezon of Damascus (11:23-25), and Jeroboam son of Nebat, an able Ephraimite whom Solomon had put in charge of forced labour (11:26-28). The prophet Ahijah of Shiloh met Jeroboam, tore his own new garment into twelve pieces, and gave him ten: "Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee" (11:29-31). If Jeroboam obeyed, God would "build thee a sure house, as I built for David" (11:38). "And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever" (11:39), a hint of future restoration through the Messiah. Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, who fled to Shishak of Egypt (11:40). Solomon died after reigning forty years (11:42-43).

Solomon's life is a solemn warning. The wisest man who ever lived, who began by asking for an understanding heart and built God's house, ended by building altars to idols. Wisdom without continued obedience cannot save. Many believe Ecclesiastes reflects his later reflections on the emptiness of life without God (Ecclesiastes 1:1; 12:13-14), though Scripture does not record his repentance.

Section II: The Divided Kingdom (Chapters 12-22)

Chapter 12 — The Kingdom Divides

Rehoboam, Solomon's son, went to Shechem to be made king (12:1). Jeroboam returned from Egypt, and the people asked Rehoboam to lighten the heavy yoke Solomon had placed on them (12:3-4; compare 1 Samuel 8:11-18). The old men who had served Solomon advised, "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them... then they will be thy servants for ever" (12:7). This is servant leadership (Mark 10:42-45). Rehoboam rejected it and followed the young men he grew up with: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins... my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (12:10-11). "Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah" (12:15). God's sovereignty worked through Rehoboam's pride.

Israel answered, "What portion have we in David?... to your tents, O Israel" (12:16), the same cry as Sheba's revolt (2 Samuel 20:1). They stoned Rehoboam's tax officer, and Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem (12:18). The ten northern tribes made Jeroboam king; only Judah (with Benjamin) followed the house of David (12:19-21). When Rehoboam gathered an army to fight, the prophet Shemaiah said, "Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren... for this thing is from me" (12:22-24), and they obeyed.

Jeroboam feared that if his people went to Jerusalem to worship, their hearts would turn back to Rehoboam (12:26-27). So he made two golden calves and said, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (12:28), almost the exact words of Aaron at Sinai (Exodus 32:4). He set one at Bethel in the south and one at Dan in the far north (12:29), built high places, appointed priests "of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi" (12:31), and invented a feast in the eighth month to rival Tabernacles, "in the month which he had devised of his own heart" (12:32-33). Many faithful priests, Levites and others moved south to Judah (2 Chronicles 11:13-16). From here on, the phrase "the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" becomes the verdict on almost every northern king. Political religion,

designed for convenience and control, led the nation to ruin.

Chapter 13 — The Man of God from Judah

As Jeroboam stood at his altar in Bethel, a man of God from Judah cried against it: "O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places" (13:2). This prophecy, naming a king about 300 years in advance, was fulfilled exactly by King Josiah (2 Kings 23:15-18). As a sign, the altar split and its ashes poured out (13:3, 5). Jeroboam stretched out his hand to seize the prophet, and it dried up; at the prophet's prayer it was healed (13:4, 6). The man of God refused the king's reward, because God had commanded him not to eat or drink there or return the same way (13:7-10).

An old prophet of Bethel followed him and lied: "I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back" (13:18). The man of God went back and ate. Then the word of the LORD came through the lying prophet, pronouncing judgment for his disobedience (13:20-22). On the way, a lion killed him, and the lion and the donkey stood beside the body untouched, a clearly supernatural judgment (13:24-28). The old prophet buried him and asked to be buried beside him, confirming his prophecy (13:29-32). The lesson: when God has spoken clearly, no claim of new revelation, even from a prophet or "an angel," can override it (Galatians 1:8). "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way" (13:33).

Chapter 14 — Jeroboam's Judgment; Rehoboam's Sins

Jeroboam's son Abijah fell sick, and Jeroboam sent his wife in disguise to the old, blind prophet Ahijah (14:1-4). God told Ahijah who was coming. Ahijah pronounced judgment: because Jeroboam had "done evil above all that were before thee... and hast cast me behind thy back," God would "take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone" (14:9-10). The child would die as she entered the city, and be the only one of the family buried with honour, "because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel" (14:13). Ahijah also foretold that God would "root up Israel out of this good land... and shall scatter them beyond the river" (14:15), fulfilled when Assyria took Israel captive (2 Kings 17:6). The child died as foretold (14:17).

In Judah, Rehoboam reigned seventeen years, and Judah also did evil, building high places, images and groves, with sodomites (male cult prostitutes) in the land, "according to all the abominations of the nations" (14:21-24). In his fifth year, Shishak king of Egypt took the treasures of the temple and palace, including Solomon's gold shields; Rehoboam replaced them with bronze (14:25-28). Glory gave way to imitation. Shishak (Pharaoh Sheshonq I) recorded his campaign in Canaan on a wall of the temple at Karnak in Egypt, one of the clearest external confirmations of an event in Kings.

Chapter 15 — Abijam, Asa, Nadab and Baasha

Abijam reigned three years in Judah and "walked in all the sins of his father" (15:1-3). "Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem," because "David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD... save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (15:4-5). God's faithfulness to His covenant kept David's line burning through many unfaithful kings.

Asa reigned 41 years and "did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father" (15:11). He removed the cult prostitutes and idols, and even removed his grandmother Maachah from being queen because she had made an idol in a grove, burning it at the brook Kidron (15:12-13). "But

the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days" (15:14). When Baasha of Israel threatened him, however, Asa paid Ben-hadad of Syria with temple treasures to attack Israel (15:16-21). 2 Chronicles 16:7-9 records a prophet's rebuke: "Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD... For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." In old age Asa was diseased in his feet (15:23).

In Israel, **Nadab**, Jeroboam's son, reigned two years and was assassinated by **Baasha**, who wiped out the whole house of Jeroboam, "according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah" (15:25-30). Baasha reigned 24 years and walked in the way of Jeroboam (15:33-34).

Chapter 16 — Baasha to Ahab

The prophet Jehu son of Hanani pronounced the same judgment on Baasha's house as on Jeroboam's (16:1-4). His son **Elah** reigned two years and was murdered while drunk by **Zimri**, a chariot commander, who destroyed Baasha's family "according to the word of the LORD" (16:8-13). Zimri reigned seven days; when the army made **Omri** king, Zimri burned the palace over himself (16:15-19). After a struggle with Tibni, Omri reigned twelve years. He bought the hill of Samaria and built a new capital there (16:23-24), which remained Israel's capital until its fall. "But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him" (16:25). Outside the Bible, Omri was famous: the Moabite Stone (Mesha Stele) mentions him, and Assyrian records called Israel "the house of Omri" long after his dynasty ended.

His son **Ahab** reigned 22 years and "did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him" (16:30). He married Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and served Baal, building a temple and altar for Baal in Samaria and making a grove (Asherah pole) (16:31-33). "Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (16:33). Ahab moved Israel from corrupt worship of the LORD (the calves) to open worship of a foreign god. In his days, Hiel rebuilt Jericho, and lost his firstborn and youngest sons, "according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua" (16:34; Joshua 6:26). Into this darkness God sent Elijah.

Chapter 17 — Elijah, the Drought and the Widow of Zarephath

> *And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*
>
> **1 Kings 17:1**

Elijah's name means "my God is the LORD (Jehovah)," the very issue at stake. Baal was worshipped as the god of rain and storms; the drought struck at the heart of Baal worship. It lasted three and a half years (Luke 4:25; James 5:17), and came in answer to Elijah's prayer (James 5:17; compare Deuteronomy 11:16-17).

God hid Elijah by the brook Cherith, where "the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening" (17:4-6). When the brook dried up, God sent him to Zarephath, a town of Zidon, Jezebel's homeland, to be fed by a widow (17:8-9). She was gathering sticks to cook her last handful of meal for herself and her son, "that we may eat it, and die" (17:12). Elijah asked her to make him a little cake first, with God's promise: "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of

oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth" (17:13-14). She obeyed by faith, "and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days" (17:15-16).

Later her son died. Elijah carried him to his room, stretched himself on the child three times, and cried, "O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again" (17:21). The child revived, the first resurrection recorded in the Bible (17:22). The widow said, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth" (17:24). Jesus pointed out that of all the widows in Israel, Elijah was sent to a Gentile widow of Sidon (Luke 4:25-26), a sign of grace to the nations. Hebrews 11:35 recalls that "women received their dead raised to life again."

Chapter 18 — The Contest on Mount Carmel

In the third year, God sent Elijah to Ahab, promising rain (18:1). Obadiah, Ahab's palace steward, "feared the LORD greatly" and had hidden a hundred prophets of the LORD in caves when Jezebel was killing them (18:3-4, 13). Elijah met Ahab, who said, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim" (18:17-18).

Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves to meet him on Mount Carmel before all Israel (18:19-20). He said to the people:

> *How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*
>
> **1 Kings 18:21**

"The God that answereth by fire, let him be God" (18:24). The prophets of Baal prepared their bull and called on Baal from morning until noon, leaping on the altar (18:26). At noon Elijah mocked them: "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (18:27). They cried louder and cut themselves with knives until the blood gushed out, and kept on until the evening sacrifice, "but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded" (18:28-29).

Elijah repaired "the altar of the LORD that was broken down," using twelve stones for the twelve tribes, though the nation was divided (18:30-31). He dug a trench and had twelve barrels of water poured over the sacrifice and wood until the trench was full (18:32-35). At the time of the evening sacrifice, he prayed a short, simple prayer:

> *LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.*
>
> **1 Kings 18:36-37**

"Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench" (18:38). The people fell on their faces: "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God" (18:39). The prophets of Baal were executed at the brook Kishon, as the law required for false prophets (18:40; Deuteronomy 13:5).

Then Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bowed with his face between his knees, and prayed for rain (18:42). Six times his servant saw nothing; the seventh time, "there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (18:44). Soon the sky was black with clouds and there was a great rain. "And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah," and he ran ahead of Ahab's chariot to Jezreel, about 17 miles (18:45-46). James 5:17-18 presents Elijah as a model of prayer: "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain... And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain."

Chapter 19 — Elijah at Horeb

When Jezebel heard what had happened, she vowed to kill Elijah within a day (19:1-2). The man who faced 850 false prophets ran for his life. He left his servant at Beersheba, went a day into the wilderness, sat under a juniper tree, and asked to die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (19:4). Spiritual highs are often followed by deep lows. God's first care was physical: He let Elijah sleep, and an angel touched him twice with food and water, "because the journey is too great for thee" (19:5-8). In the strength of that food, he travelled forty days and nights to Horeb, the mount of God where Moses had received the law (19:8).

In a cave, God asked, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Elijah poured out his complaint: he had been zealous, Israel had forsaken the covenant, "and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life" (19:9-10). God passed by: a great wind tore the mountains, but the LORD was not in the wind; then an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; then a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; "and after the fire a still small voice" (19:11-12). God often works not in the spectacular but in the quiet power of His word. God asked the same question again and received the same answer (19:13-14). Then He gave Elijah new work: anoint Hazael king of Syria, Jehu king of Israel, and Elisha as prophet in his place (19:15-17). And He corrected Elijah's despair:

> *Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.*
>
> **1 Kings 19:18**

Paul quotes this: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:2-5). Elijah found Elisha plowing with twelve yoke of oxen and threw his mantle over him (19:19). Elisha asked to say goodbye to his parents, then slaughtered his oxen, burned the plow equipment to cook them, fed the people, and followed Elijah (19:20-21). He burned his bridges behind him. Compare Jesus' words: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:61-62).

Chapter 20 — Ahab's Wars with Syria

Ben-hadad of Syria, with 32 allied kings, besieged Samaria and made arrogant demands (20:1-6). Ahab replied, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off" (20:11). A prophet told Ahab that God would give him the victory, "and thou shalt know that I am the LORD" (20:13), and Israel won (20:16-21). The Syrians concluded, "Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain" (20:23). God answered through a man of God: "Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand" (20:28). Israel won again at

Aphek (20:29-30). But when Ben-hadad begged for mercy, Ahab called him "my brother," made a treaty, and let him go (20:32-34). A prophet, disguised as a wounded soldier, told a parable and declared, "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people" (20:42). Ahab went home "heavy and displeased" (20:43).

Chapter 21 — Naboth's Vineyard

Ahab wanted the vineyard of Naboth, next to his palace in Jezreel, for a vegetable garden. Naboth refused: "The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee" (21:3). He honoured God's law that family land was not to be permanently sold (Leviticus 25:23; Numbers 36:7). Ahab went home sulking and refused to eat (21:4). Jezebel mocked him, "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?" (21:7), and wrote letters in Ahab's name to the elders of Jezreel, ordering a fast and two "sons of Belial" to falsely accuse Naboth of blaspheming God and the king (21:8-10). They obeyed. Naboth was stoned outside the city, and Ahab went to take the vineyard (21:13-16).

God sent Elijah to meet him there:

> *Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?... In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.*
>
> **1 Kings 21:19**

Ahab said, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah answered, "I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD" (21:20). His house would be cut off like those of Jeroboam and Baasha, and "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel" (21:21-24). "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (21:25). Yet when Ahab heard, he tore his clothes, wore sackcloth, fasted and "went softly," and God told Elijah, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days" (21:27-29). God's mercy responded even to the partial humbling of the worst king, though the judgment was only delayed. Revelation 2:20 uses "Jezebel" as the name of a false prophetess who led believers into immorality and idolatry.

Chapter 22 — Micaiah and the Death of Ahab

Jehoshaphat, the godly king of Judah, allied himself with Ahab by marriage (2 Chronicles 18:1) and agreed to join him against Syria at Ramoth-gilead, saying, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people" (22:4). But he wisely asked first to "enquire... at the word of the LORD" (22:5). Ahab gathered 400 prophets, who all said, "Go up; for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king" (22:6). Jehoshaphat sensed something wrong: "Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?" (22:7). Ahab answered, "There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah... but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (22:8). Zedekiah, one of the false prophets, made iron horns as a sign of victory (22:11).

The messenger urged Micaiah to agree with the others, but he said, "As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak" (22:14). At first he repeated their words sarcastically; when pressed, he said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd" (22:17). Then he described a vision of God's heavenly court: God asked who would entice Ahab to his death, and a spirit offered to be "a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets," and God permitted it (22:19-23).

God gave Ahab over to the lies he preferred, as He judicially gives over those who reject the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11; Romans 1:24, 28). Zedekiah struck Micaiah on the cheek (22:24). Ahab had Micaiah imprisoned on bread and water "until I come in peace." Micaiah answered, "If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me" (22:27-28).

Ahab disguised himself in battle and let Jehoshaphat wear his royal robes. The Syrians, ordered to kill only the king of Israel, chased Jehoshaphat until he cried out and they saw he was not Ahab (22:30-33). "And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness" (22:34). A random arrow was guided by God. Ahab died that evening (22:35). His chariot was washed at the pool of Samaria, "and the dogs licked up his blood... according unto the word of the LORD which he spake" (22:38). The chapter summarises the good reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah, who walked in the ways of Asa (22:41-50), though he was rebuked for his alliance with Ahab: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?" (2 Chronicles 19:2). The book ends with Ahab's son Ahaziah beginning an evil reign in Israel (22:51-53).

Part Three: Christ in 1 Kings

Solomon as a Type of Christ

Solomon	1 Kings	Christ	New Testament
Son of David, chosen by God to reign	1:30; 2:12	The Son of David on David's throne	Luke 1:32-33
Rode on a mule to his coronation	1:33, 38	Rode into Jerusalem on a colt	Matthew 21:5-9; Zechariah 9:9
Anointed king	1:39	The Anointed One (Christ)	Acts 10:38
His name means "peaceable"; a king of peace	4:24-25; 1 Chronicles 22:9	The Prince of Peace	Isaiah 9:6; Ephesians 2:14
Asked for and received divine wisdom	3:9-12; 4:29	"A greater than Solomon"; in Him are all the treasures of wisdom	Matthew 12:42; Colossians 2:3
Judged with perfect discernment	3:16-28	Knows all hearts and judges righteously	John 2:25; 5:22, 30
Built the house of God	6	Builds His church, the true temple	Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20-22
His reign brought peace, prosperity and safety	4:20-25	His kingdom of righteousness and peace	Isaiah 9:7; Micah 4:3-4
Ruled from the river to the ends of the land	4:21	"His dominion shall be from sea even to sea"	Psalm 72:8; Zechariah 9:10
Gentiles came to hear his wisdom and bring gifts	4:34; 10:1-10	The nations come to Christ's light; the wise men brought gifts	Isaiah 60:3-6; Matthew 2:11
Prayed for his people and blessed them	8:22-61	Prays for His people and blesses them	John 17; Luke 24:50

The great difference: Solomon's heart turned away, and his kingdom divided. Christ's heart never wavered, and His kingdom will never end. Psalm 72, "A Psalm for Solomon," describes a King far greater than Solomon, whose reign is eternal and universal.

The Temple and Christ

The temple, like the tabernacle, pointed to God dwelling with His people. Jesus said, "in this place is one greater than the temple" (Matthew 12:6) and spoke of His body as the temple: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19-21). Solomon's prayer that sinners could pray toward the temple and be heard (8:30-50) is fulfilled in Christ, through whom we "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16). Stephen quoted Solomon's own words: "the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:47-50; 1 Kings 8:27). Now believers individually and together are God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).

Elijah and Christ

Elijah points forward both to John the Baptist and to Christ:

Elijah	1 Kings	Fulfillment	New Testament
Fed a Gentile widow and her son miraculously	17:8-16	Jesus fed multitudes; ministered to Gentiles	Matthew 14:15-21; 15:21-28; Luke 4:25-26
Raised a widow's only son	17:17-24	Jesus raised the widow of Nain's only son; "a great prophet is risen"	Luke 7:11-16
Called the nation to decide between God and Baal	18:21	"He that is not with me is against me"	Matthew 12:30
Fire from heaven accepted the sacrifice	18:38	God accepted Christ's sacrifice	Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 9:14
Fasted forty days in the wilderness	19:8	Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness	Matthew 4:2
Rejected and hunted by the ruling powers	19:2	Rejected by the rulers	John 11:53
Prophesied to return before the day of the LORD	Malachi 4:5-6	John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elias"	Luke 1:17; Matthew 11:14; 17:10-13
Appeared with Moses at the transfiguration		Spoke with Christ about His death	Luke 9:30-31

Naboth: The Innocent Condemned

Naboth was a faithful man who refused to give up his God-given inheritance, condemned by false witnesses on a charge of blasphemy against God and the king, and executed outside the city (21:10-13). Jesus was likewise accused by false witnesses (Matthew 26:59-61), condemned for blasphemy (Matthew 26:65), and crucified outside the gate (Hebrews 13:12). Stephen died the same way (Acts 6:11-13; 7:58).

Micaiah: The Faithful Prophet

Micaiah, the lone true prophet against 400, hated because he told the truth, struck on the cheek and imprisoned, foresaw Israel "as sheep that have not a shepherd" (22:17). Jesus was struck for His testimony (John 18:22-23), hated for telling the truth (John 8:45), and was moved with compassion because the people were "as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34).

The Lamp for David's Sake

Again and again God preserved the house of David "for David's sake" (11:12-13, 32-36; 15:4). Through evil kings and a divided kingdom, the lamp did not go out, because the promise of 2 Samuel 7 would be fulfilled in Christ, "the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment
Judgment on the house of Eli	1 Samuel 2:31-35	Abiathar removed (1 Kings 2:27)
David's son will build the temple	2 Samuel 7:13	6-8; 8:20
The kingdom torn from Solomon, but one tribe left	11:11-13	12:16-20
Ahijah: ten tribes to Jeroboam	11:31	12:20
"This thing is from me" (the division)	11:31; 12:15, 24	12:16-24
Josiah by name will burn priests' bones on Bethel's altar	13:2	2 Kings 23:15-18 (about 300 years later)
The Bethel altar will split	13:3	13:5
Jeroboam's son will die as his mother enters the city	14:12	14:17
Jeroboam's house cut off	14:10-11	15:29
Israel will be scattered beyond the river	14:15	2 Kings 17:6, 23
Baasha's house cut off	16:1-4	16:11-12
The rebuilder of Jericho will lose his sons	Joshua 6:26	16:34
No rain except by Elijah's word	17:1	17:7; 18:1, 41-45
The meal and oil will not fail	17:14	17:16
Victory over Syria in the hills and valleys	20:13, 28	20:21, 29-30
Ahab's life for Ben-hadad's	20:42	22:34-37
Dogs will lick Ahab's blood	21:19	22:38
Dogs will eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel	21:23	2 Kings 9:30-37
Hazael, Jehu and Elisha to be anointed	19:15-16	19:19-21; 2 Kings 8:13; 9:1-10
Ahab will not return in peace	22:17, 28	22:35-37
The temple will be destroyed if Israel turns away	9:7-9	2 Kings 25:9

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Kings 3 — Asking for Wisdom

Solomon's request is a model of prayer: humble ("I am but a little child"), focused on serving others ("to judge thy people"), and spiritual rather than selfish. God gave more than he asked (Ephesians 3:20). Yet the same chapter shows the seeds of his fall: a marriage alliance with Egypt and sacrifice at high places (3:1-3). Gifts are not the same as faithfulness.

1 Kings 8 — Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

The prayer teaches that God is unique and faithful (8:23), transcendent yet near (8:27-30), that "there is no man that sinneth not" (8:46), that repentance brings forgiveness (8:47-50), and that God's purpose is for "all the people of the earth" to know Him (8:43, 60). It anticipates both the exile and the return.

1 Kings 11 — How the Wise Fall

Solomon did not fall suddenly. His heart was turned "when Solomon was old" (11:4), the result of years of small compromises: political marriages, multiplied horses and wealth, and tolerance of high places. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23), wrote Solomon himself.

1 Kings 18 — Decision at Carmel

Elijah's challenge, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" (18:21), confronts every age. The people "limped" between the LORD and Baal, trying to keep both. God answers with fire and proves He alone is God. Elijah's prayer was short, God-centred ("let it be known this day that thou art God"), and based on God's word ("I have done all these things at thy word," 18:36).

1 Kings 19 — God's Care for a Discouraged Servant

God met Elijah's despair with rest, food, gentle questions, a revelation of Himself in a still small voice, new work and a reminder that he was not alone. Spiritual depression is not answered by rebuke but by God's tender care and renewed purpose.

1 Kings 22 — Truth vs. Popular Religion

Four hundred prophets told the king what he wanted to hear; one told him the truth and was hated for it. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Timothy 4:3). Micaiah's rule, "what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak" (22:14), is the rule for every preacher.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Kings

1. Faithfulness Determines Destiny

Every king is measured by his faithfulness to the LORD. Prosperity and power count for nothing if the heart turns from God (9:4-9; 11:9-11).

2. The Danger of Compromise

Solomon's foreign wives, horses and gold (11; Deuteronomy 17:16-17), and Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab (22), show how compromise gradually turns the heart.

3. The Sin of Man-Made Religion

Jeroboam's calves were worship of the LORD in a way "devised of his own heart" (12:33), and they led to Ahab's open Baal worship. False worship is never neutral.

4. The Power of the Prophetic Word

Every prophecy in 1 Kings is fulfilled, often in detail and sometimes centuries later (13:2). "Not one word" of God fails (8:56).

5. God's Faithfulness to David

For David's sake God kept a lamp burning in Jerusalem (11:36; 15:4), preserving the line of the Messiah through unfaithful kings.

6. The Exclusive Claims of the LORD

Carmel proves there is one true God (18:39). God is "God of the hills" and "of the valleys" (20:28); Baal is nothing.

7. Prayer

Solomon's prayer (8), Elijah's prayers for drought, resurrection, fire and rain (17-18; James 5:16-18), and Ahab's humbling (21:27-29) all show God responding to prayer.

8. Wisdom

True wisdom begins with God and is given by Him (3:9-12; Proverbs 1:7; James 1:5), but it must be joined to lifelong obedience.

9. God's Justice and Mercy

God judges the houses of Jeroboam, Baasha and Ahab exactly as He said, yet shows mercy to a dying child (14:13), a Gentile widow (17), and even Ahab when he humbled himself (21:29).

10. The Faithful Remnant

In the worst of times God had Obadiah, a hundred hidden prophets, Micaiah and seven thousand who did not bow to Baal (18:4; 19:18; 22:8). God always preserves a remnant (Romans 11:5).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Kings Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Kings in the New Testament

1 Kings	New Testament	Use
1-11 (Solomon)	Matthew 1:6-7	Solomon in Christ's genealogy, born of "her that had been the wife of Urias"
3-4; 10 (Solomon's wisdom; the queen of Sheba)	Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31	"A greater than Solomon is here"
10 (Solomon's glory)	Matthew 6:29; Luke 12:27	Not arrayed like the lilies
6-8 (the temple)	Matthew 12:6; John 2:19-21; Acts 7:47-50	One greater than the temple; God not confined to buildings
8:27	Acts 7:48-49; 17:24	The most High dwells not in temples made with hands
Solomon's porch (the temple's east colonnade)	John 10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12	Jesus and the apostles taught there
12-16 (kings of Judah)	Matthew 1:7-8	Roboam, Abia, Asa and Josaphat in Christ's genealogy
17:1; 18:41-45	James 5:17-18; Luke 4:25	Elijah's prayer; three years and six months
17:8-16	Luke 4:25-26	The widow of Sarepta
17:17-24	Luke 7:11-16; Hebrews 11:35	Women received their dead raised
19:8	Matthew 4:2	Forty days and nights
19:10, 14, 18	Romans 11:2-5	The remnant of seven thousand
19:19-21	Luke 9:61-62	Putting one's hand to the plough
Elijah	Matthew 11:14; 16:14; 17:3-13; Luke 1:17; 9:54; John 1:21	John the Baptist; the transfiguration; calling down fire
21 (Jezebel)	Revelation 2:20	A false prophetess called Jezebel
21:10-13 (Naboth)	Matthew 26:59-66; Acts 6:11-13	False witnesses and a charge of blasphemy
22:17	Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34	Sheep without a shepherd
22:22-23	2 Thessalonians 2:11	God sends strong delusion on those who reject truth

1 Kings in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The borders promised to Abraham reached under Solomon (15:18; 1 Kings 4:21)
Exodus	The Exodus dates the temple (6:1); the tabernacle's pattern and glory (40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11); Jeroboam repeats Aaron's words (32:4; 1 Kings 12:28)
Leviticus	The land may not be sold permanently (25:23; Naboth, 1 Kings 21:3)
Deuteronomy	The law of the king: horses, wives and gold (17:16-17; 1 Kings 10-11); one place of worship (12); no marriage with idolaters (7:3-4); false prophets (13; 18:20); rain withheld for idolatry (11:16-17)
Joshua	The curse on the rebuilder of Jericho (6:26; 1 Kings 16:34)
1 Samuel	The word against Eli fulfilled (2:31-35; 1 Kings 2:27)
2 Samuel	Direct continuation; the Davidic covenant (7) fulfilled in Solomon (1 Kings 8:15-20); Sheba's cry repeated (20:1; 1 Kings 12:16); Joab's murders (3:27; 20:10)
2 Kings	Direct continuation; Elijah's departure and Elisha (2); Jehu fulfils the judgment on Ahab and Jezebel (9-10); Josiah fulfils 13:2 (23:15-18); the temple destroyed (25:9)
1 Chronicles	David's preparations for the temple (22-29)
2 Chronicles	Parallel account of Solomon (1-9) and the kings of Judah (10-20), with added detail on Asa and Jehoshaphat
Nehemiah	"Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?" (13:26)
Psalms	Psalm 72 and 127 (Solomon); 132 (the ark brought to its rest)
Proverbs	Solomon's proverbs (1:1; 10:1; 25:1; 1 Kings 4:32)
Ecclesiastes	Traditionally Solomon's reflections on life
Song of Solomon	One of Solomon's songs (1 Kings 4:32)
Isaiah	Gold from Sheba (60:6); the temple's glory (6:1-4)
Jeremiah	The temple is not a guarantee of safety (7:4-14)
Daniel	Praying toward Jerusalem from exile (6:10; 1 Kings 8:48)
Hosea	Judgment on Jehu's house for the blood of Jezreel (1:4)
Micah	"The statutes of Omri... and all the works of the house of Ahab" (6:16); every man under his vine (4:4)
Malachi	"I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD" (4:5)

Themes That Run from 1 Kings Through Scripture

Theme	In 1 Kings	Developed	Fulfilled
The temple and God's presence	6-8	Ezekiel 40-48; Haggai 2:7-9	John 2:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Revelation 21:22
Wisdom from God	3:9-12; 4:29	Proverbs; Isaiah 11:2	1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3; James 1:5

Theme	In 1 Kings	Developed	Fulfilled
The Son of David's kingdom of peace	4:20-25	Psalm 72; Isaiah 9:6-7	Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 11:15
The lamp of David	11:36; 15:4	2 Kings 8:19; Psalm 132:17	John 8:12; Revelation 22:16
The prophetic word fulfilled	13:2; 21:19	2 Kings 23:16; 9:36	Matthew 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21
Elijah	17-19	2 Kings 2; Malachi 4:5	Luke 1:17; Matthew 17:3-13; Revelation 11:6
The remnant	19:18	Isaiah 10:20-22	Romans 11:4-5
False religion and false prophets	12:28-33; 22	Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 13	Matthew 7:15; 2 Peter 2:1; Revelation 2:20

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Fathers must correct their children** (1:6).
- **Be strong and obey God's Word** (2:2-3).
- **Ask God for wisdom** before riches (3:9; James 1:5).
- **Give God your best and first** (6; 7:1 shows Solomon built his own house longer).
- **Pray for your nation and for the nations** (8:41-43, 60).
- **Small compromises turn the heart over time** (11:1-4).
- **Lead by serving** (12:7).
- **Seek wise counsel, not just agreeable counsel** (12:8).
- **Never worship God in your own invented way** (12:33).
- **Obey what God has clearly said,** whatever others claim (13:18-24).
- **God keeps His promises across generations** (15:4).
- **God provides in unexpected ways** (17:4-16).
- **Choose: "How long halt ye between two opinions?"** (18:21).
- **Persevere in prayer** (18:43-44; James 5:16-18).
- **Rest and eat when you are worn out;** God cares for the whole person (19:5-8).
- **You are never as alone as you feel** (19:18).
- **Follow the Lord without looking back** (19:21).
- **Covetousness leads to terrible sin** (21).
- **Tell the truth even when it is unpopular** (22:14).
- **Don't partner with the ungodly** (22:4; 2 Chronicles 19:2).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:2-3	Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways
3:9	Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad
8:27	Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?
8:56	There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.
8:61	Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments
11:4	His wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God
17:24	Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.
18:21	How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.
18:39	The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.
19:12	And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.
19:18	Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal
22:14	As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.

Conclusion

1 Kings opens in glory and closes in darkness. Under Solomon, Israel reached the height of its wealth, wisdom and influence: the temple was built, God's glory filled it, and the nations came to hear the wisdom God gave. But Solomon's heart turned away, the kingdom split in two, and the northern kingdom sank from Jeroboam's calves to Ahab's Baal worship. Into that darkness God sent Elijah, whose fire on Carmel proved that the LORD alone is God. Through every failure, God kept His word: judgment came exactly as the prophets said, and the lamp of David was not put out. The book points beyond Solomon to the One "greater than Solomon," the true Temple and the true King, whose wisdom never fails and whose kingdom will never be divided.

> *Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.*
>
> **1 Kings 8:61**

2 Kings

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (traditionally Jeremiah) • Date: c. 560-540 BC • Chapters: 25

> *So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.*
>
> **2 Kings 17:23**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Kings

The Book

2 Kings is the second half of the original single book of Kings, continuing directly from 1 Kings. The King James Version calls it "The Second Book of the Kings, commonly called the Fourth Book of the Kings." Jewish tradition credits Jeremiah as the author; the book was completed during the Babylonian exile, around 560 BC, since its last event is the release of King Jehoiachin from prison in the 37th year of his captivity (25:27-30).

Period Covered

2 Kings covers about 300 years, from the reign of Ahaziah of Israel (around 853 BC) to Jehoiachin's release in Babylon (around 560 BC). It records two national catastrophes:

- **The fall of Israel (the northern kingdom)** to Assyria in 722 BC (chapter 17).
- **The fall of Judah (the southern kingdom)** to Babylon, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC (chapter 25).

Purpose and Theme

2 Kings explains why God's people lost the land He had given them. The answer is stated plainly: persistent idolatry and covenant unfaithfulness, despite repeated warnings from God's prophets.

> *Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers... Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks*
>
> **2 Kings 17:13-14**

The book shows God's patience (He sent prophet after prophet over centuries), His justice (the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28 fell exactly as warned), His mercy to individuals who turned to Him (Naaman, the Shunammite, Hezekiah, Josiah), and His faithfulness to David (the royal line survived even in exile).

The World Around Israel

Power	Role in 2 Kings	Key Rulers
Syria (Aram), capital Damascus	Constant wars with Israel; oppressed Israel under Hazael	Ben-hadad, Hazael, Rezin
Assyria, capital Nineveh	Destroyed Israel (722 BC); invaded Judah (701 BC)	Pul (Tiglath-pileser III), Shalmaneser V, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon
Egypt	Unreliable ally; killed Josiah (609 BC)	So, Tirhakah, Pharaoh-nechoh
Babylon	Destroyed Judah and the temple (586 BC)	Merodach-baladan, Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach

Prophets During 2 Kings

Prophet	Ministry	Kingdom
Elijah	Until his translation (1-2)	Israel
Elisha	About 50 years (2-13)	Israel
Jonah	Under Jeroboam II (14:25)	Israel and Nineveh
Amos and Hosea	Under Jeroboam II and after	Israel
Isaiah and Micah	Uzziah to Hezekiah (19-20)	Judah
Nahum	Before Nineveh's fall (612 BC)	Judah, concerning Assyria
Zephaniah	Under Josiah	Judah
Huldah	Under Josiah (22:14)	Judah
Habakkuk	Before the Babylonian invasion	Judah
Jeremiah	Josiah to the fall of Jerusalem	Judah
Ezekiel and Daniel	Among the exiles in Babylon	Judah in exile

Kings in 2 Kings

Dates are approximate; some reigns overlapped as co-regencies.

Israel	Years	Verdict	Judah	Years	Verdict
Ahaziah (c. 853-852)	2	Evil	Jehoshaphat (to c. 848)	25	Good
Jehoram/Joram (c. 852-841)	12	Evil	Jehoram (c. 848-841)	8	Evil
Jehu (c. 841-814)	28	Evil, but destroyed Baal	Ahaziah (c. 841)	1	Evil
Jehoahaz (c. 814-798)	17	Evil	Athaliah (c. 841-835)	6	Evil usurper
Jehoash/Joash (c. 798-782)	16	Evil	Joash/Jehoash (c. 835-796)	40	Good, while Jehoiada lived
Jeroboam II (c. 793-753)	41	Evil	Amaziah (c. 796-767)	29	Good, not wholehearted
Zechariah (c. 753)	6 mon ths	Evil	Azariah/Uzziah (c. 792-740)	52	Good
Shallum (c. 752)	1 month	Evil	Jotham (c. 750-732)	16	Good
Menahem (c. 752-742)	10	Evil	Ahaz (c. 735-715)	16	Evil
Pekahiah (c. 742-740)	2	Evil	Hezekiah (c. 715-686)	29	Very good
Pekah (c. 752-732)	20	Evil	Manasseh (c. 697-642)	55	Most evil
Hoshea (c. 732-722)	9	Evil; Israel falls	Amon (c. 642-640)	2	Evil

Israel	Years	Verdict	Judah	Years	Verdict
			Josiah (c. 640-609)	31	Best
			Jehoahaz (609)	3 months	Evil
			Jehoiakim (c. 609-598)	11	Evil
			Jehoiachin (598-597)	3 months	Evil
			Zedekiah (c. 597-586)	11	Evil; Judah falls

Confirmation from Archaeology

2 Kings is one of the most externally confirmed books of the Old Testament:

- **The Moabite Stone (Mesha Stele)** records Mesha king of Moab's revolt against Israel (chapter 3) and names Omri.
- **The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III** shows "Jehu son of Omri" bowing before the Assyrian king, the only known picture of an Israelite king.
- **Assyrian annals** of Tiglath-pileser III name Menahem, Pekah, Hoshea and Ahaz paying tribute (15-16).
- **Sargon II** claimed the capture of Samaria and deportation of its people (17).
- **Sennacherib's Prism** describes his 701 BC campaign against Hezekiah, boasting he shut him up in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage," but does not claim to have taken the city (18-19). The **Lachish reliefs** in his palace show the siege of Lachish (18:14).
- **The Siloam Tunnel inscription** records the digging of Hezekiah's water tunnel (20:20).
- **The Babylonian Chronicle** dates Nebuchadnezzar's capture of Jerusalem and Jehoiachin to March 597 BC (24:10-12).
- **Babylonian ration tablets** list food allowances for "Jehoiachin, king of Judah" and his sons (25:27-30).

Outline of 2 Kings

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Ministry of Elisha	1-8	The prophet of grace
Elijah's last acts and translation	1-2	Fire from heaven; the chariot of fire; the double portion
Elisha's miracles	3-8	Water, oil, a son restored, Naaman healed, eyes opened, a city fed
II. Israel and Judah to the Fall of Samaria	9-17	Decline and judgment
Jehu's purge	9-10	Ahab's house and Baal destroyed
Joash preserved and the temple repaired	11-12	The royal seed saved
Elisha's death and Israel's revival	13-14	Jonah; Jeroboam II

Section	Chapters	Theme
Israel's last kings	15-16	Assyria rises; Ahaz's apostasy
The fall of Samaria	17	The verdict on Israel
III. Judah Alone to the Fall of Jerusalem	18-25	Revival and ruin
Hezekiah	18-20	Trust, deliverance, healing and a fatal display
Manasseh and Amon	21	The point of no return
Josiah	22-23	The book found; the last great revival
The final kings and the exile	24-25	Babylon; Jerusalem destroyed; Jehoiachin released

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Ministry of Elisha (Chapters 1-8)

Chapter 1 — Ahaziah and the Fire from Heaven

Ahaziah, Ahab's son, fell through a lattice in his upper room and was badly injured. He sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he would recover (1:2). The angel of the LORD sent Elijah to meet them: "Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?... Thou shalt not come down from that bed... but shalt surely die" (1:3-4). The name Baal-zebub ("lord of the flies") later became "Beelzebub," the Pharisees' name for the prince of devils (Matthew 12:24). The king sent a captain with fifty men to arrest Elijah; twice Elijah called down fire from heaven and consumed them (1:9-12). The third captain humbled himself and begged for mercy, and Elijah went with him and delivered the same message (1:13-16). Ahaziah died, and his brother Jehoram became king (1:17). When James and John wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan village "as Elias did," Jesus rebuked them: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:54-56).

Chapter 2 — Elijah Taken Up; Elisha's Double Portion

As God prepared to take Elijah to heaven "by a whirlwind," Elijah walked from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to the Jordan, each time telling Elisha to stay behind. Each time Elisha answered, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (2:2, 4, 6). Elijah struck the Jordan with his mantle, and they crossed on dry ground (2:8). Elijah asked, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." Elisha answered:

> *I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*
>
> **2 Kings 2:9**

The "double portion" was the inheritance of the firstborn son (Deuteronomy 21:17); Elisha was asking to be Elijah's true successor. "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so" (2:10). Then "there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2:11). Elisha cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" (2:12): Elijah had been Israel's true defence. Elijah, like Enoch (Genesis 5:24), went to heaven without dying.

Elisha took up the fallen mantle, struck the Jordan, and asked, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" The waters parted (2:13-14). The sons of the prophets recognised, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha" (2:15). At Jericho he healed the bad water with salt in a new bowl (2:19-22). At Bethel, the centre of calf worship, a crowd of young men (the Hebrew word can describe youths, not only small children) mocked him: "Go up, thou bald head" (2:23), ridiculing God's prophet and perhaps Elijah's ascension. Elisha cursed them in the LORD's name, and two she bears mauled 42 of them (2:24). God's prophet and God's work were not to be despised.

Elijah's ascension pictures Christ's: the master taken up, the disciple watching, and the Spirit given to continue his work (Acts 1:9-11; 2:33). Jesus told His disciples, "greater works than these shall he do;

because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).

Chapter 3 — Victory over Moab

Mesha king of Moab, who had paid Israel a huge yearly tribute of sheep and wool, rebelled after Ahab's death (3:4-5). Jehoram of Israel, Jehoshaphat of Judah, and the king of Edom marched against him through the wilderness and ran out of water (3:6-10). At Jehoshaphat's request they consulted Elisha, who said he would not even look at Jehoram "were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat" (3:13-14). While a minstrel played, the word came: "Make this valley full of ditches... that valley shall be filled with water... and he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand" (3:16-18). The next morning water filled the ditches. The rising sun made it look like blood, and the Moabites, thinking the kings had slaughtered each other, rushed in to plunder and were routed (3:20-25). In desperation Mesha sacrificed his eldest son as a burnt offering on the city wall, and the armies withdrew (3:26-27). The Moabite Stone records Mesha's side of this conflict.

Chapter 4 — Miracles of Life and Provision

The widow's oil (4:1-7). A prophet's widow was about to lose her two sons as slaves to a creditor. She had nothing but a pot of oil. Elisha told her to borrow empty vessels, "not a few," shut the door, and pour. The oil flowed until there were no more vessels (4:3-6). She sold the oil, paid the debt, and lived on the rest. God's supply was limited only by the vessels she brought.

The Shunammite woman (4:8-37). A "great woman" of Shunem showed hospitality to Elisha and, with her husband, built him a small room with a bed, table, stool and candlestick (4:8-10). Elisha promised her a son, and the childless woman bore one (4:16-17). Years later the boy died in her lap (4:18-20). She laid him on the prophet's bed and rode to Elisha, saying only, "It is well" (4:23, 26). Gehazi's attempt with Elisha's staff failed (4:31). Elisha shut the door, prayed, and stretched himself on the child; the child sneezed seven times and opened his eyes (4:32-35). "Women received their dead raised to life again" (Hebrews 11:35).

Death in the pot (4:38-41). During a famine, someone added poisonous wild gourds to a stew. Elisha added meal, "and there was no harm in the pot."

Feeding a hundred (4:42-44). With twenty barley loaves, Elisha fed a hundred men: "They shall eat, and shall leave thereof," and they did. Jesus would later feed five thousand with five barley loaves, with twelve baskets left over (John 6:9-13).

Chapter 5 — Naaman the Leper

Naaman, commander of the Syrian army, was "a great man... and honourable... but he was a leper" (5:1). A little Israelite girl, taken captive in a raid, said to her mistress, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" (5:2-3). The king of Syria sent Naaman with a letter and great wealth to the king of Israel, who tore his clothes: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive?" (5:5-7). Elisha sent for Naaman, but did not even come out to meet him; he sent a message: "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (5:10).

Naaman was furious. He had expected the prophet to come out and wave his hand over him. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" (5:11-12). His servants reasoned with him: "if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?

how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" (5:13). He humbled himself, dipped seven times, "and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (5:14). Naaman returned and confessed, "now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel" (5:15). Elisha refused any payment (5:16). Naaman asked for two mules' load of Israelite earth to worship the LORD in Syria, and for pardon when duty required him to accompany his master into the temple of Rimmon; Elisha said, "Go in peace" (5:17-19).

But Elisha's servant Gehazi ran after Naaman, lied that visitors had come, and took silver and clothing, hiding them (5:20-24). Elisha confronted him: "Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments...?" Naaman's leprosy came on Gehazi, "and he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow" (5:26-27). Jesus cited Naaman: "many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" (Luke 4:27). See Part Three for Naaman as a picture of salvation.

Chapter 6 — The Floating Axe Head, Opened Eyes, and the Siege of Samaria

When the sons of the prophets were building a larger meeting place, a borrowed axe head fell into the Jordan. Elisha cut a stick, threw it in, "and the iron did swim" (6:1-7). God cares about small losses, too.

The king of Syria kept planning ambushes, but Elisha kept warning the king of Israel (6:8-10). Learning that Elisha was the cause, the Syrian king sent a great army to surround Dothan by night (6:11-14). Elisha's servant woke to see the city surrounded: "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" (6:15).

> *And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*
>
> **2 Kings 6:16-17**

Faith sees unseen realities (2 Corinthians 4:18; Hebrews 1:14). Elisha then prayed that the Syrians be struck with blindness, led them into Samaria, and when the king of Israel wanted to kill them, said, "set bread and water before them" (6:18-22). They were fed and sent home, and the raids stopped for a time (6:23). "If thine enemy hunger, feed him" (Romans 12:20; Proverbs 25:21).

Later Ben-hadad besieged Samaria, and the famine became so severe that a donkey's head sold for eighty pieces of silver (6:24-25). Two mothers agreed to eat their sons, a horror foretold in the covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28:53-57). The king, hearing it, tore his clothes, revealing sackcloth underneath, and vowed to kill Elisha, blaming God's prophet for God's judgment (6:26-33).

Chapter 7 — Four Lepers and a Day of Good Tidings

Elisha prophesied that by the next day, fine flour and barley would sell cheaply in Samaria's gate (7:1). A royal officer scoffed: "if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" Elisha answered, "thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof" (7:2). Four lepers outside the gate reasoned, "Why sit we here until we die?" and went to surrender to the Syrians (7:3-4). They found the camp empty: "the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses," and they had fled, leaving everything (7:6-7). The lepers ate, drank and hid treasure, then stopped:

> *We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace... now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.*
>
> **2 Kings 7:9**

This is a strong picture of every believer's duty to share the gospel (Romans 10:14-15). The city was fed, the prices fell exactly as Elisha said, and the scoffing officer was trampled to death in the gate, having seen the food but not eaten it (7:16-20).

Chapter 8 — The Shunammite's Land; Hazael; Kings of Judah

Elisha had warned the Shunammite of a seven-year famine; she lived in Philistia, and on returning found her land taken (8:1-3). At the very moment she came to the king to appeal, Gehazi was telling him how Elisha had raised her son. The king restored her land and all its produce (8:4-6): providence perfectly timed.

In Damascus, the sick Ben-hadad sent Hazael with forty camels of gifts to ask Elisha if he would recover (8:7-9). Elisha said he would not die of the sickness, yet would die, and then stared at Hazael until Hazael was ashamed, and wept: "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel" (8:11-12). Hazael said, "But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Elisha replied, "The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria" (8:13). The next day Hazael smothered Ben-hadad and took the throne (8:15). Men rarely know the evil in their own hearts (Jeremiah 17:9).

In Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat married Ahab's daughter (Athaliah) and "walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab" (8:16-18). One political marriage brought Baal worship into Judah. "Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a light, and to his children" (8:19). Edom revolted and set up its own king (8:20-22), fulfilling Isaac's word that Esau would break Jacob's yoke (Genesis 27:40). Jehoram's son Ahaziah reigned one year and joined Jehoram of Israel against Hazael at Ramoth-gilead (8:25-29).

Section II: Israel and Judah to the Fall of Samaria (Chapters 9-17)

Chapter 9 — Jehu Anointed; Jezebel's End

Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu, a commander, as king of Israel, with a mission: "thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets... at the hand of Jezebel" (9:1-7), as God had told Elijah (1 Kings 19:16). The officers proclaimed Jehu king (9:13). Jehu drove toward Jezreel, and the watchman recognised him: "the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously" (9:20). He shot King Jehoram through the heart and had his body thrown into the field of Naboth, fulfilling the word spoken to Ahab (9:24-26; 1 Kings 21:19-29). He also had Ahaziah of Judah, Ahab's grandson, killed (9:27).

Jezebel painted her eyes, adorned her head, and taunted Jehu from a window: "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" (9:30-31; 1 Kings 16:9-18). At Jehu's call, two or three eunuchs threw her down; she was trampled, and when they went to bury her, they found only her skull, feet and palms. Jehu said, "This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel" (9:33-37; 1 Kings 21:23).

Chapter 10 — Jehu Destroys Ahab's House and Baal Worship

Jehu demanded the heads of Ahab's seventy sons in Samaria, and the leaders sent them in baskets (10:1-10). He killed the rest of Ahab's family, officials and priests in Jezreel (10:11), and 42 relatives of Ahaziah of Judah (10:12-14). He took Jehonadab son of Rechab into his chariot: "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?... Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD" (10:15-16). Jehonadab's descendants, the Rechabites, later became an example of faithfulness (Jeremiah 35). Jehu then pretended to be a greater Baal worshipper than Ahab, gathered all Baal's prophets and priests into Baal's temple, and had them all killed; the temple was destroyed and made a latrine (10:18-28). "Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel" (10:28).

But "from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves" (10:29). God rewarded his obedience with four generations on the throne (10:30; fulfilled in 15:12), but "Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart" (10:31). His zeal was partial and served his own power. A century later, Hosea announced judgment on Jehu's house "for the blood of Jezreel" (Hosea 1:4): God commanded the judgment, but He also saw Jehu's motives and excess. Zeal for God that does not lead to wholehearted obedience is not enough. "In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short," as Hazael took the land east of the Jordan (10:32-33). Jehu reigned 28 years (10:36). The Black Obelisk shows him paying tribute to Shalmaneser III.

Chapter 11 — Athaliah and the Hidden Prince

When Athaliah, Ahab and Jezebel's daughter and mother of Ahaziah of Judah, saw that her son was dead, she "arose and destroyed all the seed royal" (11:1) and seized the throne of Judah. It was the closest the line of David ever came to extinction, a satanic attempt to destroy the line of the promised Messiah (compare Revelation 12:4). But Jehosheba, Ahaziah's sister and wife of the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 22:11), hid the baby Joash, and he was hidden in the house of the LORD for six years (11:2-3). In the seventh year, Jehoiada organised the guards and Levites, brought out the boy, "put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king" (11:4-12). Athaliah cried, "Treason, Treason," and was executed outside the temple (11:13-16). Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, the king and the people "that they should be the LORD'S people," and the people destroyed Baal's temple and killed Mattan, Baal's priest (11:17-18). The lamp of David survived through a hidden child.

Chapter 12 — Joash Repairs the Temple

Joash became king at seven and reigned forty years. "And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him" (12:2). He ordered the temple repaired, but after many years the priests had done nothing (12:4-7). So Jehoiada put a chest with a hole in its lid beside the altar, and the people's offerings were given directly to the workmen, who "dealt faithfully" (12:9-15). When Hazael of Syria threatened Jerusalem, Joash bought him off with the temple's treasures (12:17-18). His servants assassinated him (12:20-21). 2 Chronicles 24:17-22 adds that after Jehoiada died, Joash turned to idols and had Jehoiada's son Zechariah stoned in the temple court for rebuking him; Jesus referred to this murder (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51). Joash's faith depended on his mentor; when Jehoiada died, Joash's godliness died with him.

Chapter 13 — Elisha's Last Days

Under Jehoahaz of Israel, Hazael oppressed Israel severely. "And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him... And the LORD gave Israel a saviour" (13:4-5), though Israel still did not turn from Jeroboam's sins (13:6). When Elisha was dying, King Jehoash of Israel wept over him: "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" (13:14), the same words Elisha had spoken of Elijah. Elisha had the king shoot an arrow eastward, "The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance," and then strike the ground with arrows. The king struck only three times. Elisha was angry: "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice" (13:15-19). Half-hearted faith receives half-hearted results.

Elisha died and was buried. Later, a burial party, frightened by Moabite raiders, threw a dead man into Elisha's tomb; "when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet" (13:20-21). Even in death, God's prophet was associated with life, pointing to the One whose death gives life to all who are joined to Him (Romans 6:4-5). "And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them... because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (13:23). Jehoash defeated Syria three times, exactly as Elisha said (13:25).

Chapter 14 — Amaziah and Jeroboam II

Amaziah of Judah "did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father" (14:3). He executed his father's murderers, "But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses... The fathers shall not be put to death for the children" (14:6; Deuteronomy 24:16). After defeating Edom (14:7), he proudly challenged Jehoash of Israel, who answered with a fable: a thistle asked a cedar for its daughter as a wife for its son, and a wild beast trampled the thistle (14:8-10). Amaziah would not listen; Judah was defeated, Jerusalem's wall broken down, and the temple and palace plundered (14:11-14). Pride goes before destruction (Proverbs 16:18). He was later assassinated at Lachish (14:19).

In Israel, Jeroboam II reigned 41 years, the longest of any northern king, and "restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher" (14:25). This confirms Jonah as a real historical prophet (compare Matthew 12:39-41). "For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter... And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam" (14:26-27). It was a time of prosperity, but also of luxury, injustice and empty religion, condemned by Amos and Hosea (Amos 6:1-7; Hosea 4:1-2).

Chapter 15 — Rapid Decline in Israel

Azariah (also called Uzziah) reigned 52 years in Judah and did right, but the LORD struck him with leprosy until his death (15:1-5); 2 Chronicles 26:16-21 explains he had proudly entered the temple to burn incense, a priest's role. Isaiah saw his vision of the LORD "In the year that king Uzziah died" (Isaiah 6:1). Jotham, his son, also did right (15:32-35).

In Israel, the dynasty of Jehu ended with Zechariah, assassinated after six months, fulfilling God's word that Jehu's sons would reign to the fourth generation (15:8-12). Then came a rapid series of murders: Shallum reigned one month; Menahem killed him and paid Pul (Tiglath-pileser III) of Assyria a

thousand talents of silver to secure his throne (15:13-20); his son Pekahiah was killed by Pekah (15:23-26). In Pekah's days, Tiglath-pileser took Galilee and the land of Naphtali and deported its people (15:29), the first great deportation from Israel (about 733 BC). Isaiah foresaw that this same despised region, "Galilee of the nations," would see a great light (Isaiah 9:1-2), fulfilled when Jesus ministered there (Matthew 4:13-16). Hoshea killed Pekah and became Israel's last king (15:30). Rezin of Syria and Pekah began attacking Judah (15:37).

Chapter 16 — Ahaz's Apostasy

Ahaz of Judah "did not that which was right... but walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen" (16:2-3). When Rezin and Pekah besieged Jerusalem, Isaiah urged Ahaz to trust God and gave the sign of Immanuel (Isaiah 7:1-14). Instead, Ahaz sent the temple's silver and gold to Tiglath-pileser, saying, "I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me" (16:7). Assyria took Damascus and killed Rezin (16:9; compare Amos 1:5). Visiting Tiglath-pileser in Damascus, Ahaz admired a pagan altar, sent its design to Urijah the priest to copy, and replaced God's bronze altar with it in the temple, moving the bronze altar aside for his own divination (16:10-15). He removed temple furnishings and changed the temple "for the king of Assyria" (16:17-18). Compromise with the world led to the redesign of worship itself.

Chapter 17 — The Fall of Samaria and Its Causes

Hoshea became a vassal of Shalmaneser king of Assyria, then secretly sought help from So king of Egypt and stopped paying tribute (17:3-4). Shalmaneser imprisoned him and besieged Samaria for three years. "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria," settling them in Halah, by the river Habor, and in the cities of the Medes (17:5-6). The year was 722 BC. The northern kingdom ended after about 210 years and nineteen kings, none of whom were good.

The writer then gives God's explanation (17:7-23):

- **"The children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt"** (17:7): ingratitude for redemption.
- They "walked in the statutes of the heathen" (17:8), built high places "in all their cities" (17:9), set up images and groves "on every high hill, and under every green tree" (17:10), and "served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing" (17:12).
- **God warned them** "by all the prophets, and by all the seers" (17:13), but "they would not hear, but hardened their necks" (17:14).
- "They followed vanity, and became vain" (17:15): people become like what they worship (Psalm 115:8).
- They made the calves, worshipped "all the host of heaven," served Baal, sacrificed their children, used divination and enchantments, "and sold themselves to do evil" (17:16-17).

> *Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God*
>
> **2 Kings 17:18-19**

The root was Jeroboam's sin: "Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin" (17:21-23).

The king of Assyria resettled the land with people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim (17:24). When lions attacked them, an Israelite priest was sent back to teach them "the manner of the God of the land" (17:25-28). The result was mixed religion: "They feared the LORD, and served their own gods" (17:33, 41). These people became the ancestors of the Samaritans. By Jesus' day, Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with one another (John 4:9), and Jesus told the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). Yet Jesus reached out to Samaritans (John 4:39-42; Luke 10:33; 17:16), and the gospel went to Samaria (Acts 1:8; 8:5-25).

Section III: Judah Alone to the Fall of Jerusalem (Chapters 18-25)

Chapter 18 — Hezekiah's Trust and Sennacherib's Threat

Hezekiah began to reign at 25 and reigned 29 years (18:2).

> *He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him*
>
> **2 Kings 18:5-6**

He removed the high places, broke the images, cut down the groves, "and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan" (18:4), meaning "a piece of brass." Even a God-given symbol (Numbers 21:8-9) becomes an idol when worshipped. Hezekiah rebelled against Assyria and defeated the Philistines (18:7-8). The fall of Samaria is recounted (18:9-12).

In Hezekiah's fourteenth year (701 BC), Sennacherib king of Assyria took all the fortified cities of Judah (18:13). Hezekiah paid 300 talents of silver and 30 of gold, even stripping the gold from the temple doors (18:14-16), but Sennacherib sent his officials with an army to Jerusalem anyway. Rabshakeh stood by the conduit of the upper pool and mocked Judah's trust: Egypt was "this bruised reed" (18:21); Hezekiah had removed the LORD's altars (18:22, misunderstanding the reforms); and the LORD Himself had sent Assyria (18:25). When asked to speak in Aramaic, he shouted in Hebrew to the people on the wall: "Let not Hezekiah deceive you... neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD" (18:26-30). "Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?... that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?" (18:33-35). The people held their peace as the king had commanded (18:36). Isaiah 36 records the same events.

Chapter 19 — Hezekiah's Prayer and God's Deliverance

Hezekiah tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, went into the house of the LORD, and sent to Isaiah the prophet (19:1-2). Isaiah answered, "Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard... Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land" (19:6-7). Sennacherib sent a threatening letter. Hezekiah "went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD" (19:14) and prayed:

> *O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth... Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.*
>
> **2 Kings 19:15, 19**

God answered through Isaiah with a poem of judgment on Sennacherib's pride: "Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?... even against the Holy One of Israel" (19:22). Assyria's conquests were only what God had planned (19:25). "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest" (19:28). A remnant of Judah would again take root downward and bear fruit upward; "the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this" (19:30-31). "He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there... For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake" (19:32-34).

> *And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand*
>
> **2 Kings 19:35**

Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, and while he worshipped in the house of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and Esarhaddon reigned (19:36-37). Sennacherib's own records boast of shutting Hezekiah up "like a bird in a cage" but never claim to have taken Jerusalem; Assyrian records also confirm he was murdered by his sons (around 681 BC). Psalms 46 and 48 may celebrate this deliverance: "God is our refuge and strength" (Psalm 46:1).

Chapter 20 — Hezekiah's Illness, Healing and Pride

Hezekiah became deathly ill, and Isaiah told him, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (20:1). Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, prayed and wept bitterly (20:2-3). Before Isaiah had left the middle court, God sent him back: "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee... And I will add unto thy days fifteen years" (20:5-6). A poultice of figs was applied (20:7): God often works through means. As a sign, the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz went back ten degrees (20:8-11).

Then Berodach-baladan (Merodach-baladan) of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present, and Hezekiah proudly "shewed them all the house of his precious things... there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not" (20:12-13). 2 Chronicles 32:25, 31 explains that "his heart was lifted up" and "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." Isaiah announced, "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house... shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left... And of thy sons... shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (20:16-18). This was fulfilled over a century later (24:13; Daniel 1:3-7). Hezekiah's response was strangely complacent: "Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?" (20:19). During his extra fifteen years, his son Manasseh was born (21:1). His great water project, "how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city" (20:20), is Hezekiah's Tunnel in Jerusalem, whose inscription was discovered in 1880.

Chapter 21 — Manasseh and Amon: The Point of No Return

Manasseh became king at twelve and reigned 55 years, the longest reign in Judah's history and the most wicked. He rebuilt the high places his father destroyed, set up altars to Baal and a grove "as did Ahab," worshipped all the host of heaven, built pagan altars in the temple courts, made his son pass through the fire, practised witchcraft and consulted mediums, and set a carved image of the grove (Asherah) in the house of God itself (21:2-7). "Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel" (21:9). "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another" (21:16). Jewish tradition holds that Isaiah was martyred in his reign (compare Hebrews 11:37).

God pronounced Jerusalem's doom: "I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria... and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies" (21:13-14). 2 Chronicles 33:11-17 adds a remarkable account of grace: the Assyrians took Manasseh to Babylon in chains, where "he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly," and God restored him to Jerusalem; "Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God." The worst king in Judah's history found mercy when he repented (1 Timothy 1:15). But the damage to the nation was done. His son Amon did evil for two years and was assassinated; the people made Josiah king (21:19-26).

Chapter 22 — Josiah and the Book of the Law

Josiah became king at eight and reigned 31 years, and "did that which was right in the sight of the LORD... and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (22:1-2). 2 Chronicles 34:3 says he began to seek God at sixteen. In his eighteenth year, while the temple was being repaired, Hilkiah the high priest said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD" (22:8). God's Word had been lost in God's house. The scribe Shaphan read it to the king (22:10), and when Josiah heard the words, "he rent his clothes" (22:11). He sent to Huldah the prophetess, who confirmed that judgment would fall on Jerusalem for its idolatry, "Because they have forsaken me" (22:15-17). But to Josiah: "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD... thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place" (22:19-20). Many believe the book found was Deuteronomy, or the whole Pentateuch, since its curses matched Josiah's response.

Chapter 23 — Josiah's Reformation

Josiah gathered all the people, read "all the words of the book of the covenant," and made a covenant "to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul" (23:1-3). Then came the most thorough reformation in Judah's history:

- He burned the vessels made for Baal, the grove and the host of heaven, and removed the idolatrous priests (23:4-5).
- He destroyed the houses of the cult prostitutes in the temple (23:7).
- He defiled Topheth in the valley of Hinnom, "that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech" (23:10).
- He removed the horses and chariots dedicated to the sun (23:11) and destroyed the altars Ahaz and Manasseh had built (23:12).

- He defiled the high places Solomon had built for Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Milcom on "the mount of corruption" (23:13).
- At Bethel he broke down Jeroboam's altar and burned on it bones taken from the tombs, "according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words" (23:15-16), fulfilling the prophecy given about 300 years earlier that named him (1 Kings 13:2). He spared the tomb of that man of God (23:17-18).
- He removed the high places throughout Samaria (23:19-20) and put away mediums and idols (23:24).

He also kept a great Passover: "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges" (23:21-23).

> *And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.*
>
> **2 Kings 23:25**

"Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath... because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal" (23:26). Josiah's reform delayed but did not cancel judgment; the people's hearts had not truly changed (Jeremiah 3:10). In 609 BC Josiah went out against Pharaoh-nechoh at Megiddo and was killed (23:29). 2 Chronicles 35:20-25 says he would not listen to Necho's warning, and Jeremiah lamented for him. The people made his son Jehoahaz king, but after three months Necho deposed him and took him to Egypt, made his brother Eliakim king, renamed him Jehoiakim, and imposed heavy tribute (23:30-35). Jehoiakim did evil (23:37).

Chapter 24 — Babylon Rises; the First Deportations

"In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him" (24:1). Daniel and his friends were taken to Babylon in this period (605 BC; Daniel 1:1-6). God sent raiders against Judah "according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh... And also for the innocent blood that he shed... which the LORD would not pardon" (24:2-4). Egypt's power ended after Babylon's victory at Carchemish (24:7). Jehoiakim had burned Jeremiah's scroll (Jeremiah 36) and killed the prophet Urijah (Jeremiah 26:20-23).

Jehoiachin, his son, reigned three months. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, and Jehoiachin surrendered (597 BC) (24:8-12). Nebuchadnezzar carried off the treasures and cut in pieces the gold vessels Solomon had made, "as the LORD had said" (24:13; 20:17). He deported the king, his family, officials, 10,000 captives including all the craftsmen and smiths, "none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land" (24:14-16). The prophet Ezekiel was among them (Ezekiel 1:1-3). Nebuchadnezzar made Jehoiachin's uncle Mattaniah king and renamed him Zedekiah (24:17). He reigned eleven years and did evil, and "through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon" (24:20).

Chapter 25 — The Fall of Jerusalem

In the ninth year of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem (25:1); the Jews later remembered this day with a fast (Zechariah 8:19). After eighteen months, famine was severe, and the wall was broken (25:2-4). Zedekiah fled by night but was captured in the plains of Jericho and brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. "And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon" (25:6-7). This fulfilled two prophecies that seemed contradictory: Jeremiah said Zedekiah would see the king of Babylon "eye to eye" (Jeremiah 32:4; 34:3), and Ezekiel said he would be brought to Babylon "yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (Ezekiel 12:13).

On the seventh day of the fifth month, Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, "burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem... And all the army of the Chaldees... brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about" (25:8-10). The year was 586 BC. The people were carried away, leaving only the poor as farmers (25:11-12). The great bronze pillars, the sea and the bases were broken up, and all the vessels taken to Babylon (25:13-17). The chief priest, officials and leaders were executed at Riblah (25:18-21). "So Judah was carried away out of their land" (25:21). Lamentations mourns this day, and Psalms 74, 79 and 137 grieve over it.

Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah governor at Mizpah. He urged the people, "Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you" (25:22-24), echoing Jeremiah's counsel (Jeremiah 40). But Ishmael, of the royal family, murdered him, and the remaining people fled to Egypt in fear of the Babylonians (25:25-26), taking Jeremiah with them (Jeremiah 41-43).

The book ends with a note of hope. In the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity, Evil-merodach, the new king of Babylon, "did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life" (25:27-29). Babylonian ration tablets have been found listing provisions for "Jehoiachin, king of Judah." The house of David, though in exile, still lived. God had not forgotten His promise (2 Samuel 7:16). Jehoiachin (Jechonias) appears in the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:11-12).

Part Three: Christ in 2 Kings

Elisha as a Picture of Christ

Elisha's name means "God is salvation." Elijah's ministry was largely one of confrontation and judgment, like John the Baptist; Elisha's was largely one of grace and compassion, like the ministry of Jesus.

Elisha	2 Kings	Christ	New Testament
Received the Spirit after his master ascended	2:9-15	Poured out the Spirit after His ascension	Acts 2:33; John 16:7
Began his ministry at the Jordan	2:13-14	Began His ministry at the Jordan	Matthew 3:13-17
Healed the bitter waters	2:19-22	Gives living water	John 4:14; 7:37-38
Multiplied oil to pay a widow's debt	4:1-7	Pays the debt of sin	Colossians 2:14
Raised a mother's only son	4:32-37	Raised the widow's son at Nain	Luke 7:11-16
Fed a hundred with twenty barley loaves, with some left over	4:42-44	Fed five thousand with five barley loaves, with twelve baskets left	John 6:9-13
Cleansed a Gentile leper freely	5	Cleansed lepers; grace to Gentiles	Luke 4:27; 5:12-13
Opened blind eyes to see spiritual reality	6:17	Opened the eyes of the blind	John 9; Luke 24:31
Fed his enemies instead of killing them	6:22-23	Loved His enemies	Luke 23:34; Romans 5:10
Announced good news of abundance to a starving city	7:1	Preached good tidings to the poor	Luke 4:18
His death brought life to a dead man	13:21	His death brings life	John 12:24; Romans 6:4-5

Naaman: A Picture of Salvation

Naaman	2 Kings 5	The Gospel
A great and honourable man, but a leper	5:1	Whatever our status, "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23)
Heard the good news through a captive slave girl	5:2-3	God uses humble witnesses (Acts 8:4)
Tried to buy healing with wealth	5:5	Salvation "without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1)
Expected a dramatic ceremony	5:11	The gospel is simple (1 Corinthians 1:21)
Was offended by the humbling remedy	5:12	The offence of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 5:11)
Had to do it God's way, not his own	5:12-14	"Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12)

Naaman	2 Kings 5	The Gospel
Washed seven times: complete cleansing	5:14	"The blood of Jesus Christ... cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7)
His flesh became like a little child's	5:14	Born again; become as little children (John 3:3; Matthew 18:3)
Confessed the one true God	5:15	"Thou shalt confess with thy mouth" (Romans 10:9)
Elisha refused payment	5:16	Salvation is the free gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9)
Gehazi tried to profit from grace and was judged	5:20-27	Simon the sorcerer tried to buy the gift of God (Acts 8:18-24)

Other Pictures of Christ

- **Elijah's ascension (2:11).** Christ "was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9).
- **The preserved royal seed (11).** The hidden Joash, sole survivor of David's line, crowned in God's house, pictures God's protection of the Messianic line against Satan's attacks (Revelation 12:4-5).
- **The four lepers with good news (7:9).** Those who have found salvation must not "hold our peace" (Acts 4:20).
- **The deliverance of Jerusalem (19:34-35).** God saves "for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake": salvation rests on God's grace and His covenant with David's Son.
- **Jehoiachin lifted from prison (25:27-30).** The captive king of David's line given new garments and a seat at the king's table pictures the hope of restoration through the Son of David, and the believer clothed in new garments and seated at the King's table (Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 19:9).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment
Ahaziah will die of his injuries	1:4, 16	1:17
Elisha will receive a double portion if he sees Elijah taken	2:10	2:11-15
Water and victory over Moab	3:16-18	3:20-24
A son for the Shunammite	4:16	4:17
Food prices will fall tomorrow; the scoffer will not eat	7:1-2	7:16-20
Hazael will be king and harm Israel	8:12-13	8:15; 10:32-33; 13:3
Jehoram's body in Naboth's field; dogs eat Jezebel	1 Kings 21:19-24	9:25-26, 35-37
Jehu's sons to the fourth generation	10:30	15:12
Three victories over Syria	13:19	13:25
Israel's borders restored (Jonah's prophecy)	14:25	14:25-28
Jeroboam's house will fall by the sword (Amos)	Amos 7:9	15:10
Damascus and Samaria plundered by Assyria	Isaiah 7:16; 8:4	16:9; 17:6
Israel scattered beyond the river	1 Kings 14:15	17:6, 23
Josiah will burn bones on Bethel's altar	1 Kings 13:2	23:15-18
Sennacherib will return home and fall by the sword	19:7	19:36-37
He will not shoot an arrow into Jerusalem	19:32-34	19:35-36
Fifteen years added to Hezekiah's life	20:6	20:21 (compare 18:2)
All Hezekiah's treasures and descendants to Babylon	20:17-18	24:13; 25:13-17; Daniel 1:3-7
Jerusalem wiped like a dish	21:12-14	25
Josiah will die before the calamity	22:20	23:29-30
The covenant curses: siege, famine, exile	Deuteronomy 28:49-68; Leviticus 26	6:28-29; 17; 25
Zedekiah taken to Babylon but not see it	Jeremiah 32:4; Ezekiel 12:13	25:6-7
The lamp of David kept	8:19; 2 Samuel 7:16	25:27-30

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Kings 2 — The Double Portion

Elisha's request was not for wealth or position but for spiritual power to continue God's work. His persistence ("I will not leave thee") and his attention at the critical moment ("if thou see me") were the conditions. He then had to take up the mantle and act on it: "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" (2:14). Believers today have received the Spirit through Christ's ascension, and the question is the same: will we take up the mantle and trust the same God?

2 Kings 5 — The Humbling of Naaman

Naaman's problem was not only leprosy but pride. He wanted a cure that matched his status. God's remedy required him to humble himself, obey a simple command, and dip in a muddy foreign river. This is the stumbling block of the gospel: it requires the proud to come as needy sinners (James 4:6).

2 Kings 6:17 — Open His Eyes

The servant saw only the enemy; Elisha saw the armies of God. Faith does not deny the visible danger; it sees the greater invisible reality. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

2 Kings 17 — Why Israel Fell

The sermon in 17:7-23 is the theological heart of Kings: ingratitude for redemption, imitation of the nations, rejection of the prophets, and idolatry led to exile. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). The chapter also shows that judgment came after centuries of patient warning (2 Peter 3:9).

2 Kings 18-19 — Trusting God in Crisis

Hezekiah faced the world's greatest army with no human help. He took the threat to God's house, spread it before the LORD, and prayed for God's glory among the nations. God answered with a single night's deliverance. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7).

2 Kings 22-23 — The Rediscovered Word

Revival under Josiah began with finding and reading God's Word. The king's tender, humble response, the public reading, the covenant and the thorough removal of idols are the pattern of true revival. Yet the chapter also shows that outward reform without inward change in the people could not avert judgment.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Kings

1. Sin Has National Consequences

Both kingdoms fell because of persistent idolatry and injustice. God's warnings in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 were fulfilled to the letter.

2. God's Patience

God sent prophet after prophet over centuries: Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Huldah, Jeremiah. "The LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people" (2 Chronicles 36:15).

3. The Sovereignty of God over Nations

God used Assyria and Babylon as instruments of judgment (17:6; 24:2-3), turned back Sennacherib (19:28), and controlled the rise and fall of kings (8:13; 9:6).

4. The Reliability of God's Word

Prophecy after prophecy is fulfilled precisely, some after centuries (23:16). "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89).

5. Grace to Individuals

In the midst of national decline, God showed grace to a widow (4), a Shunammite (4; 8), a Syrian general (5), four lepers (7), Hezekiah (20) and even Manasseh (2 Chronicles 33).

6. Faith vs. Political Alliances

Ahaz trusted Assyria (16:7); Hoshea trusted Egypt (17:4); Hezekiah trusted the LORD (18:5). "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man... Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:5, 7).

7. The Power of God's Word in Revival

Josiah's revival began with the Word read and believed (22-23). Spiritual renewal always comes through Scripture.

8. Half-Hearted Obedience

Jehu destroyed Baal but kept the calves (10:28-31); Joash served God only while Jehoiada lived (12:2); Amaziah obeyed "yet not like David" (14:3); Jehoash struck the ground only three times (13:18-19). God desires wholehearted devotion (23:25).

9. God's Faithfulness to David

Through Athaliah's massacre, Assyria's invasion and Babylon's destruction, God kept David's line alive "for David my servant's sake" (8:19; 19:34; 25:27-30), preserving the path to Christ.

10. Hope Beyond Judgment

The book ends not with total darkness but with a king of David's line released and honoured. Judgment is never God's last word for His people (Lamentations 3:31-32; Jeremiah 29:10-14).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Kings Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Kings in the New Testament

2 Kings	New Testament	Use
1:2-3 (Baal-zebub)	Matthew 10:25; 12:24-27	Beelzebub, prince of the devils
1:10-12 (fire from heaven)	Luke 9:54-56	Jesus rebukes James and John
2:11 (Elijah's ascension)	Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51	Christ's ascension
2:9-15 (the Spirit given after ascension)	Acts 2:33; John 14:12	The Spirit poured out
4:32-37	Hebrews 11:35; Luke 7:11-16	Women received their dead
4:42-44	Matthew 14:15-21; John 6:9-13	Feeding the multitude with barley loaves
5 (Naaman)	Luke 4:27	Grace to a Gentile leper
5:20-27 (Gehazi)	Acts 8:18-24; 1 Timothy 6:10	Trying to profit from God's gift
6:17	2 Corinthians 4:18; Hebrews 1:14	Seeing the unseen; ministering spirits
6:22-23	Romans 12:20	Feed your enemy
7:9	Romans 10:14-15; Acts 4:20	Sharing good tidings
11 (the royal seed preserved)	Matthew 1:8-9; Revelation 12:4-5	The Messianic line protected
12 (with 2 Chronicles 24:20-22)	Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51	The murder of Zacharias
14:25 (Jonah)	Matthew 12:39-41	Jonah as a historical prophet
15:29 (Galilee taken)	Matthew 4:13-16	Light in Galilee of the Gentiles
17:24-41 (the Samaritans)	John 4:9, 20-22; Luke 10:33; Acts 8:5	Samaritans and the gospel
24-25 (the exile)	Matthew 1:11-12, 17; Acts 7:43	"The carrying away into Babylon"
Elijah	Matthew 11:14; 17:3-12; Luke 1:17; James 5:17	John the Baptist; the transfiguration; prayer

2 Kings in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Esau will break Jacob's yoke (27:40; 2 Kings 8:20-22)
Exodus	God brought Israel out of Egypt, the ground of His claim (17:7)
Leviticus	The land enjoys its sabbaths in exile (26:34-35); the covenant curses (26)
Numbers	The brazen serpent destroyed (21:8-9; 2 Kings 18:4)
Deuteronomy	The curses of chapter 28 fulfilled; children not put to death for fathers (24:16; 2 Kings 14:6); the book of the law found (2 Kings 22)
2 Samuel	The lamp of David (7:16; 2 Kings 8:19; 19:34)
1 Kings	Direct continuation; Elijah's ministry completed; the prophecies against Ahab and Jezebel (21) and about Josiah (13:2) fulfilled
2 Chronicles	Parallel account of Judah's kings (21-36), adding Zechariah's martyrdom (24), Hezekiah's Passover (30) and Manasseh's repentance (33)
Ezra	The return from exile (1); the Samaritans' mixed origins (4:2, 10)
Psalms	46 and 48 (deliverance from Assyria); 74, 79 and 137 (the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile); 89:38-51 (the crown profaned)
Isaiah	Isaiah 36-39 parallels 2 Kings 18-20; Ahaz and Immanuel (7); Galilee (9:1-2); Uzziah's death (6:1)
Jeremiah	Jeremiah 52 parallels 2 Kings 24-25; Jehoiakim (22; 26; 36); Jeconiah (22:24-30); Gedaliah (40-43); Josiah lamented (2 Chronicles 35:25)
Lamentations	Mourning the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC)
Ezekiel	Taken into exile with Jehoiachin (1:1-3); Zedekiah's fate (12:13)
Daniel	Taken to Babylon under Jehoiakim (1:1-6)
Hosea	Ministered in Israel's last decades; judgment on Jehu's house (1:4)
Amos	Ministered under Jeroboam II (1:1); "I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword" (7:9)
Jonah	The prophet of 2 Kings 14:25
Micah	Ministered under Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (1:1); "Zion shall be plowed as a field" (3:12)
Nahum	The fall of Nineveh, capital of the Assyria that destroyed Israel
Zephaniah	Ministered under Josiah (1:1)
Obadiah	Edom's cruelty at Jerusalem's fall
Habakkuk	God raising up the Chaldeans (1:6)
Zechariah	The fasts remembering the siege and the fall (8:19)

Themes That Run from 2 Kings Through Scripture

Theme	In 2 Kings	Developed	Fulfilled
Exile as judgment	17; 25	Jeremiah 25:11; Daniel 9	Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25-26
The faithful remnant	19:30-31	Isaiah 10:20-22	Romans 11:5
The Spirit's power for service	2:9-15	Joel 2:28	Acts 1:8; 2:4
Grace to the Gentiles	5	Jonah; Isaiah 49:6	Luke 4:27; Acts 10
Elijah's return	2:11	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 17:10-13; Revelation 11:3-6
Preservation of David's line	11; 25:27-30	Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:17	Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 1:32-33
The Word rediscovered	22-23	Nehemiah 8	2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12
Trust in God, not alliances	18-19	Isaiah 30-31	Philippians 4:6-7

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Seek the true God, not the world's alternatives** (1:3).
- **Persist in seeking spiritual power for service** (2:9).
- **Bring God your empty vessels;** His supply is not the limit (4:3-6).
- **Show hospitality to God's servants** (4:8-10).
- **Humble yourself to receive God's grace** (5:11-14).
- **Never try to profit from God's gifts** (5:20-27).
- **Pray for spiritual sight** (6:17).
- **Overcome evil with good** (6:22).
- **Don't hold your peace when you have good news** (7:9).
- **Don't trust your own heart's estimate of itself** (8:13).
- **Zeal must be wholehearted, not selective** (10:28-31).
- **Make your faith your own, not your mentor's** (12:2).
- **Don't stop at three when God offers more** (13:18-19).
- **Pride leads to defeat** (14:10).
- **Don't copy the world's altars** (16:10-16).
- **People become like what they worship** (17:15).
- **Destroy even religious idols** (18:4).
- **Spread your troubles before the LORD** (19:14).
- **Beware of pride after blessing** (20:12-13).
- **No sinner is beyond God's mercy** (2 Chronicles 33:12-13).
- **Return to God's Word for revival** (22:8-11).
- **God keeps His promises even in judgment** (25:27-30).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:9	I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.
2:14	Where is the LORD God of Elijah?
5:14	His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.
6:16	Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.
6:17	LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.
7:9	We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace
17:13	Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes
18:5	He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah
19:15	O LORD God of Israel... thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth
19:34	For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.
20:5	I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee
23:25	Like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might

Conclusion

2 Kings records the end of the kingdoms. Israel, the northern kingdom, never had a single good king, and despite the mighty ministry of Elisha and the warnings of Amos and Hosea, fell to Assyria in 722 BC. Judah lasted longer, refreshed by the faith of Hezekiah and the revival of Josiah, but the wickedness of Manasseh brought it past the point of no return, and Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC. Every warning of the law and the prophets came true. Yet through it all God showed grace: to a Syrian leper, a starving city, a dying king, and a repentant Manasseh. And He kept His promise to David: the book ends with David's heir alive, released from prison and seated at the king's table. The line would continue to Jesus Christ, the Son of David, who would bring a greater return from a greater exile.

> *Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways*
>
> **2 Kings 17:13**

1 Chronicles

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Ezra (traditional) • Date: c. 450-430 BC • Chapters: 29

> *Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine*
>
> **1 Chronicles 29:11**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Chronicles

The Name

1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one book. The Hebrew title, Divre Hayyamim, means "the words (or events) of the days," that is, the annals. The Greek Septuagint called it Paraleipomena, "the things left out," because it includes material not found in Samuel and Kings. The English title comes from Jerome, who described it as "a chronicle of the whole of sacred history." In the Hebrew Bible, Chronicles is the last book, so the Hebrew Old Testament ends with Cyrus' decree inviting God's people to "go up" to Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:23).

Author and Date

Jewish tradition attributes Chronicles to Ezra the scribe. The closing verses of 2 Chronicles (36:22-23) are repeated as the opening verses of Ezra (1:1-3), and the two books share a style and a strong interest in the temple, the priests, the Levites and the law. The genealogy of David's line continues several generations after Zerubbabel, who led the return from exile around 538 BC (1 Chronicles 3:19-24), which places the writing after the exile, probably around 450-400 BC. The writer used many sources, which he names, including "the book of Samuel the seer," "the book of Nathan the prophet," and "the book of Gad the seer" (29:29), as well as official records and the books of Samuel and Kings.

Purpose: Written for the Returned Exiles

Samuel and Kings were written to explain why Israel went into exile. Chronicles was written for those who had come back, a small, poor community rebuilding Jerusalem under Persian rule. They needed to know: Are we still God's people? Do God's promises to David still stand? What matters most now? Chronicles answers:

- **You belong to God's story.** The genealogies connect the returned community to Adam, Abraham, Israel and David.
- **God's covenant with David still stands.** The book focuses on David and Solomon as the founders of the temple and the royal line, and traces that line beyond the exile.
- **The temple and true worship are central.** The ark, the Levites, the singers, the priests and the house of God receive extensive attention.
- **Seeking God brings blessing; forsaking Him brings judgment.** This principle is shown repeatedly, especially in 2 Chronicles.
- **"All Israel."** The writer stresses the unity of all twelve tribes under God.

How Chronicles Differs from Samuel and Kings

Chronicles retells much of the same history but from a priestly and spiritual perspective. It leaves out much of David's personal failures (his adultery with Bathsheba, the murder of Uriah, Absalom's rebellion) and Solomon's idolatry, not to hide them (they were already recorded) but because its purpose was to present the Davidic kingdom as the model of God's rule and the temple as the centre of Israel's life. It includes the census of chapter 21 because it led to the purchase of the temple site. It adds much

material about the ark, the Levites, the musicians and the temple preparations that is found nowhere else.

Samuel and Kings	Chronicles
Written for the exiles, explaining the fall	Written for the returned, encouraging the rebuilding
Prophetic perspective	Priestly perspective
History of both Israel and Judah	Focus on Judah and David's line
Emphasises the throne	Emphasises the temple
Includes the kings' sins in detail	Focuses on David's and Solomon's positive role in worship
Ends in exile	Ends with the decree to return

The Key Verse

> *But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 17:14**

Compare 2 Samuel 7:16, "thine house and thy kingdom." Chronicles stresses that the kingdom is God's kingdom: David's son sits on "the throne of the kingdom of the LORD" (28:5; 29:23).

Outline of 1 Chronicles

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Genealogies: The People of God	1-9	Identity and continuity
From Adam to Israel	1	The human race and the patriarchs
Judah and the line of David	2-4	The royal tribe; Jabez
The tribes east of the Jordan	5	Reuben, Gad, half Manasseh
Levi	6	Priests, Levites and singers
The other tribes	7-8	Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher; Saul's family
The returned community	9	Those who resettled Jerusalem
II. The Reign of David	10-29	God's king and God's house
Saul's death	10	Why Saul fell
David becomes king; his mighty men	11-12	All Israel with David
The ark brought to Jerusalem	13-16	Failure, then worship done God's way
The Davidic Covenant	17	God's house and kingdom for ever
David's victories	18-20	The kingdom secured
The census and the temple site	21-22	Ornan's threshing floor; preparations
Organising worship and government	23-27	Levites, priests, singers, gatekeepers, officers

Section	Chapters	Theme
David's final charge and prayer	28-29	The pattern, the offering and the praise

Part Two: The Genealogies (Chapters 1-9)

Why the Genealogies Matter

Nine chapters of names can seem difficult to read, but they were treasured by the returned exiles. They proved who belonged to Israel, who could serve as priests (Ezra 2:61-63), which families held which land, and above all, that God's purpose had continued unbroken from creation to their own day. For Christians, they trace the line of the promised Seed from Adam to David and beyond, the line that leads to Jesus Christ (Matthew 1; Luke 3). Every name reminds us that God works through real people in real history and knows each by name (Isaiah 43:1).

Chapter 1 — From Adam to Israel

The book begins with the first word of human history: "Adam, Sheth, Enosh" (1:1). It traces the line from Adam through Noah (1:1-4), the nations descended from Noah's sons Japheth, Ham and Shem (1:5-23; compare Genesis 10), the line from Shem to Abram (1:24-27), and Abraham's descendants through Ishmael, Keturah and Isaac (1:28-34). It records Esau's descendants and the kings of Edom (1:35-54; Genesis 36). In every case, the side lines are recorded first and briefly, and then the line of promise is followed. Israel's story is set within the story of all humanity, and God's purpose is for all nations (Genesis 12:3). Luke's genealogy of Jesus likewise reaches back to "Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke 3:38).

Chapters 2-4 — Judah and the Line of David

Judah, the royal tribe, comes first among the sons of Israel (2:3), "for Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler" (5:2). The line runs through Pharez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salma, Boaz, Obed and Jesse to David (2:3-15; Ruth 4:18-22). Jesse's sons are listed, with David as "the seventh" (2:15); 1 Samuel 16:10-11 mentions eight sons, so one probably died without descendants. The family of Caleb and other clans of Judah follow (2:18-55).

Chapter 3 lists David's sons born in Hebron and Jerusalem, including Solomon and Nathan (3:1-9). Matthew traces Jesus' legal line through Solomon (Matthew 1:6), and Luke traces His physical line through Nathan (Luke 3:31). Then come the kings of Judah from Solomon to the exile (3:10-16), and the royal line continuing in captivity through Jeconiah, Salathiel (Shealtiel) and Zerubbabel, who led the return (3:17-19), and several generations beyond (3:19-24). The lamp of David had not gone out (1 Kings 11:36).

Chapter 4 continues with other families of Judah, and in the middle of the list, one man is singled out:

> *And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 4:9-10**

His name sounds like the Hebrew for "sorrow" or "pain," but he did not let his beginning define his end. He prayed for God's blessing, enlarged territory, God's presence ("thine hand might be with me"), and protection from evil. God answered. In a book of names, the one who prayed is remembered. Chapter 4 also records Simeon's families and their victories, including the destruction of the last of the Amalekites (4:24-43).

Chapter 5 — The Tribes East of the Jordan

Reuben was the firstborn, but lost his birthright because he defiled his father's bed (Genesis 35:22; 49:4). The birthright went to Joseph's sons, while "Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler" (5:1-2). The double portion went to Joseph; the rule went to Judah, the tribe of the Messiah (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14). The eastern tribes won battles because "they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them; because they put their trust in him" (5:20). But later "they went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land," and God stirred up the king of Assyria to carry them away (5:25-26). The same tribes that chose the land east of the Jordan by sight (Numbers 32) were the first to go into captivity.

Chapter 6 — The Tribe of Levi

The longest genealogy is Levi's, because the priests and Levites were central to the returned community's worship. It traces the high priests from Aaron through Eleazar, Phinehas, Zadok and down to Jehozadak, who went into captivity (6:1-15). It lists the Levite families of Gershom, Kohath and Merari (6:16-30). It names the singers David appointed "over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after that the ark had rest" (6:31): Heman (a grandson of Samuel, 6:33), Asaph and Ethan, with their ancestry traced back to Levi (6:31-47). Many Psalms bear their names (Psalms 50 and 73-83 by Asaph; 88 by Heman; 89 by Ethan). The duties of Aaron's sons are summarised: offering sacrifices and incense "and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded" (6:49). The chapter ends with the Levitical cities (6:54-81; Joshua 21).

Chapters 7-8 — The Other Tribes and the House of Saul

Chapter 7 records Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim and Asher, emphasising their "mighty men of valour" (7:2, 5, 40). Ephraim's line leads to "Jehoshuah his son" (7:27), Joshua son of Nun. The tribes of Dan and Zebulun are not given genealogies here. Chapter 8 gives a fuller genealogy of Benjamin, including the family of Saul and Jonathan, down to Jonathan's descendants through Mephibosheth (Merib-baal) (8:33-40). David's kindness to Jonathan's line bore fruit for generations.

Chapter 9 — The Returned Community in Jerusalem

"So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies... But Judah were carried away to Babylon for their transgression" (9:1). The chapter then lists the first families to resettle Jerusalem after the exile: people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh, priests, Levites and Nethinim (temple servants) (9:2-34; compare Nehemiah 11). The gatekeepers (porters) are given special attention, appointed "in their set office" since the days of Samuel and David (9:22), guarding the house of God day and night. The singers "were employed in that work day and night" (9:33). Worship never stopped. The chapter ends by repeating Saul's genealogy (9:35-44), leading into the narrative.

Part Three: The Reign of David — Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: David Becomes King (Chapters 10-12)

Chapter 10 — The Death of Saul

The writer tells only the end of Saul's reign: the defeat on Mount Gilboa, the death of Saul and his sons, and the Philistines hanging his head in the temple of Dagon (10:1-12; 1 Samuel 31). Then he gives God's verdict:

> *So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 10:13-14**

Saul's reign is summed up as a failure to seek the LORD. "Seek" is a key word in Chronicles, and the contrast is set from the start.

Chapter 11 — David King Over All Israel; His Mighty Men

"Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron" and anointed him king, "according to the word of the LORD by Samuel" (11:1-3). David took Jerusalem (Jebus); Joab was first up into the city and became chief commander (11:4-6). "So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts was with him" (11:9). The list of David's mighty men follows, those who "strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom... to make him king, according to the word of the LORD" (11:10-47; 2 Samuel 23). It includes the three who broke through the Philistine lines to bring water from the well of Bethlehem, which David poured out to the LORD (11:15-19).

Chapter 12 — Those Who Came to David

This chapter, found only in Chronicles, lists those who joined David before he was king, while he was a fugitive from Saul at Ziklag and in the wilderness. They included Benjamites, Saul's own tribe, who could use the bow and sling with both hands (12:1-2), and Gadites "whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains" (12:8). When men of Benjamin and Judah came, David questioned their loyalty, and the Spirit came upon Amasai, who answered:

> *Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 12:18**

The chapter then lists the thousands from every tribe who came to Hebron to make David king, "with a perfect heart" (12:23-38). Among them were "the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (12:32), and men of Zebulun who "could

keep rank: they were not of double heart" (12:33). For three days they feasted, "for there was joy in Israel" (12:40). Those who followed the king in his rejection shared his kingdom, as Christ's followers who suffer with Him will reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12; Luke 22:28-30).

Section II: The Ark Brought to Jerusalem (Chapters 13-16)

Chapter 13 — The First Attempt and Uzza's Death

David's first concern as king was the ark: "let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul" (13:3). With the agreement of all the people, they carried it on a new cart from the house of Abinadab (13:5-8). When the oxen stumbled, Uzza put out his hand to hold it, and God struck him dead (13:9-10). David was displeased and afraid and left the ark at the house of Obed-edom, where the LORD blessed his household for three months (13:11-14). The right goal pursued in the wrong way brought death.

Chapter 14 — David's House and Victories

Hiram king of Tyre built David a house, "And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel, for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel" (14:1-2). His children born in Jerusalem are listed (14:3-7). David twice inquired of God before fighting the Philistines and was given victory (14:8-16). At Baal-perazim the Philistines left their gods behind, and David had them burned (14:12), as the law required (Deuteronomy 7:5). "And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations" (14:17).

Chapter 15 — The Ark Brought Up God's Way

David prepared a place and pitched a tent for the ark (15:1). This time he studied God's law:

> *Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 15:2**

He told the priests and Levites, "For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order" (15:13). They sanctified themselves, "And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD" (15:14-15; Numbers 4:15; 7:9). David appointed singers and musicians with psalteries, harps and cymbals: Heman, Asaph and Ethan (15:16-24). Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was "for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful" (15:22). David, wearing a robe of fine linen and a linen ephod like the Levites, brought up the ark "with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals" (15:25-28). Michal, Saul's daughter, saw him dancing and playing "and she despised him in her heart" (15:29).

Chapter 16 — David's Psalm of Thanksgiving

The ark was set in the tent David had pitched, offerings were made, and David blessed the people and gave every one bread, meat and wine (16:1-3). He appointed Levites "to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel" (16:4), with Asaph as chief. Then David gave Asaph a psalm of thanksgiving (16:8-36), made up of parts of Psalms 105:1-15, 96:1-13 and 106:1, 47-48:

> *Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works... Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 16:8-11**

The psalm calls Israel to remember God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (16:15-18), and how He protected the patriarchs: "He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm" (16:21-22). It calls all the earth to worship: "Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen" (16:23-24). "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (16:29). It looks ahead to the LORD coming "to judge the earth" (16:33), and ends:

> *O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 16:34**

This refrain appears again and again in Chronicles (16:41; 2 Chronicles 5:13; 7:3, 6; 20:21) and became the song of the returned exiles (Ezra 3:11). David appointed Asaph and his brethren to minister before the ark daily (16:37), while Zadok and the priests served at the tabernacle and altar at Gibeon (16:39-40). For a time there were two centres of worship, until the temple united them.

Section III: The Davidic Covenant and David's Victories (Chapters 17-20)

Chapter 17 — God's House and Kingdom for Ever

This chapter parallels 2 Samuel 7. David wanted to build a house for the ark; God said instead that He would build David a house (17:1-10). The promise:

> *I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him... But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 17:11-14**

Two differences from 2 Samuel are significant. First, Chronicles omits the phrase "if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him" (2 Samuel 7:14), focusing on the eternal, ideal King. Second, it calls the kingdom "mine house and... my kingdom" (17:14): David's throne is God's throne, and David's son rules

on God's behalf. Both point beyond Solomon to Christ, whose kingdom is God's kingdom (Luke 1:32-33; Hebrews 1:8). David's prayer follows: "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" (17:16). "For thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness" (17:19). "Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed for ever" (17:27).

Chapter 18 — David's Victories

David defeated the Philistines, Moab, Hadarezer of Zobah, the Syrians and Edom (18:1-13; 2 Samuel 8). "Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went" (18:6, 13). The bronze taken from Hadarezer's cities was later used by Solomon to make the bronze sea, pillars and vessels for the temple (18:8). David dedicated all the silver and gold to the LORD (18:11). He "executed judgment and justice among all his people" (18:14).

Chapter 19 — War with Ammon and Syria

When Hanun of Ammon humiliated David's ambassadors, war followed with Ammon and its hired Syrian allies (19:1-19; 2 Samuel 10). Joab encouraged Abishai: "Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight" (19:13).

Chapter 20 — Rabbah and the Giants

"At the time that kings go out to battle... David tarried at Jerusalem" (20:1). The writer moves straight to the capture of Rabbah (20:1-3), passing over the Bathsheba affair recorded in 2 Samuel 11-12. David's men killed Philistine giants: Sippai, "Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite," and a giant with six fingers and six toes (20:4-8; 2 Samuel 21:18-22). The giants that once terrified Israel (Numbers 13:33) were finally defeated by the king and his servants.

Section IV: The Temple Site and Preparations (Chapters 21-22)

Chapter 21 — The Census and Ornan's Threshing Floor

> *And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 21:1**

This is one of the few places in the Old Testament where Satan is named (compare Job 1-2; Zechariah 3:1-2). 2 Samuel 24:1 says the LORD "moved David." Both are true: God, in judgment on Israel, permitted Satan to tempt David, and David was responsible for yielding (compare Job 1-2; James 1:13-14). Joab protested, "why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?" (21:3), and did not count Levi and Benjamin, "for the king's word was abominable to Joab" (21:6). "And God was displeased with this thing" (21:7). David confessed, "I have sinned greatly" (21:8).

Through the prophet Gad, God offered three choices: three years of famine, three months of defeat, or three days of the sword of the LORD (21:11-12). David chose to fall into the hand of the LORD, "for very great are his mercies" (21:13). Seventy thousand died. As the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem, God said, "It is enough, stay now thine hand." David saw "the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem," and

he and the elders fell on their faces in sackcloth (21:14-16). David pleaded, "Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered?... but as for these sheep, what have they done?" (21:17). The angel stood by the threshing floor of Ornan (Araunah) the Jebusite, who was threshing wheat with his four sons (21:15, 20).

God told David to build an altar there. Ornan offered everything as a gift, but David said, "Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost" (21:24). He paid 600 shekels of gold for the place (21:25). (2 Samuel 24:24 records 50 shekels of silver, apparently for the threshing floor and oxen, while Chronicles gives the price of the whole site.) David built the altar and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, "and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering" (21:26). "And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof" (21:27). Then David declared:

> *This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 22:1**

This site was Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1), where Abraham had offered Isaac (Genesis 22:2). The place where God's sword of judgment was sheathed through a sacrifice became the place of the temple, near which Christ would offer Himself once for all.

Chapter 22 — David Prepares for the Temple

David gathered stonecutters, iron, bronze "in abundance without weight," and cedar beyond number, "for Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (22:2-5). He charged Solomon and explained why he himself could not build:

> *But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name... Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 22:8-9**

The temple, God's house of rest (28:2), was to be built by a man of peace (Solomon's name comes from shalom). David had prepared 100,000 talents of gold and a million talents of silver (22:14), an enormous sum. He urged Solomon, "Be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed" (22:13), and charged the leaders: "Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God" (22:19). David could not build the house, but he could prepare everything for it, a lesson in serving a work one will not see completed (John 4:37-38).

Section V: Organising Worship and Government (Chapters 23-27)

Chapter 23 — The Levites

In his old age, David made Solomon king (23:1) and numbered the Levites from thirty years old: 38,000 men (23:3). He organised them: 24,000 to oversee the work of the temple, 6,000 as officers and judges, 4,000 as gatekeepers, and 4,000 to praise the LORD with instruments (23:4-5). They were divided by the families of Gershon, Kohath and Merari (23:6-23). Since the tabernacle would no longer need to be carried (23:26), the age of service was lowered to twenty (23:24, 27). Their duties included caring for the courts and chambers, the shewbread and offerings, "And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even" (23:28-31).

Chapter 24 — The Twenty-Four Courses of Priests

The priests, descendants of Aaron through Eleazar and Ithamar, were divided by lot into 24 courses, each serving in rotation (24:1-19). The eighth course was that of Abijah (24:10). Over a thousand years later, "a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia" was serving in the temple when the angel Gabriel announced the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5, 8-9). David's arrangements were still in force at the dawn of the New Testament. The rest of the Levites were also assigned by lot (24:20-31). Some Bible teachers see a connection between these 24 priestly courses and the 24 elders around God's throne in Revelation 4:4.

Chapter 25 — The Musicians

David and the army leaders set apart the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun "who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals" (25:1). Their music was a form of prophetic ministry, praising God with inspired words. Heman was "the king's seer in the words of God" (25:5). There were 288 trained musicians, "all that were cunning," organised into 24 courses by lot, "as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar" (25:7-8). Worship was prepared, skilled and organised, yet open to all.

Chapter 26 — Gatekeepers, Treasurers and Officers

The gatekeepers (porters) were organised by families, including the Korahites and Obed-edom's family, "for God blessed him" with many sons (26:1-19). The house where the ark had rested for three months produced generations of servants for God's house. Levites were placed over the treasuries, including the spoils David and others had dedicated to the house of the LORD (26:20-28), and over outside work as officers and judges (26:29-32).

Chapter 27 — Military and Civil Leaders

The army was organised into twelve divisions of 24,000 men, each serving one month a year (27:1-15). Tribal leaders (27:16-24), royal stewards over treasures, farms, vineyards, olive trees and herds (27:25-31), and counsellors (27:32-34) are listed. Ahithophel was the king's counsellor and Hushai "the king's companion" (27:33), recalling Absalom's rebellion. Good government reflects God's order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Section VI: David's Final Charge and Prayer (Chapters 28-29)

Chapter 28 — David's Charge to Israel and to Solomon

David assembled all the leaders of Israel in Jerusalem (28:1). He told them he had wanted "to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God," but God had chosen Solomon (28:2-3). God had chosen Judah, the house of Jesse, David, and from all David's sons, Solomon, "to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel" (28:4-5). David charged the people to keep and seek all God's commandments "that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever" (28:8). Then he charged Solomon:

> *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 28:9**

David gave Solomon the detailed plans for the temple, its courts, chambers, treasuries, the courses of priests and Levites, and the weight of gold and silver for every vessel, "the pattern of all that he had by the spirit" (28:11-18). "All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern" (28:19). Like the tabernacle (Exodus 25:9, 40), the temple was built according to a God-given pattern. David concluded: "Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work" (28:20).

Chapter 29 — The Offering and David's Final Prayer

David told the assembly that he had given from the kingdom's resources, and also from his own private treasure, 3,000 talents of gold of Ophir and 7,000 talents of refined silver, "because I have set my affection to the house of my God" (29:1-5). Then he asked: "who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?" (29:5). The leaders gave willingly: 5,000 talents and 10,000 drams of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, bronze, iron and precious stones (29:6-8).

> *Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 29:9**

David then blessed the LORD before all the people, in one of the greatest prayers of praise in Scripture:

> *Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.*

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

The words "thine is the kingdom... and the power, and the glory" are echoed in the closing doxology of the Lord's Prayer as found in the King James Version (Matthew 6:13). David went on: "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee" (29:14). Giving is simply returning to God what is already His. "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding" (29:15; compare Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11). "I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness" (29:17). He prayed that God would keep this willing spirit in the people's hearts, and give Solomon "a perfect heart" (29:18-19).

The congregation blessed the LORD, worshipped, offered thousands of sacrifices, and ate and drank "before the LORD on that day with great gladness" (29:20-22). They made Solomon king the second time and anointed Zadok as priest (29:22). "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him" (29:23). David died "in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour" after reigning forty years (29:26-28). His acts are written in the books of Samuel, Nathan and Gad (29:29-30).

Part Four: Christ in 1 Chronicles

The Genealogy of the Messiah

The genealogies of 1 Chronicles trace the line of promise: Adam (1:1), Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Judah (2), Pharez, Boaz, Jesse, David (2:15), Solomon and Nathan (3:5), the kings of Judah, Jeconiah and Zerubbabel (3:17-19). Matthew's genealogy of Jesus follows this line from Abraham through Solomon (Matthew 1:1-16), and Luke's from Adam through Nathan (Luke 3:23-38). "Of him came the chief ruler" (5:2): the ruler from Judah is Christ, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" (Revelation 5:5).

The Throne of the Kingdom of the LORD

Reference	Promise or Picture	Fulfillment in Christ
17:11	A Son raised up from David's seed	"Made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3)
17:12	He shall build God a house	"I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18); "whose house are we" (Hebrews 3:6)
17:13	"I will be his father, and he shall be my son"	"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" (Hebrews 1:5)
17:14	Settled in God's house and kingdom for ever	"Of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33)
28:5; 29:23	Sitting on "the throne of the kingdom of the LORD"	Christ sits with the Father on His throne (Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 1:3, 8)
22:9	"A man of rest... I will give peace"	The Prince of Peace who gives rest (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 11:28)
5:2	The chief ruler from Judah	The Ruler from Bethlehem of Judah (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:6)

David as a Picture of Christ in 1 Chronicles

- **The king followed in his rejection (12).** Those who came to David while he was hunted shared his kingdom; "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12).
- **"Thine are we, David" (12:18).** The Spirit-given confession of loyalty to the anointed king, echoed in the believer's confession of Christ as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3).
- **The king who brought God's presence to His people (15-16).** David, wearing a linen ephod, offering sacrifices and blessing the people (15:27; 16:2), is a king acting in a priestly way, pointing to Christ the Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7).
- **The king who interceded for the people under judgment (21:17).** "Let thine hand... be on me... but not on thy people," a picture of Christ, who took the judgment Himself.

The Threshing Floor of Ornan

At Ornan's threshing floor, the sword of judgment was raised over Jerusalem, a sacrifice was offered, God answered by fire, and the sword was put back in its sheath (21:15-27). This place became the site of the temple (22:1; 2 Chronicles 3:1), on the same mountain where Abraham had offered Isaac. It is a powerful picture of the cross, where God's judgment fell on the sacrifice and was turned away from His people (Romans 5:9).

Worship and Praise

David's organisation of praise, with singers prophesying and instruments sounding day and night (6:31-32; 9:33; 16:4-6; 25), anticipates the worship of heaven, where the redeemed sing a new song to the Lamb (Revelation 5:8-14), and the believer's continual "sacrifice of praise" through Christ (Hebrews 13:15).

Part Five: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy or Promise	Source	Fulfillment
The sceptre and chief ruler from Judah	Genesis 49:10	David (1 Chronicles 5:2; 11:1-3); ultimately Christ
Saul's kingdom given to David	1 Samuel 15:28	10:14; 11:3
David anointed king "according to the word of the LORD by Samuel"	1 Samuel 16:1-13	11:3
The ark to be carried by Levites	Numbers 4:15; 7:9	15:2, 15
A son of David to build God's house	17:12; 22:9-10	2 Chronicles 2-7
Solomon a man of peace and rest	22:9	1 Kings 4:24-25; 5:4
David's line continuing beyond the exile	2 Samuel 7:16; Jeremiah 33:17	3:17-24
The priestly courses continuing	24	Luke 1:5, 8-9
An eternal throne for David's son	17:14	Luke 1:32-33; Hebrews 1:8

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 — The Prayer of Jabez

Jabez's prayer has four requests: for God's blessing ("bless me indeed"), for greater opportunity and responsibility ("enlarge my coast"), for God's presence and power ("that thine hand might be with me"), and for protection from evil ("keep me from evil"). It shows that God hears those who call on Him, regardless of their background. It is not a formula to guarantee prosperity, but an example of honest, God-dependent prayer from a man whose life began in pain and ended in honour.

1 Chronicles 15:13 — "The Due Order"

David learned that zeal is not enough; worship must follow God's revealed will. "For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order." The second attempt succeeded because David searched the Scriptures and obeyed them. True worship is "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

1 Chronicles 16 — A Psalm of Thanksgiving

David's psalm combines remembrance of God's past works (16:12), His covenant faithfulness (16:15-18), His protection of His people (16:19-22), His worship among all nations (16:23-33) and His coming judgment (16:33). It shows that thanksgiving is the heart of worship: "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good" (16:34).

1 Chronicles 28:9 — Know God and Serve Him

David's charge to Solomon is a charge to every believer: know God personally, serve Him with an undivided and willing heart, remember that He searches every heart and thought, and seek Him. "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee" (compare Jeremiah 29:13; Hebrews 11:6). Sadly, Solomon later forsook this counsel (1 Kings 11).

1 Chronicles 29:10-19 — David's Prayer of Praise

This prayer teaches a full theology of worship and giving: God owns everything (29:11); all wealth and strength come from Him (29:12); our giving is only returning what is His (29:14); our lives are brief and we are pilgrims (29:15); God tests the heart and delights in uprightness (29:17); willing, joyful giving is a sign of a right heart (29:9, 17). "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of 1 Chronicles

1. God's Faithfulness Across Generations

The genealogies show that God's purposes continued through every generation, through faithful and unfaithful people alike, from Adam to the return from exile.

2. The Covenant with David

God's promise of an eternal kingdom to David's son is the hope of the book, and of the returned exiles who had no king. It is fulfilled in Christ (17:11-14; Luke 1:32-33).

3. The Kingdom Belongs to God

The throne is "the throne of the kingdom of the LORD" (28:5); "thine is the kingdom, O LORD" (29:11). Human kings rule only as God's representatives.

4. Seeking God

Saul died because he "enquired not of the LORD" (10:14). David sought God before battle (14:10, 14), sought the ark (13:3), and charged Solomon and the people to seek Him (22:19; 28:9). Seeking God is the key to blessing throughout Chronicles.

5. Worship According to God's Word

The death of Uzza and the success of the second attempt to move the ark show that worship must follow God's revealed pattern (13; 15:13-15). The temple, too, was built according to a God-given pattern (28:11-19).

6. Joyful, Organised Praise

Chronicles gives great attention to music, singers and thanksgiving. Worship is to be joyful (15:16, 25; 29:9), skilled (15:22; 25:7), continual (9:33; 16:37), and organised (23-26).

7. Willing and Generous Giving

David and the people gave abundantly and joyfully because their hearts were devoted to God's house (29:3-9). Giving flows from recognising that everything belongs to God (29:14).

8. The Unity of God's People

"All Israel" came to make David king (11:1; 12:38) and to bring up the ark (13:5; 15:3). The genealogies include all the tribes. God's people are one (Ephesians 4:3-6).

9. Prayer

Jabez (4:10), the eastern tribes in battle (5:20), David's prayers of thanksgiving and dedication (17:16-27; 29:10-19), and David's intercession for the people (21:17) all show God hearing prayer.

10. Preparing for the Next Generation

David could not build the temple, but he gathered the materials, organised the workers, gave the plans and charged his son (22; 28-29). Faithful servants prepare for work they may not see completed.

Part Eight: Connections — How 1 Chronicles Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Chronicles in the New Testament

1 Chronicles	New Testament	Use
1-3 (genealogies)	Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38	The genealogy of Jesus from Adam and Abraham through David
3:5 (Nathan son of David)	Luke 3:31	Jesus' line through Nathan
3:10-19 (Solomon to Zerubbabel)	Matthew 1:7-13	Jesus' royal line through Solomon and Zorobabel
5:2 (the chief ruler from Judah)	Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5	Our Lord sprang out of Juda
17:11-14	Luke 1:32-33; Hebrews 1:5, 8; Hebrews 3:6	The eternal King and His house
21-22 (the temple site)	Acts 7:46-47	David desired to find a tabernacle; Solomon built the house
24:10 (the course of Abijah)	Luke 1:5, 8-9	Zacharias of the course of Abia
28:5; 29:23 (the throne of the LORD)	Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 12:2	Christ seated on the Father's throne
29:11 (thine is the kingdom)	Matthew 6:13	The doxology of the Lord's Prayer (KJV)
29:14-17 (willing giving)	2 Corinthians 8:12; 9:7	God loves a cheerful giver
29:15 (strangers and sojourners)	Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11	Pilgrims on the earth
16; 25 (songs and praise)	Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15	Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
12:32 (understanding of the times)	Matthew 16:3; Romans 13:11	Discerning the signs of the times

1 Chronicles in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The genealogies of chapter 1 come from Genesis 5, 10, 11, 25 and 36; Judah's line from Genesis 38 and 46; Moriah (22:2; 1 Chronicles 21-22)
Exodus	The tabernacle pattern (25:9, 40; 1 Chronicles 28:19); the Levites' genealogy (6:16-25)
Numbers	The Levites' duties and the ark carried on shoulders (3-4; 7:9; 1 Chronicles 15); the census (1; 26)

Book	Link
Deuteronomy	One place God would choose for His name (12:5-11; 1 Chronicles 22:1)
Joshua	The Levitical cities (21; 1 Chronicles 6:54-81)
Ruth	The line from Pharez to David (4:18-22; 1 Chronicles 2:5-15)
1 Samuel	Saul's death (31; 1 Chronicles 10); David anointed (16)
2 Samuel	Parallel account of David's reign (5-24), with Chronicles adding chapters 12, 15-16 and 22-29
1 Kings	David's last days and Solomon's accession (1-2; 1 Chronicles 23:1; 29:22-25)
2 Chronicles	Direct continuation: Solomon builds the temple on Ornan's threshing floor (3:1)
Ezra	The closing verses of Chronicles open Ezra; genealogies and temple service restored (2; 3:10-11)
Nehemiah	The returned community and its genealogies (7; 11-12; compare 1 Chronicles 9)
Psalms	David's psalm (16:8-36) from Psalms 105, 96 and 106; Psalms of Asaph (50; 73-83), Heman (88), Ethan (89) and the sons of Korah (42-49; 84-88); Psalm 132 (the ark brought to rest)
Isaiah	The root of Jesse (11:1); the throne of David (9:7)
Jeremiah	David's line and the Levites as sure as day and night (33:17-22)
Haggai	Zerubbabel, David's descendant, as God's signet (2:23)
Zechariah	Zerubbabel will finish the temple (4:9); the Branch builds the temple (6:12-13)
Malachi	The sons of Levi purified to offer in righteousness (3:3)

Themes That Run from 1 Chronicles Through Scripture

Theme	In 1 Chronicles	Developed	Fulfilled
The Messianic line	1-3	Ruth 4; Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 1; Luke 3
God's eternal kingdom	17:14; 29:11	Daniel 2:44; 7:14	Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15
The house of God	17:12; 22; 28	Haggai 2:9; Ezekiel 40-48	Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5
Seeking God	10:13-14; 28:9	2 Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah 29:13	Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 11:6
Praise and thanksgiving	16; 25	Psalms 100; 136	Ephesians 5:19-20; Revelation 5:9-14
Worship according to God's pattern	15:13; 28:19	Exodus 25:40	John 4:24; Hebrews 8:5
Willing giving	29:3-17	Exodus 35:21-29	2 Corinthians 8-9
Pilgrims on earth	29:15	Psalm 39:12	Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **God knows His people by name** (1-9).
- **Your beginning does not determine your end;** call on God (4:9-10).
- **Trust God in battle** (5:20).
- **Failing to seek God is fatal** (10:13-14).
- **Stand with God's King before He is crowned** (12).
- **Understand the times and know what to do** (12:32).
- **Be single-hearted, not double-hearted** (12:33).
- **Zeal must follow God's Word** (13; 15:13).
- **Give thanks continually** (16:8, 34).
- **Pray God's promises back to Him** (17:23-27).
- **Never offer God what costs you nothing** (21:24).
- **Prepare the way for others' success** (22).
- **Serve God with a perfect heart and a willing mind** (28:9).
- **Be strong, take courage and do the work** (28:20).
- **Give willingly and joyfully;** it is all His anyway (29:9, 14).
- **Remember life is short** (29:15).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
4:10	Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil
12:32	Men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do
16:11	Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.
16:29	Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name... worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
16:34	O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.
17:14	I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.
21:24	I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost.
28:9	Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind
28:20	Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee
29:11	Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty
29:14	For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

Conclusion

1 Chronicles was written to a small, discouraged community back from exile, to remind them who they were and what mattered. Its genealogies show that God's purpose had run unbroken from Adam to their own day, and that the line of David, through which the Messiah would come, still lived. Its account of David focuses on the ark, the praise of God, the covenant of an eternal kingdom, and the preparation of God's house. It teaches that blessing comes from seeking God, that worship must follow His pattern, that praise and willing giving flow from hearts that know everything belongs to Him, and that the throne of David is really "the throne of the kingdom of the LORD." That throne is now occupied by Jesus Christ, the Son of David, whose kingdom will have no end.

> *Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.*
>
> **1 Chronicles 29:11**

2 Chronicles

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Ezra (traditional) • Date: c. 450-430 BC • Chapters: 36

> *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 7:14**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Chronicles

The Book

2 Chronicles is the second half of the original single book of Chronicles, continuing directly from 1 Chronicles. It covers the reign of Solomon and the history of the kingdom of Judah from Solomon to the Babylonian exile, ending with the decree of Cyrus in 538 BC allowing the Jews to return. Like 1 Chronicles, it was written after the exile, traditionally by Ezra, around 450-400 BC, to encourage the returned community.

The Last Book of the Hebrew Bible

In the Hebrew arrangement of the Old Testament (Law, Prophets, Writings), Chronicles is the final book. The Hebrew Bible therefore begins with "In the beginning God created" (Genesis 1:1) and ends with Cyrus' invitation, "let him go up" (2 Chronicles 36:23). When Jesus spoke of the murdered prophets "from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple" (Luke 11:51; Matthew 23:35), He was naming the first martyr in Genesis (4:8) and the last in Chronicles (2 Chronicles 24:20-22): the whole Old Testament, from beginning to end.

Purpose and Theme

2 Chronicles focuses on the house of David and the house of God. It omits almost all of the northern kingdom's history, mentioning Israel only when it touched Judah, because Judah, with David's line and the temple, carried God's promises forward. Its central lesson, illustrated reign after reign, is that **seeking the LORD brings blessing, and forsaking Him brings judgment**:

> *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 7:14**

The words "seek" and "humble" run through the book. Kings who sought God prospered; kings who forsook Him suffered. Even the most wicked king, Manasseh, was restored when he humbled himself (33:12-13). The returned exiles needed this lesson: their future depended not on their size or strength but on seeking God.

What 2 Chronicles Adds to Kings

About half of 2 Chronicles has no parallel in Kings. Material found only in Chronicles includes:

- **Solomon:** the glory filling the temple as the singers praised (5:13-14); fire from heaven at the dedication (7:1-3); God's promise of 7:14.
- **Rehoboam:** the priests and Levites moving to Judah (11:13-17); his humbling before Shishak (12:6-12).
- **Abijah:** his speech and victory over Jeroboam (13).

- **Asa:** his prayer against Zerah the Ethiopian (14:11); Azariah's prophecy and the covenant (15); Hanani's rebuke (16:7-10).
- **Jehoshaphat:** his teaching mission (17:7-9); his judicial reform (19); the battle won by praise (20).
- **Jehoram:** a letter from Elijah (21:12-15).
- **Joash:** the martyrdom of Zechariah son of Jehoiada (24:17-22).
- **Amaziah:** the hired army sent home (25:5-10); his idolatry with Edom's gods (25:14-16).
- **Uzziah:** his successes and his pride in burning incense (26).
- **Ahaz:** the release of Judah's captives by Israel (28:8-15).
- **Hezekiah:** the cleansing of the temple, the great Passover, and the tithes (29-31).
- **Manasseh:** his captivity, repentance and restoration (33:11-17).
- **Josiah:** his early seeking of God (34:3) and his great Passover (35:1-19).

Five Great Revivals

Revival Under	Chapters	Features of Revival
Asa	14-15	Idols removed; "seek the LORD" commanded; a covenant to seek God with all the heart; rest from war
Jehoshaphat	17; 19-20	Teachers sent with the book of the law; godly judges; prayer and praise in crisis
Joash (under Jehoiada)	23-24	Covenant renewed; Baal destroyed; the temple repaired
Hezekiah	29-31	Temple cleansed; worship restored; Passover for all Israel; idols smashed; tithes given
Josiah	34-35	Seeking God from youth; idols purged; the book of the law found; covenant; Passover

Each revival included a return to God's Word, the removal of idols, the restoration of worship at God's house, a renewed covenant, and great joy.

The Kings of Judah in 2 Chronicles

Judah's King	Chapters	Years	Verdict and Key Lesson
Solomon	1-9	40	Wisdom and the temple
Rehoboam	10-12	17	"He prepared not his heart to seek the LORD" (12:14)
Abijah	13	3	Victory "because they relied upon the LORD" (13:18)
Asa	14-16	41	Good, but in old age relied on Syria and physicians, not God
Jehoshaphat	17-20	25	Good; harmed by alliances with Ahab's house
Jehoram	21	8	Evil; killed his brothers; died "without being desired"
Ahaziah	22	1	Evil; counselled by his mother Athaliah
Athaliah	22-23	6	Usurper; tried to destroy David's line

Judah's King	Chapters	Years	Verdict and Key Lesson
Joash	24	40	Good while Jehoiada lived; then idolatry and murder
Amaziah	25	29	Right, "but not with a perfect heart" (25:2)
Uzziah	26	52	Prospered while he sought God; pride brought leprosy
Jotham	27	16	"Prepared his ways before the LORD" (27:6)
Ahaz	28	16	Very wicked; shut the temple doors
Hezekiah	29-32	29	Wholehearted; revival and deliverance
Manasseh	33	55	Most wicked; then humbled and restored
Amon	33	2	Evil; "humbled not himself" (33:23)
Josiah	34-35	31	Sought God from youth; the last great revival
Jehoahaz	36	3 months	Deposed by Egypt
Jehoiakim	36	11	Evil; bound for Babylon
Jehoiachin	36	3 months	Evil; taken to Babylon
Zedekiah	36	11	Evil; "humbled not himself before Jeremiah" (36:12)

A striking pattern: many kings began well and ended badly (Asa, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah), while one, Manasseh, began badly and ended well. How a person finishes matters (2 Timothy 4:7).

Outline of 2 Chronicles

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Reign of Solomon	1-9	The temple built and filled with glory
Solomon's wisdom and wealth	1	The request at Gibeon
The temple built	2-4	Mount Moriah
The temple dedicated	5-7	The glory, the prayer, the fire, God's answer
Solomon's achievements and fame	8-9	The queen of Sheba; his death
II. The Kings of Judah	10-36	Seeking or forsaking God
The divided kingdom and early kings	10-16	Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa
Jehoshaphat	17-20	Teaching, justice and the battle of praise
The house of Ahab's influence	21-23	Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah; Joash preserved
Kings who began well	24-27	Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham
Ahaz and Hezekiah	28-32	Apostasy and revival; deliverance from Assyria
Manasseh, Amon and Josiah	33-35	Repentance and the last revival
The fall of Jerusalem and the decree of Cyrus	36	Exile and hope

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Reign of Solomon (Chapters 1-9)

Chapter 1 — Solomon's Request for Wisdom

"And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly" (1:1). Solomon and the whole assembly went to Gibeon, where "the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness" still stood with the bronze altar, and offered a thousand burnt offerings (1:3-6). That night God said, "Ask what I shall give thee" (1:7). Solomon asked:

> *Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?*
>
> **2 Chronicles 1:10**

God granted wisdom and knowledge, and also riches, wealth and honour beyond any king before or after (1:11-12). The chapter ends with his chariots, horses and wealth: "the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones" (1:14-17).

Chapter 2 — Preparations for the Temple

Solomon wrote to Huram (Hiram) king of Tyre, explaining the purpose of the house: "the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods. But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him?" (2:5-6). He asked for a skilled craftsman and for cedar, fir and algum timber (2:7-10). Huram answered, "Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them... Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, that made heaven and earth" (2:11-12), and sent Huram-abi, son of a woman of Dan, skilled in every craft (2:13-14). Solomon numbered 153,600 foreigners living in Israel and put them to work as labourers and overseers (2:17-18).

Chapter 3 — The Temple Built on Mount Moriah

> *Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 3:1**

This is the only place in Scripture that names the temple mount as Moriah, linking three great events: Abraham offering Isaac (Genesis 22:2), David's sacrifice that stopped the plague (1 Chronicles 21), and the temple, where sacrifices would be offered for centuries. Near this same mountain, God would provide the true Lamb. Solomon began building in the fourth year of his reign (3:2). The chapter describes the dimensions, the gold overlay, the precious stones, the Most Holy Place covered with 600 talents of gold, the two great cherubim, the veil "of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon" (3:14), and the two pillars Jachin and Boaz (3:15-17).

Chapter 4 — The Furnishings

Solomon made a bronze altar twenty cubits square (4:1), the great bronze sea on twelve oxen for the priests to wash in (4:2-6), ten lavers for washing the offerings, ten gold candlesticks, ten tables, a hundred gold basins, the courts and all the vessels (4:6-22). The bronze was so abundant that "the weight of the brass could not be found out" (4:18).

Chapter 5 — The Ark Brought In; the Glory Fills the House

The priests brought the ark into the Most Holy Place, beneath the wings of the cherubim; it held only the two tables of stone (5:2-10). Then, as the priests came out, the Levite singers, 120 priests with trumpets, and musicians with cymbals, psalteries and harps stood at the east end of the altar:

> *It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD... and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 5:13-14**

Only Chronicles records that the glory came as God's people praised Him with one voice. Unity and praise are the atmosphere of God's presence (Psalm 22:3; 133:1-3; Acts 2:1-4).

Chapter 6 — Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

Solomon blessed the people and praised God for keeping His promise to David (6:1-11). Kneeling on a bronze platform before all Israel, with hands spread toward heaven (6:12-13), he prayed the great prayer recorded also in 1 Kings 8: "O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants" (6:14); "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee" (6:18). He asked God to hear prayer toward this house for justice, defeat, drought, famine, the foreigner, battle and captivity (6:22-39). Chronicles ends the prayer differently from Kings, with words from Psalm 132:8-10:

> *Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 6:41-42**

The prayer ends by appealing to God's covenant with David, "the sure mercies of David" (Isaiah 55:3; Acts 13:34), the very hope of the returned exiles.

Chapter 7 — Fire from Heaven and God's Answer

"Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house" (7:1). As at the tabernacle (Leviticus 9:24), God showed His acceptance by fire. The people bowed with their faces to the pavement, "and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever" (7:3). Solomon offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep, and the feast lasted fourteen days (7:4-10).

Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night: "I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice" (7:12). He gave the great promise:

> *If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 7:13-15**

The promise was given to Israel ("my people... their land"), but its principle applies to God's people in every age: humbling, praying, seeking God's face and turning from sin bring forgiveness and restoration (James 4:8-10; 1 John 1:9; Acts 3:19). God also warned that if they forsook Him, He would pluck them up from the land and make the temple "a proverb and a byword among all nations" (7:19-22), as happened in 586 BC.

Chapter 8 — Solomon's Achievements

Solomon built cities, store cities and chariot cities, and put the remaining Canaanites to forced labour (8:1-10). He moved Pharaoh's daughter out of the city of David "because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come" (8:11). He offered the daily, Sabbath, monthly and festival sacrifices "according to the commandment of Moses" (8:13) and organised the priests and Levites "according to the order of David his father" (8:14). "So the house of the LORD was perfected" (8:16). His ships brought 450 talents of gold from Ophir (8:17-18).

Chapter 9 — The Queen of Sheba; Solomon's Death

The queen of Sheba came to test Solomon with hard questions and was overwhelmed: "the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me" (9:1-6). She blessed God, "which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God" (9:8). Solomon's wealth, throne, shields and trade are described (9:13-28). "And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart" (9:22-23). He reigned forty years and died (9:30-31). Chronicles does not repeat Solomon's later idolatry (1 Kings 11), since its focus is his role in building the temple.

Section II: The Divided Kingdom and the Early Kings of Judah (Chapters 10-16)

Chapter 10 — The Kingdom Divides

Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the old men and answered the people harshly at Shechem: "my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (10:14). "For the cause was of God, that the LORD might perform his word, which he spake by the hand of Ahijah" (10:15). Israel cried, "What portion have we in David?... every man to your tents, O Israel" (10:16), and the kingdom divided.

Chapter 11 — Rehoboam Strengthened; the Faithful Move to Judah

Rehoboam obeyed the prophet Shemaiah and did not fight Israel (11:1-4). He fortified fifteen cities (11:5-12). When Jeroboam rejected the priests and Levites and appointed his own priests for the calves, "the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem" (11:13-14). "And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice" (11:16). True worshippers from every tribe joined Judah, so "all Israel" continued to be represented. "So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah... for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon" (11:17).

Chapter 12 — Rehoboam Forsakes the LORD; Shishak's Invasion

> *And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 12:1**

Strength led to self-sufficiency. In his fifth year, Shishak of Egypt invaded with 1,200 chariots and took Judah's fortified cities (12:2-4). Shemaiah announced, "Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak" (12:5). The princes and king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is righteous" (12:6). God granted partial deliverance, but they would serve Shishak, "that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries" (12:7-8): serving God is better than serving the world. Shishak took the temple and palace treasures, including Solomon's gold shields (12:9-11). "And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him... and also in Judah things went well" (12:12). The verdict on Rehoboam: "he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD" (12:14).

Chapter 13 — Abijah's Victory over Jeroboam

Abijah of Judah, with 400,000 men, faced Jeroboam with 800,000 (13:3). Standing on Mount Zemaraim, Abijah reminded Israel that "the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt" (13:5). Jeroboam's army had golden calves and false priests, "But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken him" (13:10). "And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain... O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper" (13:12). Jeroboam had set an ambush behind them (13:13). "And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets" (13:14). God struck Jeroboam's army, and "the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers" (13:18). Jeroboam never

recovered, and "the LORD struck him, and he died" (13:20). (1 Kings 15:3 says Abijah walked in his father's sins; Chronicles highlights this one moment of faith.)

Chapter 14 — Asa Seeks God; Victory over Zerah

Asa "did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God" (14:2). He removed foreign altars, high places, images and groves, "And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment" (14:3-4). The land had rest ten years, and he built fortified cities: "because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side" (14:6-7). Then Zerah the Ethiopian came with a million men and 300 chariots (14:9). Asa prayed:

> *LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 14:11**

"So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa" (14:12), and Judah took great spoil.

Chapter 15 — Azariah's Message and Asa's Covenant

The Spirit of God came on Azariah son of Oded, who met Asa returning from battle:

> *Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 15:2**

He reminded them of the days of the judges, when Israel had been "without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law," yet when they turned and sought Him, "he was found of them" (15:3-4). "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (15:7). Asa took courage, removed the idols from all the land, and repaired the altar (15:8). People from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon came to him "when they saw that the LORD his God was with him" (15:9). They made a covenant "to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul" (15:12), and they rejoiced, "for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about" (15:15). Asa removed his grandmother Maachah from being queen because of her idol (15:16). "Nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days" (15:17).

Chapter 16 — Asa's Failure in Old Age

In his 36th year, when Baasha of Israel threatened Judah, Asa took silver and gold from the temple and hired Ben-hadad of Syria to attack Israel (16:1-6). Hanani the seer rebuked him:

> *Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host... yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 16:7-9**

Instead of repenting, Asa was angry, imprisoned the seer, and oppressed some of the people (16:10). In his 39th year he was diseased in his feet, "yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians" (16:12). The problem was not using doctors but leaving God out. The man who once relied on God against a million men ended relying on men. Earlier faith does not guarantee later faithfulness.

Section III: Jehoshaphat (Chapters 17-20)

Chapter 17 — Jehoshaphat's Teaching Mission

Jehoshaphat "walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the LORD God of his father" (17:3-4). "And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD" (17:6), a good kind of boldness. In his third year he sent princes, Levites and priests throughout Judah, "and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people" (17:7-9). This is one of the earliest recorded Bible-teaching campaigns. "And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah" (17:10); even Philistines and Arabians brought gifts. Teaching God's Word strengthened the nation more than its large army (17:12-19).

Chapter 18 — The Alliance with Ahab

Jehoshaphat "joined affinity with Ahab" by marriage (his son Jehoram married Ahab's daughter Athaliah, 21:6) and joined Ahab's campaign against Ramoth-gilead (18:1-3). The chapter repeats the account of Micaiah's faithful prophecy and Ahab's death (18:4-34; 1 Kings 22). When the Syrians chased Jehoshaphat, thinking he was Ahab, "Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him" (18:31).

Chapter 19 — Rebuke and Reform

On his return, Jehu son of Hanani the seer met him:

> *Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 19:2-3**

Jehoshaphat accepted the rebuke and went out among the people "and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers" (19:4). He appointed judges in every fortified city with a solemn charge: "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment...

for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts" (19:6-7). He set up a central court in Jerusalem: "Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good" (19:11). Godly justice reflects God's own character.

Chapter 20 — The Battle Won by Praise

A vast army of Moabites, Ammonites and men of Mount Seir (Edom) invaded and reached En-gedi (20:1-2). "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah" (20:3). People came from every city. Standing in the temple court, Jehoshaphat prayed:

> *O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?*
>
> **2 Chronicles 20:6**

He recalled God's gift of the land to "the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever" (20:7; James 2:23), God's promise to hear prayer at the temple (20:8-9), and Israel's restraint toward these very nations in Moses' day (20:10-11). He ended:

> *O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 20:12**

"And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children" (20:13). Then the Spirit came on Jahaziel, a Levite of the sons of Asaph:

> *Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's... Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you*
>
> **2 Chronicles 20:15, 17**

The king and people bowed and worshipped, and the Levites praised "with a loud voice on high" (20:18-19). Early the next morning Jehoshaphat said, "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (20:20). He appointed singers to go before the army, praising "the beauty of holiness" and singing, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever" (20:21).

> *And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir... and they were smitten.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 20:22**

The enemy armies turned on one another until none escaped (20:23-24). It took three days to gather the spoil (20:25). On the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Berachah ("blessing") to bless the LORD, and returned to Jerusalem with joy, harps and trumpets (20:26-28). "And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms" (20:29). Some connect this deliverance with "the valley of Jehoshaphat" where God

judges the nations (Joel 3:2, 12), and with Psalm 83, which names Edom, Moab and Ammon. Sadly, the chapter ends with Jehoshaphat again allying with Ahab's family, this time with Ahaziah in a shipping venture; the prophet Eliezer announced, "the LORD hath broken thy works," and the ships were wrecked (20:35-37).

Section IV: The Influence of Ahab's House (Chapters 21-23)

Chapter 21 — Jehoram and the Letter from Elijah

Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son, secured his throne by killing all six of his brothers and some of the princes (21:4). He "walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife" (21:6). One marriage alliance brought the corruption of Ahab's house into David's line. "Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever" (21:7). Edom and Libnah revolted "because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers" (21:10). He built high places and led Judah into idolatry (21:11).

Then "there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet" (21:12), found only in Chronicles. Elijah, who may have written it before his translation, foresaw Jehoram's sins and announced judgment: a great plague on his people and family, and a disease of the bowels until they came out (21:12-15). The Philistines and Arabians raided his house and took his sons and wives, except the youngest, Jehoahaz (Ahaziah) (21:16-17). After two years of incurable disease he died "of sore diseases" (21:18-19). "His people made no burning for him," and he "departed without being desired" and was not buried in the tombs of the kings (21:19-20). A life without God ends without honour.

Chapter 22 — Ahaziah and Athaliah

Ahaziah, Jehoram's youngest son, reigned one year. "His mother was his counsellor to do wickedly" (22:3). Visiting his wounded uncle Joram of Israel, he was killed in Jehu's purge of Ahab's house; "the destruction of Ahaziah was of God" (22:7-9). Then his mother Athaliah "arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah" (22:10). But Jehoshabeath, the king's daughter and wife of Jehoiada the priest, hid the infant Joash in the house of God for six years (22:11-12). God preserved the line of David, and of the Messiah, through one hidden child.

Chapter 23 — Joash Crowned

In the seventh year, Jehoiada strengthened himself and made a covenant with the captains, Levites and heads of families (23:1-3). "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD hath said of the sons of David" (23:3). Using the Levites on duty as guards, they crowned Joash, gave him the testimony, anointed him, and cried, "God save the king" (23:4-11). Athaliah came, cried "Treason, Treason," and was executed outside the temple (23:12-15). Jehoiada made a covenant "that they should be the LORD'S people" (23:16). The people destroyed Baal's temple and killed Mattan the priest of Baal, and Jehoiada restored the temple worship "as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David" (23:17-18).

Section V: Kings Who Began Well (Chapters 24-27)

Chapter 24 — Joash and the Martyrdom of Zechariah

"And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest" (24:2). He resolved to repair the temple, which Athaliah's sons had broken into (24:4-7). When the Levites were slow, he had a chest placed at the gate, and called for "the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness" (24:9; Exodus 30:12-16). "And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end" (24:10). The temple was restored (24:11-14).

Jehoiada died at 130 and was buried among the kings, "because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house" (24:15-16). Then the princes of Judah came and bowed to the king, "Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols" (24:17-18). God sent prophets, "but they would not give ear" (24:19). Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah, Jehoiada's son:

> *Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 24:20**

"And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD" (24:21). Joash killed the son of the man who had saved his life and made him king. As he died, Zechariah said, "The LORD look upon it, and require it" (24:22). Jesus referred to this murder: "from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51). Zechariah's blood cried for justice; Christ's blood "speaketh better things" (Hebrews 12:24), and He prayed, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). Within the year, a small Syrian army defeated Judah's large one, "because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash" (24:23-24). His servants killed him in his bed "for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada," and he was not buried in the kings' tombs (24:25).

Chapter 25 — Amaziah: Right, But Not Wholehearted

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart" (25:2). He hired 100,000 soldiers from Israel for 100 talents of silver (25:6). A man of God warned, "let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel... God hath power to help, and to cast down" (25:7-8). Amaziah asked, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?" The answer: "The LORD is able to give thee much more than this" (25:9). He sent them home and defeated Edom (25:10-12).

But then he brought back the gods of the Edomites, set them up, and worshipped them (25:14). A prophet asked, "Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?" (25:15). Amaziah silenced him. Proud of his victory, he challenged Joash of Israel and was badly defeated; Jerusalem's wall was broken and the temple plundered (25:17-24). "It came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom" (25:20). He was later assassinated at Lachish (25:27).

Chapter 26 — Uzziah: Strength and Pride

Uzziah became king at sixteen and reigned 52 years (26:3).

> *And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 26:5**

He defeated the Philistines and Arabians, received tribute from the Ammonites, built towers, dug wells, loved agriculture ("for he loved husbandry"), built a strong army, and made "engines, invented by cunning men" to shoot arrows and great stones from the walls (26:6-15). "And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong" (26:15).

> *But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 26:16**

Only priests could burn incense (Exodus 30:7-8; Numbers 16:40). Azariah the high priest and eighty brave priests withstood him: "It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD" (26:17-18). Uzziah, censer in hand, raged at them, "and the leprosy even rose up in his forehead" (26:19). He lived as a leper in a separate house until he died (26:21). Isaiah saw "the Lord... high and lifted up" in the year King Uzziah died (Isaiah 6:1); the proud king who tried to enter God's presence on his own terms was replaced, in Isaiah's eyes, by the true King on the throne. "Pride goeth before destruction" (Proverbs 16:18).

Chapter 27 — Jotham

Jotham did right, though he did not enter the temple (perhaps learning from his father's sin), "And the people did yet corruptly" (27:2). He built, fortified and defeated the Ammonites. "So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God" (27:6).

Section VI: Ahaz and Hezekiah (Chapters 28-32)

Chapter 28 — Ahaz and the Merciful Samaritans

Ahaz made images for Baal, burned incense in the valley of Hinnom, "and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen" (28:2-3). God gave him into the hands of Syria and of Pekah king of Israel, who killed 120,000 men of Judah in one day and took 200,000 captives to Samaria (28:5-8). Then a prophet of the LORD named Oded met Israel's army and rebuked them: they had gone too far, and they themselves were guilty before God; they must send the captives back (28:9-11). Some of Israel's leaders agreed (28:12-13).

> *And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 28:15**

This remarkable act of mercy by men of Samaria, who clothed, fed and anointed wounded Judeans, put the weak on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho, is strikingly similar to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), where a Samaritan bound up the wounds of a man on the Jericho road, poured in oil, set him on his own beast, and cared for him.

Ahaz, attacked by Edom and the Philistines, sent to the king of Assyria for help, but Tiglath-pileser "distressed him, but strengthened him not" (28:16-21). "And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz" (28:22). He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, reasoning that they had helped Syria (28:23), broke up the temple vessels, "and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem" (28:24). Trouble can drive a person to God or further from Him.

Chapter 29 — Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple

Hezekiah began to reign at 25 and did right "according to all that David his father had done" (29:1-2). "He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them" (29:3). He had no time to waste. He gathered the priests and Levites: "Sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place" (29:5). He confessed the nation's sin: "our fathers have trespassed... and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs" (29:6). "My sons, be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him" (29:11).

For sixteen days they cleansed the temple and carried the filth to the brook Kidron (29:15-17). Then Hezekiah offered sin offerings "to make an atonement for all Israel" (29:24), including the northern tribes. The Levites stood with David's instruments and the priests with trumpets, "And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets" (29:25-27). Praise accompanies the sacrifice. All the assembly worshipped (29:28-30). "And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly" (29:36).

Chapter 30 — The Great Passover

Hezekiah sent letters throughout Judah and also to Ephraim and Manasseh, the remnant of the northern kingdom after Assyria's invasion, inviting all to come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover (30:1, 6):

> *Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary... For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive... for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 30:8-9**

Many mocked the messengers, "Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem" (30:10-11). The gospel invitation receives the same responses today (Acts 17:32-34). Because the priests had not sanctified themselves in time, they kept the Passover in the second month, as the law allowed (30:2-3; Numbers 9:10-11). Many who came from the north had not been ceremonially cleansed, yet ate the Passover. Hezekiah prayed:

> *The good LORD pardon every one That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 30:18-20**

God values the seeking heart above perfect ritual (1 Samuel 16:7; Hosea 6:6). The feast was extended another seven days with gladness, "so there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem" (30:23-26). "And their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven" (30:27).

Chapter 31 — Idols Destroyed; Tithes Restored

After the Passover, the people went out and broke the images, cut down the groves, and destroyed the high places throughout Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh (31:1). Hezekiah reorganised the priests and Levites (31:2) and commanded the people to give the priests' and Levites' portion. "And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance" (31:5). The tithes were piled in heaps for four months (31:6-7). Azariah the chief priest reported: "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people" (31:10; compare Malachi 3:10). Storerooms were prepared and faithful men put in charge (31:11-19).

> *And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 31:21**

Chapter 32 — Sennacherib, Sickness and Pride

"After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came" (32:1). Faithfulness does not exempt from trials. Hezekiah stopped the springs outside the city so the Assyrians would find no water, repaired the wall, built towers and made weapons (32:2-5). Then he encouraged the people:

> *Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 32:7-8**

Sennacherib's servants mocked God as no different from the gods of the nations (32:9-19). "And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven" (32:20). "And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour... So he returned with shame of face to his own land," where his own sons killed him (32:21). God "guided them on every side" (32:22).

Hezekiah fell sick and prayed, and God gave him a sign (32:24). "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up" (32:25). He humbled himself, and the wrath did not come in his days (32:26). He had great wealth and "stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David" (32:30), the tunnel still visible in Jerusalem. When Babylon's envoys came, "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart" (32:31). God tests us to reveal our own hearts to us (Deuteronomy 8:2).

Section VII: Manasseh, Amon and Josiah (Chapters 33-35)

Chapter 33 — Manasseh's Sin and Repentance

Manasseh, Hezekiah's son, reigned 55 years and did evil "like unto the abominations of the heathen" (33:2): he rebuilt the high places, built altars to Baal, worshipped the host of heaven, built pagan altars in the temple courts, burned his children in the valley of Hinnom, practised sorcery and witchcraft, consulted mediums, and set an idol in the house of God (33:3-7). He "made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen" (33:9). "And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken" (33:10).

Then God acted. The Assyrian army "took Manasseh among the thorns [hooks], and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon" (33:11).

> *And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 33:12-13**

The worst king in Judah's history was forgiven and restored. He rebuilt Jerusalem's wall, removed the foreign gods and the idol from the temple, restored the LORD's altar, offered thank offerings, "and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel" (33:14-16). The people still sacrificed at high places, though now to the LORD (33:17). His prayer was recorded among the acts of the kings and of the seers (33:18-19). Manasseh is one of the Bible's greatest examples of grace: no one is beyond God's reach. Paul called himself "chief" of sinners and said that in him Christ showed "all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe" (1 Timothy 1:15-16).

His son Amon did evil, "And humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more" (33:22-23). His servants killed him after two years (33:24).

Chapter 34 — Josiah Seeks God and Finds the Book

Josiah became king at eight. "For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem" (34:3). At sixteen he sought God; at twenty he began a thorough purge of idols, high places, groves and images, even into the territories of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon and Naphtali (34:3-7). In his eighteenth year, during temple repairs, "Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses" (34:14). When Shaphan read it to the king, Josiah tore his clothes (34:19). The prophetess Huldah confirmed God's coming judgment on Jerusalem, but promised Josiah, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God... thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace" (34:22-28). Josiah gathered all the people, read the book to them, and made a covenant to obey God with all their heart and soul (34:29-32). "And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers" (34:33).

Chapter 35 — Josiah's Passover and Death

Josiah kept a great Passover. He told the Levites to put the holy ark back in the temple (35:3), organised them according to David's and Solomon's writings, and gave 30,000 lambs and kids and 3,000 bulls from his own possessions for the people (35:4-7). The singers stood in their places, and the gatekeepers did not need to leave their posts (35:15). "And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet" (35:18).

In 609 BC, Pharaoh-necho marched north to Carchemish. Josiah went out to fight him. Necho sent messengers: "God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not" (35:20-21). Josiah disguised himself, "and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God," and was shot by archers in the valley of Megiddo (35:22-23). He died in Jerusalem, and all Judah mourned. "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day" (35:24-25). Zechariah later compared Israel's future mourning for the pierced One to "the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon" (Zechariah 12:10-11). Even the best king made a fatal error by not seeking God's will in this decision.

Section VIII: The Fall of Jerusalem and the Decree of Cyrus (Chapter 36)

Chapter 36 — Exile and the Promise of Return

The last four kings are summarised briefly. Jehoahaz reigned three months before Necho deposed him and took him to Egypt (36:1-4). Jehoiakim did evil; Nebuchadnezzar bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon and took temple vessels (36:5-8). Jehoiachin did evil and was taken to Babylon with more of the temple's treasures (36:9-10). Zedekiah reigned eleven years and "humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD" (36:12). He broke his oath to Nebuchadnezzar, sworn in God's name, "and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel" (36:13). The priests and people "transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD" (36:14).

The writer then gives God's verdict on the whole history:

> *And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 36:15-16**

God's warnings were an act of compassion. Jesus told a parable of a vineyard owner who sent servant after servant, then his son, all rejected (Matthew 21:33-39), and lamented over Jerusalem, "thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee" (Matthew 23:37). Stephen asked, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52).

The Chaldeans killed young men even in the sanctuary, took all the vessels and treasures, burned the house of God, broke down the walls, and burned the palaces (36:17-19). The survivors were carried to Babylon, where they served until the kingdom of Persia (36:20),

> *To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 36:21**

Israel had neglected the sabbatical years commanded in Leviticus 25; God had warned that the land would enjoy its sabbaths during exile (Leviticus 26:34-35, 43). Jeremiah had foretold seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10), and Daniel read this prophecy in Babylon and prayed (Daniel 9:2).

The book, and the Hebrew Bible, ends with hope:

> *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia... Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 36:22-23**

Isaiah had named Cyrus about 150 years earlier as the one who would say of Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be built" (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). The story continues directly in Ezra 1:1-3.

Part Three: Christ in 2 Chronicles

The Temple and Its Glory

The temple built on Mount Moriah (3:1) and filled with glory when God's people praised Him (5:13-14; 7:1-3) points to Christ, in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9), who said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19-21). Solomon's prayer that God would hear prayers toward this house (6:21-39) is answered in Christ, through whom "we have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 4:14-16).

The Preserved Seed of David

Athaliah's massacre (22:10) was the most direct attempt in the Old Testament to destroy David's line, and with it the promise of the Messiah. God preserved one child, hidden in His house for six years and crowned in the seventh (22:11-23:11). The promise that God would give "a light to him and to his sons for ever" (21:7) was kept through every crisis until "the true Light" came (John 1:9).

Pictures and Pointers to Christ

2 Chronicles	Picture	Fulfillment in Christ
3:1	The temple on Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac and David's plague was stayed	The Lamb of God offered at Jerusalem (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:26)
5:13-14	Glory fills the house as God's people praise with one voice	The Spirit poured out on the disciples "with one accord" (Acts 2:1-4)
6:41-42	"Remember the mercies of David"	"The sure mercies of David" given in Christ's resurrection (Acts 13:34)
7:14	Humble, pray, seek, turn; God hears, forgives, heals	"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19)
13:5	A covenant of salt with David for ever	Christ's eternal throne (Luke 1:33)
20:15-22	"The battle is not yours, but God's"; victory through praise	Christ won the decisive victory (Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:57)
22:11-23:11	The hidden king revealed and crowned in God's house	Christ, now hidden from sight, will be revealed as King (Colossians 3:3-4; Revelation 11:15)
24:20-22	Zechariah's blood: "The LORD look upon it, and require it"	Christ's blood speaks better things: forgiveness (Hebrews 12:24; Luke 23:34)
28:15	Samaritans clothe, feed and anoint wounded Judeans and take them to Jericho	The Good Samaritan; Christ the true neighbour (Luke 10:30-37)
30:18-20	Pardon for every heart that seeks God, though not ritually clean	Grace through faith, not ritual (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8-9)
33:12-13	The worst sinner forgiven and restored	"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15)

2 Chronicles	Picture	Fulfillment in Christ
36:22-23	Cyrus, God's anointed, proclaims release: "let him go up"	Christ proclaims liberty to the captives (Luke 4:18; Isaiah 61:1)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment
David's son will build the temple	1 Chronicles 17:12; 22:9-10	2 Chronicles 3-7
Ahijah: ten tribes to Jeroboam	1 Kings 11:31	10:15-19
Shishak will plunder Judah, but not destroy it	12:5-8	12:9-12
Asa will have wars from then on	16:9	1 Kings 15:32
Jehoshaphat's ships will be broken	20:37	20:37
Elijah's letter: plague and disease for Jehoram	21:12-15	21:16-19
Zechariah: "The LORD look upon it, and require it"	24:22	24:23-25
God will destroy Amaziah for worshipping Edom's gods	25:16	25:20-24, 27
Sennacherib will return in shame	Isaiah 37:7, 29	32:21
Babylon will carry off Hezekiah's treasures and sons	2 Kings 20:17-18	36:7, 10, 18
Josiah will die before the calamity	34:28	35:23-24
The land will enjoy its sabbaths in exile	Leviticus 26:34-35, 43	36:21
Seventy years of desolation	Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10	36:21
Cyrus will decree Jerusalem's rebuilding	Isaiah 44:28; 45:1	36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4
The temple will become a byword if Israel forsakes God	7:19-22	36:19

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Chronicles 7:14 — The Path to Restoration

This verse has four conditions and three promises. The conditions: **humble** themselves (admit need and sin), **pray** (call on God), **seek my face** (desire God Himself, not only His help), and **turn from their wicked ways** (genuine repentance). The promises: God will **hear**, **forgive** and **heal**. The rest of 2 Chronicles illustrates it: Rehoboam humbled himself (12:6-7), Hezekiah's people sought God (30:18-20), Manasseh humbled himself greatly (33:12-13), and Josiah's tender heart was heard (34:27). The verse was addressed to Israel about their land, but its principle remains: God's people must lead in repentance, and God responds in mercy (1 Peter 4:17; James 4:8-10).

2 Chronicles 16:9 — The Eyes of the LORD

"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." God is actively looking for people who trust Him wholeheartedly, so He can display His strength through them. Asa had known this against Zerah (14:11), but forgot it against Baasha. Relying on human resources when God is available is folly.

2 Chronicles 20 — How to Face an Overwhelming Crisis

Jehoshaphat's response is a model: he felt fear honestly (20:3), turned at once to seek God (20:3), called God's people to fast and pray together (20:4, 13), reminded God of His character, His past acts and His promises (20:6-11), admitted helplessness ("neither know we what to do," 20:12), fixed his eyes on God (20:12), listened to God's word (20:14-17), worshipped before the victory (20:18-19), believed God's word and His prophets (20:20), and praised in advance (20:21-22). God fought the battle.

2 Chronicles 26:16 — When Strength Becomes Weakness

Uzziah prospered "as long as he sought the LORD" (26:5) and was "marvellously helped, till he was strong" (26:15). His success became his snare. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). Dependence on God is not a stage we outgrow.

2 Chronicles 33:12-13 — No One Beyond Grace

Manasseh shed innocent blood, sacrificed his own children, filled the temple with idols and led the nation into worse sin than the Canaanites. Yet "when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD... and he was intreated of him." God's mercy is greater than any sin (Isaiah 1:18; Romans 5:20). But his repentance could not undo the effects of his sin on the nation (2 Kings 23:26).

2 Chronicles 36:15-16 — Until There Was No Remedy

God's patience was long: "rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion." But persistent rejection of His word eventually brings a point where "there was no remedy." This is a solemn warning: "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15; 2 Corinthians 6:2).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Chronicles

1. Seek the LORD

The central theme. "If ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" (15:2). Kings who sought God prospered (14:7; 17:3-5; 26:5; 31:21); those who did not failed (12:14).

2. Humility and Pride

Humbling oneself brings mercy (7:14; 12:6-7, 12; 32:26; 33:12; 34:27). Pride brings destruction (25:19; 26:16; 32:25). "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

3. Relying on God, Not Man

Victory came when kings relied on God (13:18; 14:11; 16:8; 20:12; 32:8); defeat when they relied on alliances, money or human strength (16:7; 25:6-9; 28:16-21).

4. Worship and Praise

The temple, the music, the singers and the feasts are central. God's glory came amid praise (5:13-14), and praise preceded victory (20:21-22; 29:27).

5. The Word of God and Revival

Revivals were tied to God's Word: Jehoshaphat's teachers (17:9), Josiah's discovery of the book (34:14-33). Neglect of the Word led to decline.

6. Finishing Well

Many kings began well and ended badly. The book warns that past faithfulness does not guarantee future faithfulness (Hebrews 3:14).

7. God's Grace to the Repentant

Even Manasseh was restored (33:12-13), and the unclean who sought God were pardoned (30:18-20). God's grace exceeds human sin.

8. God's Patience and Judgment

God sent prophet after prophet "because he had compassion" (36:15), but persistent rejection brought judgment "till there was no remedy" (36:16).

9. Covenant Faithfulness to David

God preserved David's line "because of the covenant that he had made with David" (21:7), even through Athaliah's massacre and the exile, so that the Messiah would come.

10. Hope After Judgment

The book ends not with exile but with the decree to return (36:22-23). God's judgment is always followed by His purpose of restoration for those who trust Him.

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Chronicles Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Chronicles in the New Testament

2 Chronicles	New Testament	Use
1-9 (Solomon's wisdom and glory)	Matthew 6:29; 12:42; Luke 11:31	A greater than Solomon
3:1; 5-7 (the temple)	John 2:19-21; Acts 7:47-50	Christ the true temple
5:13-14 (glory with united praise)	Acts 2:1-4	The Spirit given to a united church
7:14 (humble yourselves)	James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6; Acts 3:19	Humility and repentance
20:7 (Abraham God's friend)	James 2:23	Abraham called the Friend of God
24:20-22 (Zechariah stoned)	Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51	From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias
28:15 (the merciful Samaritans)	Luke 10:30-37	The Good Samaritan
30:18-20 (pardon for the seeking heart)	Romans 3:24-28; Ephesians 2:8-9	Grace, not ritual
32:7-8 (more with us than with him)	Romans 8:31; 1 John 4:4	If God be for us
33:12-13 (Manasseh forgiven)	1 Timothy 1:15-16; Luke 15:18-24	The chief of sinners saved
36:15-16 (prophets mocked and rejected)	Matthew 21:33-39; 23:37; Acts 7:52	The rejected messengers and Son
Kings of Judah	Matthew 1:7-11	Christ's royal genealogy

2 Chronicles in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac (22:2; 2 Chronicles 3:1); the first martyr, Abel (4:8), and the last, Zechariah (24:20-22)
Exodus	The tabernacle at Gibeon (1:3); the collection of Moses (30:12-16; 2 Chronicles 24:6, 9)
Leviticus	Fire from heaven (9:24; 2 Chronicles 7:1); incense only for priests (2 Chronicles 26:18); the land's sabbaths (26:34-35; 2 Chronicles 36:21)
Numbers	A second Passover allowed (9:10-11; 2 Chronicles 30:2-3)
Deuteronomy	Children not killed for fathers' sins (24:16; 2 Chronicles 25:4); the curses of exile (28)

Book	Link
1 Kings	Parallel account of Solomon (1-11) and the kings of Judah (12-22)
2 Kings	Parallel account of Judah's later kings (8-25)
1 Chronicles	Direct continuation; David's preparations fulfilled in Solomon's temple
Ezra	2 Chronicles 36:22-23 repeated as Ezra 1:1-3; the return and the rebuilding
Nehemiah	The confession of Israel's history of rejecting the prophets (9:26-30)
Psalms	Psalm 132 (2 Chronicles 6:41-42); the refrain "his mercy endureth for ever" (Psalm 136); Psalm 83 (Edom, Moab, Ammon); Psalms 46 and 48 (deliverance from Assyria)
Isaiah	Uzziah's death (6:1); Hezekiah and Sennacherib (36-39); Cyrus named (44:28; 45:1)
Jeremiah	Seventy years of exile (25:11-12; 29:10); Josiah lamented; Zedekiah's refusal to humble himself (37-38)
Lamentations	"The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits" (4:20)
Daniel	Daniel reads Jeremiah's seventy years (9:2)
Joel	The valley of Jehoshaphat (3:2, 12)
Amos	The earthquake in the days of Uzziah (1:1; Zechariah 14:5)
Haggai	The second temple rebuilt after the decree of Cyrus
Zechariah	The mourning in the valley of Megiddon (12:11)
Malachi	Bring the tithes into the storehouse (3:10; 2 Chronicles 31:10)

Themes That Run from 2 Chronicles Through Scripture

Theme	In 2 Chronicles	Developed	Fulfilled
Seeking God	7:14; 15:2	Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29:13	Matthew 7:7; Hebrews 11:6
Humility and repentance	7:14; 33:12	Isaiah 57:15; Micah 6:8	Luke 18:13-14; James 4:10
God's glory in His house	5:14; 7:1-3	Ezekiel 43:4-5; Haggai 2:7-9	John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Revelation 21:23
The battle belongs to the LORD	20:15	1 Samuel 17:47	Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 2:15
Praise as spiritual warfare	20:21-22	Psalm 149:6-9	Acts 16:25-26
The rejected messengers	24:19-22; 36:15-16	Jeremiah 7:25-26	Matthew 21:33-39; 23:34-37
Grace to the worst sinner	33:12-13	Isaiah 1:18	1 Timothy 1:15-16
Return from exile	36:22-23	Ezra; Isaiah 40	Luke 4:18; 1 Peter 2:9-10

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Ask God for wisdom to serve others** (1:10).
- **Praise in unity invites God's presence** (5:13-14).
- **Humble yourself, pray, seek His face, turn from sin** (7:14).
- **Prepare your heart to seek the LORD** (12:14).
- **God can help with many or with few** (14:11).
- **The LORD is with you while you are with Him** (15:2).
- **Don't let past victories make you self-reliant** (16:7-12).
- **Teach God's Word to the people** (17:9).
- **Don't help the ungodly or love those who hate the LORD** (19:2).
- **Judge fairly, as before God** (19:6-7).
- **Keep your eyes on God when you don't know what to do** (20:12).
- **The battle is the LORD's** (20:15).
- **Believe God and His Word** (20:20).
- **Choose godly mentors, and keep walking when they are gone** (24:2, 17-18).
- **God is able to give you much more than what you lose in obeying Him** (25:9).
- **Beware when you become strong** (26:16).
- **Show mercy to fallen enemies** (28:15).
- **Don't waste time in returning to God** (29:3).
- **God looks at the heart that seeks Him** (30:18-20).
- **Do God's work with all your heart** (31:21).
- **There are more with us than with them** (32:7-8).
- **No one is beyond God's mercy** (33:12-13).
- **Seek God while you are young** (34:3).
- **Don't despise God's warnings** (36:15-16).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
5:13	For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud
7:14	If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
14:11	LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power
15:2	The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you
16:9	For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.
20:12	Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.
20:15	Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.
20:20	Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.
26:5	As long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.
31:21	He did it with all his heart, and prospered.
32:8	With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles.
33:13	Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.

Conclusion

2 Chronicles traces the house of David and the house of God from the glory of Solomon's temple to its ashes in 586 BC. Reign after reign, it teaches one lesson: those who seek the LORD prosper, and those who forsake Him fall. It celebrates five great revivals, honours kings who trusted God against impossible odds, and warns that even good beginnings can end badly through pride and self-reliance. It shows God's compassion in sending prophet after prophet, and His grace in restoring even Manasseh. And it ends, as the Hebrew Bible ends, with the invitation to return and rebuild: "Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up." That invitation finds its full meaning in Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the true Temple, who calls every sinner to come home.

> *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*
>
> **2 Chronicles 7:14**

Ezra

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Ezra • Date: c. 450 BC • Chapters: 10

> *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*
>
> **Ezra 7:10**

Part One: Introduction to Ezra

The Name and the Book

The book is named after Ezra, a priest and "ready scribe in the law of Moses" (7:6), who led the second return from Babylon. His name means "help," a fitting name for a book that repeatedly speaks of "the hand of the LORD his God upon him" (7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31). In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were counted as one book, and they tell one continuous story: the return from exile, the rebuilding of the temple and the walls, and the restoration of God's people to His Word.

Author and Date

Jewish tradition names Ezra as the author, and chapters 7:27-9:15 are written in the first person ("I"). Ezra was a skilled scribe who could compile records, letters and lists. Parts of the book (4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26) are written in Aramaic, the official language of the Persian Empire, because they quote official letters and decrees. The book was probably completed around 440 BC.

Period Covered

Ezra covers about 80 years, from the decree of Cyrus in 538 BC to Ezra's reforms in 457 BC. There is a gap of about 58 years between chapters 6 (515 BC) and 7 (458/457 BC). The events of the book of Esther took place during this gap, under King Ahasuerus (Xerxes).

Persian King	Reign	Link to Ezra
Cyrus	559-530 BC (over Babylon from 539)	Decree to return and rebuild (1:1-4); first return under Zerubbabel
Cambyses	530-522 BC	Not named; opposition continued
Darius I	522-486 BC	Confirmed Cyrus' decree; temple completed in his sixth year, 515 BC (5-6)
Ahasuerus (Xerxes)	486-465 BC	Accusation against Judah (4:6); the events of Esther
Artaxerxes I	465-424 BC	Halted the rebuilding of the walls (4:7-23); sent Ezra (7); later sent Nehemiah

Three Returns from Exile

Return	Date	Leader	Number	Purpose	Record
First	538 BC	Zerubbabel and Jeshua	About 50,000	Rebuild the temple	Ezra 1-6
Second	458/457 BC	Ezra	About 1,500 men plus families	Restore the law and worship	Ezra 7-10
Third	445/444 BC	Nehemiah	Not stated	Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem	Nehemiah 1-13

Purpose and Theme

Ezra shows **God faithfully keeping His promises** to bring His people back from exile, **restoring true worship** at His house, and **restoring His people to His Word**. Three themes stand out:

- **God's sovereign hand.** God stirred the heart of a pagan king (1:1), moved the hearts of His people to return (1:5), protected the work from opposition (5:5), and guided Ezra's journey (7:9; 8:31). "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD" (Proverbs 21:1).
- **The centrality of worship.** The returning exiles built the altar first (3:2-3), then the temple (3-6), and celebrated with praise, sacrifice and Passover.
- **The authority of God's Word.** Everything was done "as it is written in the law of Moses" (3:2; 6:18). Ezra devoted himself to study, practise and teach that law (7:10), and the people reformed their lives by it (10:3).

> *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*
>
> **Ezra 7:10**

Confirmation from History

The **Cyrus Cylinder**, a clay cylinder found in Babylon in 1879, records Cyrus' policy of returning conquered peoples to their homelands and restoring their temples. It does not mention the Jews by name, but it fits exactly the decree recorded in Ezra 1:2-4 and 6:3-5. The Persian practice of keeping royal records in archives, such as at Ecbatana (6:1-2), is also well documented.

Outline of Ezra

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The First Return and the Rebuilding of the Temple	1-6	Under Zerubbabel
The decree of Cyrus	1	God stirs a king's heart
The list of returnees	2	God's people by name
The altar and the foundation	3	Worship restored; joy and weeping
Opposition	4	The work stops
The work resumes	5	Haggai and Zechariah
The temple completed and dedicated	6	Darius' decree; joy and Passover
II. The Second Return and the Reformation	7-10	Under Ezra
Ezra's commission	7	A man prepared to seek, do and teach God's law
The journey	8	Fasting, prayer and the good hand of God
Ezra's prayer of confession	9	Mixed marriages exposed
The people's repentance	10	Covenant and separation

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The First Return and the Rebuilding of the Temple (Chapters 1-6)

Chapter 1 — The Decree of Cyrus

> *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing*
>
> **Ezra 1:1**

Jeremiah had prophesied seventy years of captivity followed by return (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10). Isaiah had named Cyrus as God's "shepherd" and "anointed" about 150 years before he lived, saying he would declare of Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be built" (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). God fulfilled both. Cyrus proclaimed:

> *The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up*
>
> **Ezra 1:2-3**

The Jews who stayed behind were to support those who went with silver, gold, goods, animals and freewill offerings (1:4). Then "rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD" (1:5). The same God who stirred Cyrus' spirit stirred His people's spirits; not all were willing to leave Babylon, but those God moved went. Their neighbours gave them silver, gold and precious things (1:6), as the Egyptians had at the Exodus (Exodus 12:35-36): this was a second exodus.

Cyrus returned 5,400 gold and silver vessels Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple (1:7-11; 2 Kings 25:13-15; Daniel 5:2-3), entrusting them to Sheshbazzar, "the prince of Judah." Isaiah had foreseen this: "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing... be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD" (Isaiah 52:11). Many identify Sheshbazzar with Zerubbabel, or as an earlier official leader.

Chapter 2 — The List of Those Who Returned

The chapter lists the returnees by family and by home town: leaders (2:2), the people of Israel (2:3-35), priests (2:36-39), Levites (2:40), singers (2:41), gatekeepers (2:42), Nethinim (temple servants) and descendants of Solomon's servants (2:43-58). The list is repeated with small variations in Nehemiah 7. God remembered each family that answered His call (Malachi 3:16).

Some could not prove their genealogy (2:59-60). Some priests whose records could not be found were excluded from the priesthood "till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim" to discern God's will (2:61-63). Purity of the priesthood mattered. Christ's priesthood, by contrast, does not rest on

Levitical genealogy but on "the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:3, 16).

The whole congregation numbered 42,360, plus 7,337 servants and 200 singers (2:64-65). Heads of families gave freely toward rebuilding: 61,000 drams of gold, 5,000 pounds of silver and 100 priestly garments (2:68-69). They settled in their towns (2:70).

Chapter 3 — The Altar Rebuilt and the Foundation Laid

In the seventh month, "the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem" (3:1). Jeshua the high priest and Zerubbabel built the altar of God "to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God" (3:2). "And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries" (3:3). They did not wait for walls or a temple; they first restored the place of sacrifice and the daily offerings. They kept the Feast of Tabernacles and resumed the regular offerings (3:4-6). The cross, the place of sacrifice, comes first in the life of God's people.

They hired masons and carpenters and bought cedar from Lebanon, as Solomon had (3:7). In the second month of the second year (536 BC), they laid the foundation of the temple, with Levites from age twenty overseeing the work (3:8-9). When the foundation was laid, the priests in their robes blew trumpets and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, played cymbals "after the ordinance of David king of Israel" (3:10).

> *And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.*
>
> **Ezra 3:11**

Jeremiah had foretold exactly this: "The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness... the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land" (Jeremiah 33:11). But the old men who had seen Solomon's temple wept aloud, while others shouted for joy, "So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people" (3:12-13). Haggai later encouraged those who thought the new house "as nothing" (Haggai 2:3), and Zechariah asked, "who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10). Psalm 126 captures the mixture: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

Chapter 4 — Opposition Stops the Work

"The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin" came to Zerubbabel and said, "Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (4:1-2). These were the mixed peoples settled in Samaria by the Assyrians, who "feared the LORD, and served their own gods" (2 Kings 17:24-41). Zerubbabel refused: "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel" (4:3). Partnership with those of a mixed faith would have compromised the work. The offer of help turned into open hostility: "the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus... even until the reign of Darius" (4:4-5). The enemy's tactics were discouragement, intimidation and legal pressure.

Verses 6-23 are a parenthesis that jumps forward in time to summarise later opposition: an accusation under Ahasuerus (Xerxes) (4:6), and a letter from Rehum and Shimshai under Artaxerxes about the rebuilding of the city walls, calling Jerusalem "the rebellious and the bad city" (4:7-16). Artaxerxes ordered the work on the city stopped (4:17-23), until he later reversed this for Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2). The narrative then returns to the temple: "Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia" (4:24), about sixteen years (536-520 BC). The people turned to building their own houses (Haggai 1:2-4).

Chapter 5 — The Prophets Stir the People

> *Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel... and Jeshua... and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.*
>
> **Ezra 5:1-2**

Haggai rebuked the people: "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?... Consider your ways" (Haggai 1:4-5). Zechariah encouraged them with visions of God's purposes and the promise, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). God's Word restarted God's work.

Tatnai, the Persian governor west of the Euphrates, came to ask who had authorised the building (5:3-4). "But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease" (5:5). Tatnai sent a letter to Darius, recording the Jews' answer: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago" (5:11). They admitted their fathers' sin had caused the destruction (5:12) and cited Cyrus' decree (5:13-17). They answered with humility, honesty and confidence.

Chapter 6 — Darius' Decree and the Temple Completed

Darius ordered a search of the royal archives, and a scroll was found at Achmetha (Ecbatana) in Media with Cyrus' memorandum authorising the temple, giving its dimensions, and ordering that the costs be paid from the royal treasury and the vessels returned (6:1-5). Darius issued a new decree: Tatnai must let the work alone and pay the full costs from the royal taxes, and provide daily animals, wheat, salt, wine and oil for the sacrifices, "That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons" (6:6-10). Anyone who altered the decree would be impaled on a timber from his own house (6:11). "And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God" (6:12). The opposition's letter led to the work being funded by the empire. God turns opposition into provision (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28).

> *And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.*
>
> **Ezra 6:14**

The temple was finished on the third day of the month Adar in the sixth year of Darius (515 BC) (6:15), about seventy years after the first temple was destroyed in 586 BC. They dedicated it with joy, offering 100 bullocks, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and twelve male goats as a sin offering "for all Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel" (6:16-17). Though few, they offered for all twelve tribes; God's people were still one. The priests and Levites were organised "as it is written in the book of Moses" (6:18). On the fourteenth day of the first month they kept the Passover, joined by "all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel" (6:19-21). "For the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God" (6:22). Persia now ruled the old Assyrian territory, and the title recalls that the same empire that once scattered Israel now helped restore them.

This second temple, smaller than Solomon's, would later be greatly expanded by Herod ("Forty and six years was this temple in building," John 2:20). God promised through Haggai, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former" (Haggai 2:9), because the Lord Jesus Himself would come to it (Malachi 3:1; Luke 2:27-32).

Section II: The Second Return and the Reformation (Chapters 7-10)

Chapter 7 — Ezra's Commission

"Now after these things," about 58 years later, "in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia," Ezra appears (7:1). His genealogy is traced back through Zadok, Phinehas and Eleazar to "Aaron the chief priest" (7:1-5). He was "a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him" (7:6). He left Babylon on the first day of the first month and arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month of Artaxerxes' seventh year (458/457 BC), a journey of about four months and 900 miles, "according to the good hand of his God upon him" (7:8-9). The key verse explains why:

> *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*
>
> **Ezra 7:10**

The order matters: Ezra first **prepared his heart**, then **sought** (studied) God's law, then **did** it, and only then **taught** it. A teacher of God's Word must first be a learner and a doer (James 1:22; 3:1; 1 Timothy 4:16).

Artaxerxes' letter, preserved in Aramaic (7:12-26), authorised any Israelite, priest or Levite who wished to go with Ezra; gave him silver and gold from the king and his counsellors for offerings; allowed him to take freewill offerings from Babylon; promised supplies from the royal treasury up to a hundred talents of silver; exempted priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers and temple servants from taxes; and gave Ezra authority to appoint magistrates and judges, to teach the law, and to punish those who would not obey it (7:12-26). The king wrote, "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" (7:23).

Ezra burst into praise: "Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem... And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God was upon me" (7:27-28). Some Bible teachers date the "commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" that begins Daniel's seventy weeks (Daniel 9:25) from this decree (457 BC); others from Artaxerxes' later decree to Nehemiah (444 BC).

Chapter 8 — The Journey and the Good Hand of God

Ezra lists the family heads who went with him, about 1,500 men besides women and children (8:1-14). At the river Ahava he found no Levites among them (8:15). He sent to Iddo at Casiphia, "and by the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of understanding," with 38 Levites and 220 Nethinim (8:18-20). Then Ezra proclaimed a fast:

> *Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us.*
>
> **Ezra 8:21-23**

Ezra had told the king God would protect them; asking for soldiers would have contradicted his testimony. (Nehemiah later accepted an escort, Nehemiah 2:9; both men acted in faith in their own circumstances.) Ezra entrusted the treasure, about 650 talents of silver, 100 talents of silver vessels, 100 talents of gold, and other precious vessels, to twelve chief priests and ten Levites, weighing it out carefully (8:24-27): "Ye are holy unto the LORD; the vessels are holy also... Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests" in Jerusalem (8:28-29). They left on the twelfth day of the first month, "and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way" (8:31). In Jerusalem everything was weighed again and recorded (8:33-34). Ezra modelled financial integrity and accountability in God's work (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). The returnees offered burnt offerings "for all Israel": twelve bullocks, 96 rams, 77 lambs and twelve goats (8:35).

Chapter 9 — The Problem of Mixed Marriages and Ezra's Prayer

After this, the leaders came to Ezra with grave news: "The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass" (9:1-2). This was exactly what God had forbidden, because such marriages would "turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (Deuteronomy 7:3-4), the very sin that had led to exile (1 Kings 11:1-8).

Ezra tore his garment and mantle, pulled hair from his head and beard, and sat appalled until the evening sacrifice (9:3). "Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel" (9:4; compare Isaiah 66:2). At the evening sacrifice he fell on his knees, spread out his hands,

and prayed one of the great prayers of confession in Scripture:

> *O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.*
>
> **Ezra 9:6**

Ezra had not committed this sin, yet he said "our iniquities," identifying with his people. He reviewed their history of sin and its punishment (9:7), and then marvelled at God's grace:

> *And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia*
>
> **Ezra 9:8-9**

He confessed that they had broken God's commandments again, against the clear warnings of the prophets (9:10-12). "Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve" (9:13; Psalm 103:10). "Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations?" (9:14). He ended with no excuse, only an appeal to God's righteousness: "O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this" (9:15). Compare the similar confessions of Daniel (Daniel 9:4-19) and Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:5-11; 9:5-38).

Chapter 10 — Repentance and Separation

As Ezra prayed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a great congregation gathered and "wept very sore" (10:1). Shechaniah spoke up:

> *We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them... and let it be done according to the law. Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.*
>
> **Ezra 10:2-4**

Even after grievous sin, "there is hope." Ezra made the leaders swear to act (10:5). He spent the night fasting and mourning (10:6). A proclamation summoned all the exiles to Jerusalem within three days (10:7-8). On the twentieth day of the ninth month, in December rain, all the people sat in the square before the house of God, "trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain" (10:9). Ezra said, "Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (10:10-11). The congregation agreed, but asked for an orderly process, given the rain and the number of cases (10:12-14). Only a few opposed (10:15). Over three months, the cases were examined (10:16-17). The book ends with a list of those who had married foreign wives, beginning with priests, including members of the high priest's own family, who "gave

their hands that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass" (10:18-19). About 110 men are named, "and some of them had wives by whom they had children" (10:44). The book ends abruptly and soberly; the story continues in Nehemiah, where the same problem arose again (Nehemiah 13:23-27).

Understanding Ezra 10. This passage is difficult, and should be read carefully:

- **The issue was idolatry, not ethnicity.** God had always welcomed foreigners who turned to Him, such as Rahab and Ruth (Ruth 1:16). These marriages were to women who remained in the pagan religions of "the people of the lands," "doing according to their abominations" (9:1).
- **The survival of the covenant community was at stake.** A tiny remnant was being absorbed into paganism; Nehemiah later found children who could not even speak the language of Judah (Nehemiah 13:24). The line through which the Messiah would come had to be preserved.
- **It was a specific, extraordinary measure** under the Old Covenant, carried out according to the law and with due process (10:3, 14, 16).
- **The New Testament gives different instruction to believers** already married to unbelievers: if the unbelieving spouse is willing to stay, the believer "should not put her away" (1 Corinthians 7:12-16). But believers must not enter such marriages: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 7:39).
- Malachi, writing in the same era, rebuked Jewish men who divorced their Jewish wives to marry pagan women ("hath married the daughter of a strange god") and declared that God "hateth putting away" (Malachi 2:11-16). Both books stand against compromise with idolatry.

Part Three: Christ in Ezra

The Return from Exile as a Picture of Redemption

Israel was in bondage in Babylon because of sin, unable to free itself. God, by His sovereign grace and through His chosen instrument, proclaimed release; those whose spirits God stirred returned to rebuild His house and worship Him. This pictures the salvation Christ brings: freedom from the bondage of sin (John 8:34-36), proclaimed as good news (Luke 4:18), received by those whom God draws (John 6:44), leading to the building of God's spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).

Pictures of Christ in Ezra

Ezra	Person or Event	Fulfillment in Christ
1:1-4	Cyrus, called God's "anointed" and "shepherd" (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1), proclaims liberty to the captives	Christ the Anointed, who proclaims "deliverance to the captives" (Luke 4:18)
2:2; 3:2, 8	Zerubbabel, of David's royal line, leads the return and builds God's house	Zorobabel in Christ's genealogy (Matthew 1:12; Luke 3:27); "he shall build the temple of the LORD" (Zechariah 6:12-13)
3:2	Jeshua (Joshua) the high priest	His name is the Hebrew form of Jesus; Zechariah 3:1-9 and 6:11-13 make him a picture of the Branch, the Priest-King
3:2-3	The altar built first, before the temple	The cross is the foundation of everything (1 Corinthians 2:2; 3:11)
3:11	"He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever" sung at the foundation	Christ the sure foundation (Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6)
6:15-16	The second temple completed and dedicated	"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former" (Haggai 2:9), because Christ came to it (Malachi 3:1; Luke 2:27-32)
7:6, 10	Ezra the priest-scribe who studied, obeyed and taught God's law	Christ the Word made flesh, who taught with authority (John 1:14; Matthew 7:29)
9:6-15	Ezra identifying himself with the people's sin and interceding	Christ "was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession" (Isaiah 53:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
9:8	"A nail in his holy place," a secure place	Christ, the "nail in a sure place" (Isaiah 22:23) on whom everything hangs
2:61-63	Priests excluded for lack of genealogy, awaiting a priest with Urim and Thummim	Christ, a priest not by genealogy but "after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:3, 16)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment in Ezra
Seventy years of captivity, then return	Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10	1:1
Cyrus named as the one who would rebuild Jerusalem and the temple	Isaiah 44:28; 45:1, 13	1:1-4; 6:3-5
The vessels of the LORD carried back by the clean	Isaiah 52:11	1:7-11; 8:28-30
Gathered from the nations when they turn to God	Deuteronomy 30:1-5; Leviticus 26:40-45	1-2
God will give His people compassion before their captors	1 Kings 8:50; Psalm 106:46	6:22; 7:27-28; 9:9
The voice of joy and the sacrifice of praise in the house of the LORD	Jeremiah 33:10-11	3:10-13; 6:16, 22
Zerubbabel will finish the temple	Zechariah 4:9	6:14-15
The people will build when stirred by the prophets	Haggai 1:1-14	5:1-2
Kings will help rebuild Jerusalem	Isaiah 60:10	6:8-12; 7:21-24

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Ezra 1:1-5 — God Stirs Hearts

God "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus" and "raised" the spirits of His people (1:1, 5). The greatest king on earth and the humblest returning family were both moved by the same God for the same purpose. God's sovereignty does not cancel human responsibility; it moves willing hearts. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

Ezra 3 — Altar First, Then Foundation; Tears and Joy

The returnees made worship their first priority, before walls for safety or houses for comfort. When the foundation was laid, joy and grief mixed: the young rejoiced at a new beginning, the old wept for lost glory. Both are understandable, but God would make the latter house more glorious through Christ. Small beginnings should not be despised.

Ezra 4-6 — Opposition and Perseverance

Opposition came as an offer of compromise (4:2), discouragement (4:4), fear (4:4), hired opposition (4:5) and false accusation (4:6-16). The work stopped for sixteen years, not because God was unable, but because the people lost heart. It resumed when God's Word was preached (5:1). And the enemy's letter led to the very decree that funded and protected the work (6:6-12).

Ezra 7:10 — The Pattern for Every Teacher of God's Word

Ezra **prepared his heart** (set his heart, made a deliberate decision), **sought** the law (diligent study), **did** it (personal obedience), and **taught** it (sharing it with others). Study without obedience is hypocrisy; teaching without study is presumption. Paul told Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them" (1 Timothy 4:16), and to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Ezra 8:21-23 — Faith That Matches Our Words

Ezra refused an escort because he had testified that God's hand protects those who seek Him. He backed his testimony with fasting and prayer, and God protected them. Our actions should be consistent with what we say we believe about God.

Ezra 9 — A Model Prayer of Confession

Ezra's prayer: personal shame before God (9:6), identification with others' sin ("our"), honest acknowledgement of history (9:7), gratitude for undeserved grace (9:8-9), specific confession (9:10-12), recognition that God's punishment was less than deserved (9:13), and an appeal to God's righteousness with no excuses (9:15). True confession agrees with God about sin (1 John 1:9).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Ezra

1. God's Sovereignty Over Rulers

Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes all served God's purposes (1:1; 6:22; 7:27). "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Proverbs 21:1).

2. God's Faithfulness to His Word

The return fulfilled Jeremiah's seventy years and Isaiah's prophecy of Cyrus to the letter (1:1). God's promises do not fail, even through exile.

3. The Priority of Worship

The altar came first (3:2-3), then the temple. Worship, sacrifice, praise and the feasts were at the centre of the restored community's life.

4. The Authority of Scripture

"As it is written" is the standard throughout (3:2, 4; 6:18). Ezra's ministry centred on studying, obeying and teaching God's law (7:10), and reformation came by it (10:3).

5. The Good Hand of God

Repeatedly, success is credited to "the hand of the LORD his God upon him" (7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31). God's providence guides, provides and protects.

6. Opposition to God's Work

Opposition came through compromise offers, discouragement, intimidation and legal accusation (4). God's work often faces resistance, but God protects His people (5:5) and turns opposition into blessing (6).

7. The Power of Preaching

The work restarted when Haggai and Zechariah preached (5:1-2; 6:14). God's Word revives God's work.

8. Separation from the World

God's people must not be absorbed into the surrounding paganism (9-10). Holiness requires separation from idolatry, not from people as such (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

9. Confession and Repentance

Ezra's confession (9) and the people's response (10) show that true repentance involves grief over sin, honest confession, and concrete action to put it away.

10. Hope in God's Grace

"Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing" (10:2). God gives "a little reviving in our bondage" (9:8). Grace is always greater than sin.

Part Seven: Connections — How Ezra Links to the Rest of the Bible

Ezra in the New Testament

Ezra	New Testament	Use
2:2; 3:2 (Zerubbabel)	Matthew 1:12-13; Luke 3:27	Zorobabel in the genealogy of Jesus
2:61-63 (priests without genealogy)	Hebrews 7:3, 13-16	Christ's priesthood not based on Levitical descent
3:2-3 (the altar first)	1 Corinthians 3:11; Hebrews 13:10	Christ the foundation and the believer's altar
3:12 (the second temple)	John 2:20; Luke 2:27, 46	The temple where Jesus was presented and taught
4:1-3 (the Samaritans' offer)	John 4:9, 20-22	Jewish-Samaritan hostility
5:1-2 (the prophets helping)	Ephesians 2:20; 4:11-12	Apostles and prophets building God's house
6:10 (praying for the king)	1 Timothy 2:1-2	Prayers for kings and all in authority
7:10 (seek, do, teach)	Matthew 13:52; James 1:22; 2 Timothy 2:15	The scribe instructed unto the kingdom; doers of the word
8:24-34 (accountability in giving)	2 Corinthians 8:20-21	Providing for honest things in the sight of men
9:6 (identifying with sin)	2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 9:1-3	Christ made sin for us; Paul's burden for Israel
9-10 (separation from unbelievers)	2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, 39	Not unequally yoked; guidance for believers already married
The return from exile	Luke 4:18; Colossians 1:13	Deliverance from bondage

Ezra in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	The second exodus: neighbours give silver and gold (1:6; Exodus 12:35-36); the Passover kept (6:19-22)
Leviticus	The Feast of Tabernacles and offerings restored (3:4-6; Leviticus 23)
Deuteronomy	No marriages with idolatrous nations (7:1-4; Ezra 9:1-2); gathering from the nations (30:1-5)
1 Kings	Solomon's prayer for mercy before captors (8:46-50); Solomon's fall through foreign wives (11:1-8)

Book	Link
2 Kings	The vessels taken to Babylon (25:13-15); the Samaritans' origins (17:24-41)
1 Chronicles	The priestly and Levitical genealogies (6); the singers and the ordinance of David (25)
2 Chronicles	Its final verses (36:22-23) are Ezra's opening verses (1:1-3)
Nehemiah	Direct continuation; Nehemiah 7 repeats the list of Ezra 2; Ezra reads the law (Nehemiah 8); mixed marriages again (13:23-27)
Esther	The events of Esther occur in the gap between Ezra 6 and 7, under Ahasuerus (4:6)
Psalms	Psalm 126 (the return: tears and joy); 137 (the exile in Babylon); 119 (love for God's law); the refrain of Psalm 136 (3:11)
Isaiah	Cyrus named (44:28; 45:1); the vessels of the LORD carried out (52:11); trembling at God's word (66:2; Ezra 9:4; 10:3)
Jeremiah	Seventy years (25:11-12; 29:10); the voice of joy in the house of the LORD (33:10-11)
Daniel	Daniel's prayer at the end of the seventy years (9:2-19); the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (9:25)
Haggai	Preached to Zerubbabel and Jeshua to resume the temple (1-2; Ezra 5:1)
Zechariah	Encouraged the rebuilding; Zerubbabel will finish (4:6-10); Joshua the high priest (3; 6:11-13)
Malachi	Rebukes intermarriage with pagans and divorce (2:11-16); the same era of priestly and moral decline

Themes That Run from Ezra Through Scripture

Theme	In Ezra	Developed	Fulfilled
Return from captivity	1-2	Isaiah 40; Psalm 126	Luke 4:18; John 8:36
God moves the hearts of rulers	1:1; 6:22; 7:27	Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 2:21	Romans 13:1; Acts 4:27-28
The house of God rebuilt	3-6	Haggai 2:7-9	John 2:19-21; Ephesians 2:20-22
The authority of God's Word	3:2; 7:10	Nehemiah 8; Psalm 119	2 Timothy 3:16-17
The good hand of God	7:6, 9; 8:18, 22, 31	Nehemiah 2:8, 18	Romans 8:28
Separation from idolatry	9-10	Nehemiah 13; Malachi 2:11	2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
Confession and intercession	9	Nehemiah 9; Daniel 9	1 John 1:9; Hebrews 7:25

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **God keeps His Word,** even after seventy years of exile (1:1).
- **When God stirs your spirit, respond** (1:5).
- **Every name matters to God** (2).
- **Put worship first** (3:2-3).
- **Don't despise the day of small things** (3:12; Zechariah 4:10).
- **Refuse compromise even when it looks like help** (4:2-3).
- **Don't let discouragement stop God's work** (4:4, 24).
- **Listen to God's Word and get back to work** (5:1-2).
- **God's eye is on His people** (5:5).
- **God can turn opposition into provision** (6:6-12).
- **Prepare your heart to seek, do and teach God's Word** (7:10).
- **Give God the credit for every open door** (7:27-28).
- **Seek God's direction with fasting and prayer** (8:21-23).
- **Let your actions match your testimony** (8:22).
- **Handle money with integrity and accountability** (8:24-34).
- **Tremble at God's Word** (9:4; 10:3).
- **Confess sin honestly, without excuse** (9:6-15).
- **There is always hope when we turn back to God** (10:2).
- **Take courage and act on God's Word** (10:4).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:1	The LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia
3:11	They sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel.
5:5	But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease
6:22	For the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king... unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God
7:10	For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.
8:22	The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.
9:6	O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head
9:13	Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve
10:2	Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.
10:4	Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.

Conclusion

Ezra records God bringing His people home. Exactly as Jeremiah and Isaiah foretold, God stirred the heart of Cyrus to release the captives, and a remnant returned to rebuild the altar and the temple. Despite years of opposition and discouragement, the prophets' preaching restarted the work, and the house of God was finished with joy. Decades later Ezra, a man who had prepared his heart to seek, do and teach God's law, led a second return and called the people back to holiness through God's Word, confession and repentance. The book shows that God is sovereign over kings, faithful to His promises, and gracious to a sinful remnant, giving them "a little reviving in their bondage." It points forward to the greater deliverance in Jesus Christ, who came to that rebuilt temple, the Son of David descended from Zerubbabel, to set the captives free and build His eternal house.

> *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*
>
> **Ezra 7:10**

Nehemiah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Nehemiah (with Ezra) • Date: c. 430 BC • Chapters: 13

> *Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
>
> **Nehemiah 8:10**

Part One: Introduction to Nehemiah

The Name and the Book

Nehemiah means "the LORD comforts." The book is largely Nehemiah's personal memoir, written in the first person ("I"). In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were one book; Ezra restored the temple and the law, and Nehemiah restored the walls and the community. Chronologically, Nehemiah is the last historical book of the Old Testament, closing the history of Israel before the 400 years of silence until Christ.

The Man

Nehemiah was "the king's cupbearer" (1:11) to Artaxerxes I of Persia, in the palace at Shushan (Susa). The cupbearer tasted the king's wine to guard against poison and was often a trusted adviser with direct access to the king. Nehemiah gave up a position of comfort and influence to rebuild a ruined city. He was a man of prayer, planning, courage, integrity and action, and one of the great leaders in Scripture. He served as governor of Judah for twelve years (5:14).

Date and Setting

Event	Date	Reference
News of Jerusalem's broken walls	Chisleu (Nov-Dec), 20th year of Artaxerxes, 445 BC	1:1-3
Nehemiah's request to the king	Nisan (Mar-Apr), 444 BC	2:1
Walls completed in 52 days	25th of Elul (about Sept-Oct), 444 BC	6:15
Nehemiah's first term as governor	444-432 BC	5:14; 13:6
Return to Persia	32nd year of Artaxerxes, 432 BC	13:6
Second visit and reforms	Some time after 432 BC	13:7-31

About thirteen years before, Ezra had come to teach the law (Ezra 7, 458/457 BC). An earlier attempt to rebuild the walls had been stopped by Artaxerxes himself after accusations from Judah's enemies (Ezra 4:7-23). Now the same king authorised the work. The prophet Malachi ministered in this same period and condemned the same sins Nehemiah confronted: corrupt priests, neglected tithes and mixed marriages (Malachi 1-3; Nehemiah 13).

Confirmation from History

The **Elephantine Papyri**, letters written by a Jewish community in Egypt around 407 BC, mention "Sanballat governor of Samaria" and "Johanan the high priest" in Jerusalem (compare Nehemiah 12:22; 13:28). An inscription naming Geshem king of Kedar, an Arabian ruler, has also been found. These match the opponents named in the book.

Purpose and Theme

Nehemiah shows how God uses a burdened, praying, obedient leader to restore His people's security, identity and faithfulness. The book has two halves:

- **Rebuilding the walls** (chapters 1-7): the physical restoration of Jerusalem's defences against fierce opposition.
- **Restoring the people** (chapters 8-13): the spiritual restoration of the people through God's Word, confession, covenant and reform.

Its themes include prayer joined with work ("we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch," 4:9), the power of God's Word (8), the joy of the LORD (8:10), and the need for ongoing vigilance against spiritual decline (13).

> *So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days... for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.*
>
> **Nehemiah 6:15-16**

Nehemiah and Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Daniel was told: "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" (Daniel 9:25). Nehemiah's walls were indeed built "in troublous times." Many Bible teachers date the start of the seventy weeks (of years) from Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah in 444 BC; counting 69 "weeks" of 360-day prophetic years (483 years) brings the reckoning to around AD 32-33, the time of Christ's triumphal entry and crucifixion. Others date it from the decree to Ezra (457 BC), counting 483 solar years to around AD 26-27, the start of Christ's ministry. Either way, the prophecy pointed precisely to the time of the Messiah.

Outline of Nehemiah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Rebuilding the Walls	1-7	Physical restoration
Nehemiah's burden and prayer	1	Weeping, fasting, confessing
Nehemiah's request and inspection	2	The king's permission; the night ride
The builders and the gates	3	Everyone at his place
Opposition from outside	4	Mockery, threats; prayer and watch
Problems inside	5	Exploitation of the poor; Nehemiah's example
Personal attacks; the wall finished	6	"I am doing a great work"
Security and the register	7	Gates, guards and genealogies
II. Restoring the People	8-13	Spiritual restoration
The Word read and explained	8	"The joy of the LORD is your strength"
Confession	9	The great prayer of the Levites

Section	Chapters	Theme
Covenant	10	A written commitment
Repopulating Jerusalem	11	Volunteers for the city
Dedication of the wall	12	Two great choirs; joy heard afar off
Reforms after relapse	13	Tobiah, tithes, the Sabbath, marriages

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Rebuilding the Walls (Chapters 1-7)

Chapter 1 — Nehemiah's Burden and Prayer

In the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah's brother Hanani arrived from Judah. Nehemiah asked about the Jews and Jerusalem, and heard: "The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire" (1:2-3). Ninety years after the first return, the city was still defenceless and its people despised.

> *And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven*
>
> **Nehemiah 1:4**

Nehemiah's response was not anger or complaint, but grief that led to prayer. His prayer (1:5-11) is a model:

- **Worship:** "O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him" (1:5).
- **Persistence:** "which I pray before thee now, day and night" (1:6).
- **Confession that includes himself:** "both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against thee" (1:6-7).
- **Claiming God's promises:** "Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me... yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen" (1:8-9; Deuteronomy 30:1-4).
- **Appeal to God's relationship with His people:** "Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed" (1:10).
- **A specific request:** "prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man" (1:11).

"For I was the king's cupbearer" (1:11): God had placed him exactly where he needed to be (compare Esther 4:14). He prayed for about four months before acting (1:1; 2:1).

Chapter 2 — The King's Permission and the Night Inspection

In Nisan, as Nehemiah served wine, the king noticed his sadness: "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart." Showing sorrow before a Persian king was dangerous. "Then I was very sore afraid" (2:1-2). Nehemiah explained that the city of his fathers' graves lay waste (2:3). The king asked, "For what dost thou make request?"

> *So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king... that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.*

> **Nehemiah 2:4-5**

Between the king's question and his answer, Nehemiah sent up a silent "arrow prayer." Four months of prayer prepared him for that moment. He had a plan ready: he asked for a set time, letters for safe passage to the governors beyond the river, and a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, for timber for the gates, the wall and his own house (2:6-8). "And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me" (2:8). Prayer and planning go together.

The king also sent army officers and horsemen with him (2:9). When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite heard, "it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel" (2:10). After three days in Jerusalem, Nehemiah went out by night with a few men, telling no one what God had put in his heart, and inspected the ruined walls and burned gates, even where his animal could not pass (2:11-16). Wise leaders see the problem for themselves before they speak.

Then he called the leaders: "Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste... come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach" (2:17). He told them of God's good hand and the king's words. They answered, "Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work" (2:18). When Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem the Arabian mocked and accused them of rebellion, Nehemiah answered:

> *The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.*
>
> **Nehemiah 2:20**

Chapter 3 — Everyone at His Place

This chapter lists about forty groups who rebuilt sections of the wall and its ten gates. It begins with the high priest: "Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it" (3:1). Leaders led by example. Workers came from many towns and every walk of life: priests, Levites, rulers, goldsmiths, perfumers (apothecaries), merchants, and "Shallum... he and his daughters" (3:12). Many repaired the section "over against his house" (3:10, 23, 28-30), starting where they lived. One man "earnestly repaired" his part (3:20). But "the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord" (3:5). The Tekoites themselves did double duty (3:27). The work was organised, shared, and done side by side ("next unto them"). The church is likewise built by every member doing their part (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:16).

Gate	Nehemiah	Often Applied Devotionally To
Sheep Gate	3:1, 32	The sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb (John 10:7, 11); near the pool of Bethesda (John 5:2)
Fish Gate	3:3	Evangelism: "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19)
Old Gate	3:6	The old paths of truth (Jeremiah 6:16)
Valley Gate	3:13	Humility and trials (Psalm 23:4)
Dung Gate	3:14	Cleansing from sin (2 Corinthians 7:1)
Fountain Gate	3:15	The Holy Spirit, living water (John 7:37-39)

Gate	Nehemiah	Often Applied Devotionally To
Water Gate	3:26; 8:1	The Word of God (Ephesians 5:26)
Horse Gate	3:28	Spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18)
East Gate	3:29	The coming of the Lord (Ezekiel 43:1-4)
Gate Miphkad ("inspection")	3:31	The judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10)

These applications are devotional illustrations, not the original meaning of the text, but they have long been used by preachers to teach Christian truth. Notably, the chapter begins and ends at the Sheep Gate (3:1, 32).

Chapter 4 — Opposition from Outside

Sanballat was furious and mocked the Jews before the army of Samaria: "What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?" (4:2). Tobiah added, "if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall" (4:3). Nehemiah did not argue with them; he prayed, "Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head" (4:4-5).

> *So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.*
>
> **Nehemiah 4:6**

When mockery failed, the enemies conspired to attack (4:7-8).

> *Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.*
>
> **Nehemiah 4:9**

Prayer and practical precaution are not opposed (Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray"). Then discouragement came from within: "The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall" (4:10). The Jews living near the enemy repeated the threats "ten times" (4:12). Nehemiah stationed people by families with swords, spears and bows in the exposed places, and said:

> *Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.*
>
> **Nehemiah 4:14**

God frustrated the enemy's plan, and everyone returned to work (4:15). From then on, half the men worked and half stood guard; "every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon," and builders wore their swords (4:16-18). A trumpeter stayed with Nehemiah to rally them wherever an attack came: "our God shall fight for us" (4:19-20). They worked from dawn until the stars appeared, and no one took off his clothes except for washing (4:21-23). The Christian

likewise builds and battles, with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).

Chapter 5 — Problems Inside: Exploitation of the Poor

A greater danger arose from within: "there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews" (5:1). Because of famine and the king's taxes, poor families had mortgaged their fields, vineyards and houses, and some had sold their children into slavery to fellow Jews who charged interest (5:2-5). Nehemiah was "very angry," but "consulted with myself" before acting (5:6-7). He rebuked the nobles and rulers: "Ye exact usury, every one of his brother" (5:7), against God's law (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-37). He called a great assembly: "It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?" (5:9). He commanded them to restore the lands and the interest at once (5:11). They agreed, and he had the priests put them under oath. He shook out his garment: "So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise," and all the congregation said "Amen" (5:12-13).

Nehemiah's own example gave him authority. For twelve years as governor, he and his family did not eat the governor's food allowance. Earlier governors had burdened the people, "but so did not I, because of the fear of God" (5:14-15). He worked on the wall himself, bought no land, and fed 150 Jewish leaders and visitors at his own table every day at his own expense, "because the bondage was heavy upon this people" (5:16-18). "Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people" (5:19). Godly leaders serve rather than exploit (1 Peter 5:2-3; Mark 10:42-45).

Chapter 6 — Personal Attacks; the Wall Finished

With only the gates left, the enemies targeted Nehemiah himself.

- **Distraction (6:1-4).** Sanballat and Geshem invited him to meet in the plain of Ono, "But they thought to do me mischief." He replied:

> *I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?*
>
> **Nehemiah 6:3**

They asked four times, and four times he gave the same answer.

- **Slander (6:5-9).** The fifth time, Sanballat sent an open letter claiming Nehemiah planned to rebel and make himself king, and had hired prophets to proclaim him. Nehemiah replied, "There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart," and prayed, "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands" (6:8-9).
- **Intimidation through a false prophet (6:10-14).** Shemaiah urged him to hide in the temple to save his life. Nehemiah refused: "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in" (6:11). As a layman, entering the holy place would have been sin (Numbers 18:7). "And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him... for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him... that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin" (6:12-13). The prophetess Noadiah and other prophets also tried to frighten him (6:14).

> *So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof... they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.*
>
> **Nehemiah 6:15-16**

Even the enemies recognised God's hand. Yet treachery continued: some nobles of Judah, related to Tobiah by marriage, kept up correspondence with him and praised him to Nehemiah, while Tobiah sent letters to frighten him (6:17-19).

Chapter 7 — Security and the Register

With the wall built and the doors set, Nehemiah appointed gatekeepers, singers and Levites (7:1). He placed his brother Hanani and Hananiah, the commander of the citadel, in charge of Jerusalem, "for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many" (7:2). He gave instructions: the gates were not to be opened until the sun was hot, and residents were to keep watch, each "over against his house" (7:3). "Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded" (7:4). "And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy" (7:5). He found the register of the first returnees under Zerubbabel and recorded it (7:6-73), essentially the same list as Ezra 2. The walls were built; now the city needed people, and the people needed renewal.

Section II: Restoring the People (Chapters 8-13)

Chapter 8 — The Word Read and Explained

In the seventh month, "all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses" (8:1). The people asked for the Word. Ezra read it from early morning until midday to men, women "and all that could hear with understanding; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law" (8:2-3). He stood on "a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose" (8:4). "And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people... and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground" (8:5-6). The Levites moved among the people helping them understand:

> *So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*
>
> **Nehemiah 8:8**

This is the pattern of faithful Bible teaching: read the text clearly, explain its meaning, and help people understand and apply it. Many of the people, after the exile, spoke Aramaic and needed explanation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus did the same with His disciples: "he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself... Did not our heart burn within us... while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:27, 32).

As they understood the law, the people wept, convicted of sin (8:9). But Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites said:

> *This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep... Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
>
> **Nehemiah 8:9-10**

This was the Feast of Trumpets, a day of celebration (Leviticus 23:24). Conviction is meant to lead to rejoicing in God's grace. "And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them" (8:12). Understanding God's Word produced joy and generosity.

On the second day the leaders studied further and found the command to keep the Feast of Tabernacles by living in booths (8:13-15; Leviticus 23:39-43). The people built booths on their roofs, in their courtyards and in the courts of God's house. "For since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness" (8:16-17), meaning the feast had not been kept with such fullness and joy since Joshua's time. Ezra read from the book every day of the feast (8:18). Jesus later stood up on the last day of this feast and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:2, 37-38).

Chapter 9 — The Great Prayer of Confession

On the 24th day of the month, the people assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, with earth on their heads. They separated themselves from foreigners, "and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers" (9:1-2). For a quarter of the day they read the law, and for another quarter they confessed and worshipped (9:3). Then the Levites led one of the longest prayers in the Bible (9:5-38), a sweeping review of Israel's history that contrasts God's faithfulness with the people's unfaithfulness:

> *Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein... and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*
>
> **Nehemiah 9:5-6**

The prayer recounts:

- **Creation** and God's sovereignty (9:6).
- **The call of Abraham**, whose heart God "foundest... faithful," and the covenant (9:7-8).
- **The Exodus, the Red Sea and Sinai**, with "right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments" (9:9-14).
- **Bread from heaven and water from the rock** (9:15).
- **The wilderness rebellion and the golden calf**, yet "thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not" (9:16-19; Exodus 34:6-7).

- **God's faithful care**: "Forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not" (9:21).
- **The conquest of Canaan** (9:22-25).
- **Rebellion and rejection of the prophets**: they "cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets" (9:26).
- **The cycle of the judges**: oppression, crying out, deliverance, "many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies" (9:27-28).
- **God's patience**: "many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets" (9:30), yet "for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them" (9:31).
- **Confession and acceptance of judgment**: "Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly" (9:33).
- **Present distress**: "Behold, we are servants this day... and we are in great distress" (9:36-37).

"And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it" (9:38). Compare the similar prayers of Ezra 9 and Daniel 9, and Stephen's review of Israel's history (Acts 7).

Chapter 10 — The Covenant Sealed

Nehemiah the governor signed first, followed by priests, Levites and leaders (10:1-27). The rest of the people, "every one having knowledge, and having understanding," joined them, entering "into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law" (10:28-29). Their specific commitments were:

- **No marriages with the peoples of the land** (10:30; Deuteronomy 7:3).
- **No buying or selling on the Sabbath or holy days** (10:31).
- **Keeping the seventh year**, letting the land rest and cancelling debts (10:31; Leviticus 25:1-7; Deuteronomy 15:1-2).
- **A yearly temple tax** of a third of a shekel for the services of God's house (10:32-33).
- **Providing wood** for the altar by lot (10:34).
- **Bringing firstfruits, firstborn and tithes** to the priests and Levites, with the Levites giving a tithe of the tithes (10:35-39).

"And we will not forsake the house of our God" (10:39). They made practical, specific commitments in the areas where they had failed. Chapter 13 shows how hard these were to keep.

Chapter 11 — Repopulating Jerusalem

The leaders lived in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one in ten to live in the holy city (11:1). Living in Jerusalem meant greater danger and sacrifice. "And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem" (11:2). The chapter lists the families who settled in Jerusalem (11:3-24) and the towns of Judah and Benjamin (11:25-36).

Chapter 12 — The Dedication of the Wall

The chapter lists the priests and Levites from Zerubbabel's time onward (12:1-26). The list includes Jaddua the high priest (12:11, 22), who according to Josephus was high priest when Alexander the Great came to Jerusalem; the list was evidently updated in later years.

For the dedication of the wall, the Levites and singers were gathered from all their villages "to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps" (12:27-29). The priests and Levites purified themselves, the people, the gates and the wall (12:30). Nehemiah organised "two great companies of them that gave thanks" who processed on top of the wall in opposite directions: Ezra the scribe went before one (12:31-37), and Nehemiah followed the other (12:38-39). They met at the house of God (12:40).

> *Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.*
>
> **Nehemiah 12:43**

The wall that enemies had mocked (4:3) now carried singing choirs. Men were appointed over the storerooms for the offerings, firstfruits and tithes for the priests and Levites, "for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited" (12:44-47).

Chapter 13 — Reforms After Relapse

At a public reading of the law, the people heard that "the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever," because they had hired Balaam to curse Israel, "howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing" (13:1-2; Deuteronomy 23:3-5). They separated the mixed multitude from Israel (13:3).

Nehemiah had returned to Artaxerxes in the 32nd year of his reign (13:6). When he came back to Jerusalem after some time, he found that the spiritual gains had been eroded:

- **Tobiah in the temple (13:4-9).** Eliashib the priest, related to Tobiah, had given that Ammonite enemy a great chamber in the courts of God's house, where the offerings and tithes had been stored. "It grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber" (13:8). He had the rooms cleansed and the temple vessels restored (13:9). Jesus also drove out those who had turned His Father's house into "a house of merchandise" (John 2:13-17).
- **Neglected Levites (13:10-14).** The Levites' portions had not been given, so they had left the temple to work their fields. "Why is the house of God forsaken?" Nehemiah asked (13:11; compare 10:39). He restored the tithes and appointed faithful treasurers (13:12-13). "Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God" (13:14).
- **Sabbath-breaking (13:15-22).** People were treading winepresses, carrying loads, and trading in Jerusalem on the Sabbath, and men of Tyre sold fish there (13:15-16). Nehemiah rebuked the nobles: "Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city?" (13:17-18; compare Jeremiah 17:21-27). He had the gates shut before the Sabbath began and kept closed until it ended, and warned the traders camping outside the wall that he would arrest them (13:19-21). "Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy" (13:22).

- **Mixed marriages again (13:23-29).** Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab, and half their children "spake in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language" (13:23-24). Nehemiah "contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God" not to make such marriages (13:25). He reminded them: "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God... nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin" (13:26). Even a grandson of the high priest had married Sanballat's daughter; Nehemiah drove him out (13:28). "Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood" (13:29).

Nehemiah cleansed the priesthood, restored the duties of priests and Levites, and provided for the wood offering and firstfruits (13:30-31). The book, and the Old Testament's historical narrative, ends with his prayer: "Remember me, O my God, for good" (13:31).

The ending is honest: even after revival, covenant and great joy, the people slid back into the same sins within a few years. Reform requires constant vigilance. Malachi, prophesying in the same period, shows that the problems ran deep (Malachi 1:6-14; 2:11-16; 3:8-10). The Old Testament closes not with a perfectly restored people, but with a longing for the One who would truly cleanse the temple, purify the priesthood and change hearts (Malachi 3:1-3).

Part Three: Christ in Nehemiah

Nehemiah as a Picture of Christ

Nehemiah was a sinful man (1:6), but his mission and character point to Christ:

Nehemiah	Nehemiah	Christ	New Testament
Left the comfort of the king's palace	1:11; 2:5	Left the glory of heaven	Philippians 2:6-7; 2 Corinthians 8:9
Wept over the condition of Jerusalem	1:4	Wept over Jerusalem	Luke 19:41
Interceded for the people, confessing their sins	1:5-11	Intercedes for His people; bore their sins	Hebrews 7:25; Isaiah 53:12
Sent by the king with authority	2:6-9	Sent by the Father	John 20:21; 5:36
Came "to seek the welfare" of God's people	2:10	"To seek and to save that which was lost"	Luke 19:10
Mocked and opposed by the rulers	2:19; 4:1-3	Mocked and opposed by the rulers	Matthew 27:41; John 11:47-53
Refused to "come down" from the great work	6:3	Refused to come down from the cross	Matthew 27:40-42
Falsely accused of wanting to be king	6:6-7	Falsely accused before Pilate of making Himself a king	Luke 23:2; John 19:12
Did not burden the people but served them at his own expense	5:14-18	"Came not to be ministered unto, but to minister"	Mark 10:45
Finished the work	6:15	"It is finished"; "I have finished the work"	John 19:30; 17:4
Cleansed the temple	13:8-9	Cleansed the temple	John 2:13-17
Purified the priesthood	13:29-30	Purifies the sons of Levi; makes believers a holy priesthood	Malachi 3:3; 1 Peter 2:5

The Word Opened (Chapter 8)

Ezra read the Scriptures, and the Levites "gave the sense, and caused them to understand" (8:8). Christ, the living Word, opened the Scriptures to His disciples and "opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke 24:45). The joy that followed understanding (8:12) is the joy Christ gives: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

The Sheep Gate

The rebuilding began and ended at the Sheep Gate, near the temple, where sacrificial lambs were brought in (3:1, 32). In the New Testament, the pool of Bethesda was "by the sheep market [gate]" (John 5:2), where Jesus healed a man lame for 38 years. Jesus said, "I am the door of the sheep... I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:7, 11).

The Feast of Tabernacles

The joyful Feast of Tabernacles of chapter 8 pointed to God dwelling with His people. Christ "tabernacled among us" (John 1:14), offered living water at this very feast (John 7:37-39), and the final fulfillment will be when "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (Revelation 21:3; Zechariah 14:16).

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The decree to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, carried out "in troublous times" (Daniel 9:25), is widely seen as the starting point of the prophecy that set the time for "Messiah the Prince" to come and be "cut off, but not for himself" (Daniel 9:26). Nehemiah's walls are linked by prophecy to the cross.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy or Promise	Source	Fulfillment
God will gather the scattered when they turn to Him	Deuteronomy 30:1-4	1:8-9; 7:5-73
The street and wall rebuilt in troublous times	Daniel 9:25	2-6
"Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in"	Isaiah 58:12	2:17-6:15
"The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee"	Isaiah 60:10	2:7-9 (the king's provision)
The city rebuilt from the tower of Hananeel	Jeremiah 31:38	3:1; 12:39
"The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel"	Psalm 147:2	3-7; 11
"Build thou the walls of Jerusalem"	Psalm 51:18	6:15
God will turn the curse into a blessing	Deuteronomy 23:5	13:2
"The God of heaven, he will prosper us"	2:20	6:15-16

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Nehemiah 1 — A Burden Turned into Prayer

Nehemiah's burden began with caring enough to ask (1:2), grieving when he heard (1:4), and praying persistently for months (1:6; 2:1). His prayer combined adoration, confession, God's promises and a specific request. Effective service for God begins on our knees.

Nehemiah 2:4 — Prayer in the Moment

"So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king." A silent prayer in a split second, backed by months of prayer beforehand. God hears the brief cry as well as the long intercession (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Nehemiah 4 — Building and Battling

The opposition came in stages: anger and mockery (4:1-3), conspiracy (4:7-8), discouragement from within (4:10), fear (4:11-12). Nehemiah's response: prayer (4:4, 9), watchfulness (4:9), encouragement from God's character ("remember the Lord," 4:14), organisation (4:13, 16-20) and perseverance (4:21-23). "Except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Psalm 127:1).

Nehemiah 6:3 — "I Am Doing a Great Work"

Nehemiah recognised distractions disguised as invitations. He refused to leave his God-given task for meetings with enemies, slander or fear. He kept his focus. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

Nehemiah 8 — Revival Through the Word

The revival began with the people's hunger for Scripture (8:1), reverence for it (8:5-6), clear explanation (8:8), conviction (8:9), joy (8:10-12) and obedience (8:14-17). It led to confession (9) and commitment (10). Every lasting revival is a return to God's Word.

Nehemiah 8:10 — The Joy of the LORD Is Your Strength

The joy is "of the LORD": joy that comes from Him and is found in Him, not in circumstances. It gives strength to obey, to serve, to resist and to endure (Psalm 16:11; Habakkuk 3:17-19; Philippians 4:4; Hebrews 12:2).

Nehemiah 13 — The Need for Continual Vigilance

Within a short time, the people broke every major commitment of chapter 10: the house of God was neglected, the Sabbath profaned and mixed marriages renewed. Spiritual victories must be guarded (1 Corinthians 10:12; Revelation 2:4-5). Nehemiah's repeated prayer, "Remember me, O my God," shows his reliance on God's mercy rather than on his own success.

Part Six: Leadership Lessons from Nehemiah

Principle	Nehemiah	Application
Begin with a God-given burden	1:3-4	Care deeply about God's work and people
Pray first, and keep praying	1:4-11; 2:4; 4:4, 9; 6:9	Every step bathed in prayer
Plan carefully	2:5-8	Know what is needed before you ask
Recognise God's hand	2:8, 18	Give God the credit
Assess the situation personally	2:11-16	See the problem before announcing the solution
Cast a vision and motivate	2:17-18	"Let us rise up and build"
Organise and delegate	3; 7:1-2	Everyone has a place; appoint faithful people
Face opposition with prayer and watchfulness	4:9	Trust God and take sensible precautions
Deal with injustice inside the community	5:1-13	Problems within are often more dangerous than those outside
Lead by example and with integrity	5:14-18	Serve rather than exploit
Stay focused on the main task	6:3	Refuse distractions
Discern false counsel	6:10-13	Test what claims to be from God
Put the Word at the centre	8	Read it, explain it, obey it
Follow through and confront relapse	13	Lasting change needs ongoing leadership

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Nehemiah

1. Prayer and Action Together

Nehemiah prayed constantly and worked diligently (4:9). Faith does not replace effort; it directs and strengthens it.

2. God's Sovereign Hand

"The good hand of my God upon me" (2:8, 18). God moved a king, protected the builders, and frustrated the enemies (4:15; 6:16).

3. The Power and Centrality of God's Word

The people's renewal came through the reading and explaining of Scripture (8:8), which produced conviction, joy, confession and commitment.

4. The Joy of the LORD

God's people are to rejoice in Him (8:10, 12, 17; 12:43). Joy is both a fruit of understanding God's Word and a source of strength.

5. Opposition to God's Work

Opposition came from outside (mockery, threats, slander, false prophets) and inside (discouragement, injustice, compromise). God's work always faces resistance, but God gives victory (6:16).

6. Social Justice Among God's People

Nehemiah condemned exploitation of the poor by fellow believers (5). Caring for the vulnerable is part of godliness (James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17).

7. Confession and Covenant

The great prayer of chapter 9 and the covenant of chapter 10 show that true repentance acknowledges God's justice, confesses sin specifically, and leads to concrete commitments.

8. Separation and Holiness

Separation from idolatrous influence (9:2; 10:30; 13:3, 23-30) protected the identity of God's people and the line of the Messiah (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

9. Faithfulness in Giving and Worship

Tithes, offerings and the support of those who serve in God's house mattered (10:32-39; 12:44-47; 13:10-13). "Why is the house of God forsaken?" (13:11).

10. The Danger of Spiritual Relapse

Chapter 13 shows how quickly reformation can be lost. Only God can truly change hearts, pointing to the need for the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26).

Part Eight: Connections — How Nehemiah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Nehemiah in the New Testament

Nehemiah	New Testament	Use
3:1, 32 (the Sheep Gate)	John 5:2; 10:7, 11	The sheep market (gate); Christ the door and good shepherd
4:9 (pray and watch)	Matthew 26:41; Ephesians 6:18	"Watch and pray"
4:17 (building with a weapon)	Ephesians 6:17	The sword of the Spirit
5:14-18 (serving, not taking)	1 Peter 5:2-3; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9; Mark 10:45	Leaders as examples
6:3 (not coming down)	Matthew 27:40-42	"Come down from the cross"
6:6-7 (accused of making himself king)	Luke 23:2; John 19:12	Christ accused of the same
6:9 (strengthen my hands)	Ephesians 6:10	"Be strong in the Lord"
8:8 (giving the sense)	Luke 24:27, 32, 45; Acts 8:30-35; 2 Timothy 4:2	Opening and explaining the Scriptures
8:10 (the joy of the LORD)	John 15:11; Philippians 4:4; Romans 15:13	Joy in the Lord
8:14-17 (Tabernacles)	John 7:2, 37-39	Living water at the feast
9 (Israel's history reviewed)	Acts 7; 13:16-41	Stephen and Paul review Israel's history
9:26 (the prophets slain)	Matthew 23:37; Acts 7:52	Killing the prophets
13:8-9 (the temple cleansed)	John 2:13-17; Matthew 21:12-13	Christ cleanses the temple
13:15-22 (the Sabbath)	Mark 2:27; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 4:9-10	The Sabbath and true rest
13:23-27 (mixed marriages)	2 Corinthians 6:14-18	Not unequally yoked
Daniel's seventy weeks	Galatians 4:4	"When the fulness of the time was come"

Nehemiah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Abraham's call and covenant (12; 15; Nehemiah 9:7-8)
Exodus	The Exodus, Sinai, manna, water and the golden calf (Nehemiah 9:9-18); God "slow to anger" (34:6-7; Nehemiah 9:17); usury forbidden (22:25)
Leviticus	The Feast of Trumpets and Tabernacles (23:24, 39-43; Nehemiah 8); the sabbatical year and the poor (25)
Numbers	Balaam hired against Israel (22-24; Nehemiah 13:2); tithes for the Levites (18:21-32); only priests in the holy place (18:7; Nehemiah 6:11)
Deuteronomy	The promise of regathering (30:1-4; Nehemiah 1:8-9); Ammonites and Moabites excluded (23:3-5; Nehemiah 13:1-2); no intermarriage (7:3)
Joshua	The Feast of Tabernacles since Joshua's days (Nehemiah 8:17); covenant renewals
Judges	The cycle of sin and deliverance (Nehemiah 9:26-28)
1 Kings	Solomon led astray by foreign wives (11:1-8; Nehemiah 13:26)
2 Chronicles	The prophets rejected until there was no remedy (36:15-16; Nehemiah 9:26-30)
Ezra	One book with Nehemiah; the opposition that stopped the walls (4:7-23); Ezra 2 repeated in Nehemiah 7; Ezra reads the law (Nehemiah 8)
Esther	The same Persian court at Shushan (1:2; Nehemiah 1:1)
Psalms	Psalm 51:18 ("build thou the walls of Jerusalem"); 122 (pray for the peace of Jerusalem); 126 (the return); 127:1 ("except the LORD keep the city"); 147:2 (the LORD builds up Jerusalem)
Isaiah	The repairer of the breach (58:12); strangers building the walls (60:10); watchmen on the walls (62:6-7); the Sabbath honoured (58:13-14)
Jeremiah	Burdens through the gates on the Sabbath (17:21-27; Nehemiah 13:15-22); the city rebuilt (31:38-40)
Lamentations	The broken walls and gates mourned (2:8-9)
Daniel	The command to restore and build Jerusalem in troublous times (9:25); a similar prayer of confession (9:4-19)
Malachi	The same era and the same sins: corrupt priests, neglected tithes, intermarriage and divorce (1-3)

Themes That Run from Nehemiah Through Scripture

Theme	In Nehemiah	Developed	Fulfilled
Rebuilding God's city	2-6	Psalm 147:2; Isaiah 58:12	Hebrews 11:10; Revelation 21:2
Prayer and watchfulness	1; 4:9	Psalm 127:1	Matthew 26:41; Ephesians 6:18
The Word explained	8:8	Psalm 119:130	Luke 24:27, 45; 2 Timothy 4:2

Theme	In Nehemiah	Developed	Fulfilled
The joy of the LORD	8:10; 12:43	Psalm 16:11; Isaiah 61:10	John 15:11; 1 Peter 1:8
Confession of national sin	9	Ezra 9; Daniel 9	1 John 1:9
Covenant commitment	10	Joshua 24; Jeremiah 31:31-33	Hebrews 8:6-13
Cleansing God's house	13:8-9	Malachi 3:1-3	John 2:13-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
Servant leadership	5:14-18	Ezekiel 34	Mark 10:42-45; 1 Peter 5:2-3

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **Ask about God's work, and let it burden you** (1:2-4).
- **Pray before you plan, and plan after you pray** (1:4-2:8).
- **Pray in the moment** (2:4).
- **Give God the credit** (2:8, 18).
- **Look at the problem honestly** (2:11-16).
- **Start where you are; build over against your own house** (3:10, 28).
- **Don't be like the nobles who wouldn't stoop to work** (3:5).
- **Pray and set a watch** (4:9).
- **Remember the Lord when you are afraid** (4:14).
- **Deal with injustice among God's people** (5:6-13).
- **Lead by example; don't use your position for gain** (5:14-18).
- **Refuse to come down from the great work** (6:3).
- **Ask God to strengthen your hands** (6:9).
- **Test every message, even religious ones** (6:12).
- **Appoint faithful people who fear God** (7:2).
- **Hunger for God's Word and seek to understand it** (8:1-8).
- **Let the joy of the LORD be your strength** (8:10).
- **Share with those who have nothing** (8:10-12).
- **Confess sin honestly; acknowledge God is just** (9:33).
- **Make specific commitments** (10).
- **Don't forsake the house of your God** (10:39; 13:11).
- **Guard your gains; relapse is always possible** (13).
- **Ask God to remember you for good** (13:31).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:4	I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven
2:4	So I prayed to the God of heaven.
2:18	Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.
2:20	The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build
4:6	So built we the wall... for the people had a mind to work.
4:9	Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night
4:14	Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible
6:3	I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down
6:16	They perceived that this work was wrought of our God.
8:8	So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.
8:10	Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.
9:17	But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness

Conclusion

Nehemiah closes the history of the Old Testament. A cupbearer in a Persian palace heard of Jerusalem's broken walls, wept, prayed, and then acted. With the king's permission and God's good hand upon him, he led the people to rebuild the walls in 52 days despite mockery, threats, slander and internal injustice. Then, with Ezra, he led the people back to God's Word, which brought conviction, joy, confession and covenant. Yet the book ends honestly, with the same sins returning and Nehemiah fighting them again, praying, "Remember me, O my God, for good." The walls could be rebuilt by human effort, but hearts needed a greater work. That work would come through the One whose coming Daniel's prophecy timed from these very walls: Jesus Christ, who left the glory of heaven, wept over Jerusalem, refused to come down from His great work on the cross, cleansed the temple, and gives His people the joy that is their strength.

> *Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
>
> **Nehemiah 8:10**

Esther

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Uncertain (perhaps Mordecai) • Date: c. 470-400 BC • Chapters: 10

> *And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*
>
> **Esther 4:14**

Part One: Introduction to Esther

The Name

The book is named after its heroine, a Jewish orphan who became queen of Persia. Her Hebrew name was Hadassah, "myrtle"; her Persian name, Esther, is usually taken to mean "star" (2:7). Esther and Ruth are the only books of the Bible named after women. Ruth was a Gentile who married into Israel; Esther was a Jew who married a Gentile king.

Author and Date

The author is not named. Suggestions include Mordecai, who "wrote these things" (9:20), or a later Jewish writer with access to Persian records, since the book refers to "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia" (10:2). It was probably written in the Persian period, not long after the events, around 470-400 BC.

Historical Setting

King Ahasuerus is Xerxes I, who ruled the Persian Empire from 486 to 465 BC, "from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces" (1:1). The events of Esther took place between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra, after the first return under Zerubbabel and before Ezra's return. Most Jews had chosen to remain in the lands of their exile; this book tells what happened to them.

Event	Year of Xerxes	Date	Reference
The great feast; Vashti deposed	3rd year	483 BC	1:3
Xerxes' failed invasion of Greece (Salamis)	6th year	480 BC	Not in Esther
Esther made queen	7th year	479 BC	2:16
Haman casts lots; decree against the Jews	12th year	474 BC	3:7, 12
The Jews' deliverance; Purim established	12th-13th year	473 BC	9:1, 17-28

The Greek historian Herodotus describes Xerxes as a ruler of lavish banquets and sudden anger, consistent with the king in Esther. He also describes the Persian courier system (compare 3:13; 8:10, 14) and the king's seven chief advisers (compare 1:14; Ezra 7:14). Excavations at Susa (Shushan) have uncovered the royal palace complex. A Persian administrative tablet from this period mentions an official named Marduka at Susa, which some scholars link with Mordecai, though this is uncertain.

A Book Without God's Name

Esther is famous for never mentioning the name of God. There is no explicit prayer, no mention of the temple, the law or sacrifice, and the book is not quoted in the New Testament. Yet God's hand is visible on every page. The book teaches **providence**: God's invisible but sovereign control of events, working through ordinary choices and apparent coincidences to protect His people and fulfil His promises. As the old saying goes, God may be hidden, but He is never absent. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD" (Proverbs 21:1); "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD" (Proverbs 16:33).

Purpose and Theme

Esther explains the origin of the Jewish Feast of Purim (9:20-32), still celebrated today. More deeply, it shows God's faithfulness in preserving His covenant people, and through them the line of the promised Messiah, against an attempt at total destruction. The book is built around reversals: the proud are humbled, the humble exalted, the enemy's plot turns back on himself, and mourning is "turned... to joy" (9:22). The key verse:

> *For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*
>
> **Esther 4:14**

The Ancient Conflict: Saul and Agag

Mordecai was "the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite" (2:5), from the family of King Saul, whose father was Kish (1 Samuel 9:1). Haman was "the Agagite" (3:1), descended from Agag, king of the Amalekites, whom Saul disobediently spared (1 Samuel 15:8-9). Amalek had attacked Israel in the wilderness, and God declared, "the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:14-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19). Centuries later, a descendant of Saul's family faced a descendant of Agag. This time the outcome was different: the enemy was destroyed, and the Jews "laid not their hand on the spoil" (9:10, 15, 16), the very thing Saul had done wrong (1 Samuel 15:19).

A Book of Banquets

Esther is structured around feasts. They mark the turning points of the story:

Banquet	Reference	Significance
Ahasuerus' feast for his officials (180 days)	1:3-4	Display of Persian power
Ahasuerus' feast for Shushan (7 days)	1:5-8	Vashti refuses; deposed
Vashti's feast for the women	1:9	
Esther's coronation feast	2:18	Esther made queen
Haman and the king drink after the decree	3:15	The plot sealed

Banquet	Reference	Significance
Esther's first banquet	5:4-8	The request delayed
Esther's second banquet	7:1-10	Haman exposed and executed
The Jews' feast at the new decree	8:17	Joy and gladness
The feasts of Purim	9:17-19	Deliverance celebrated for ever

Outline of Esther

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Threat	1-4	The stage set and the danger revealed
Vashti deposed	1	A vacancy at the palace
Esther made queen; Mordecai saves the king	2	God's people in position
Haman's plot	3	A decree to destroy all Jews
Mordecai's challenge; Esther's decision	4	"For such a time as this"
II. The Triumph	5-10	The great reversal
Esther's first banquet; Haman's gallows	5	Pride before the fall
The king's sleepless night; Mordecai honoured	6	The turning point
Esther's second banquet; Haman hanged	7	The enemy caught in his own trap
The counter-decree	8	The Jews may defend themselves
Victory and the Feast of Purim	9	Sorrow turned to joy
Mordecai's greatness	10	Seeking the good of his people

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Threat (Chapters 1-4)

Chapter 1 — Vashti Deposed

In his third year, Ahasuerus held a 180-day display of "the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty" for the nobles and princes of all his provinces (1:3-4), likely while planning his campaign against Greece. It ended with a seven-day feast for all the people of Shushan, in courts hung with white, green and blue, with silver and gold couches and wine in vessels of gold (1:5-7). "And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel" (1:8). Queen Vashti held a separate feast for the women (1:9).

On the seventh day, "when the heart of the king was merry with wine," he commanded Vashti to come wearing the royal crown "to shew the people and the princes her beauty" (1:10-11). She refused (1:12). The text does not condemn her; many see her refusal as a matter of modesty and dignity before a drunken crowd. The king was furious and consulted his seven wise men (1:13-14). Memucan argued that Vashti's example would encourage all wives to despise their husbands, and advised that she be removed and her royal position given "unto another that is better than she" (1:16-19). Letters went out to every province "that every man should bear rule in his own house" (1:20-22). The most powerful man in the world could command 127 provinces but not his own wife, and a decision made in anger and wine opened the way for God's plan. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand" (Proverbs 19:21).

Chapter 2 — Esther Made Queen; Mordecai Saves the King

When his anger cooled, the king "remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her" (2:1). His servants proposed gathering beautiful young virgins from every province to the palace, so that the one who pleased the king could be queen (2:2-4).

Mordecai, a Benjamite in Shushan, was descended from those carried away with Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar (2:5-6; 2 Kings 24:14-15). He had raised his orphaned cousin Hadassah, "fair and beautiful," as his own daughter (2:7). She was taken into the king's house under the care of Hegai, the keeper of the women, who favoured her and gave her the best place (2:8-9). "Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it" (2:10). Mordecai walked daily before the court of the women's house to learn how she was (2:11).

Each woman underwent twelve months of beauty treatment before going to the king (2:12). When her turn came, Esther "required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain... appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her" (2:15). She was taken to the king in the tenth month of his seventh year (2:16).

> *And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.*
>
> **Esther 2:17**

The king held a great feast and granted a release to the provinces (2:18). Esther still kept her identity secret, obeying Mordecai "like as when she was brought up with him" (2:20).

Mordecai "sat in the king's gate" (2:19, 21), likely as a royal official. He learned that two of the king's doorkeepers, Bigthan and Teresh, were plotting to kill Ahasuerus. He told Esther, who told the king "in Mordecai's name." The plot was confirmed, the conspirators hanged, "and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king" (2:21-23). Mordecai received no reward at the time. That unrewarded deed would become the hinge of the whole story (6:1-3).

A note on Esther's situation. Christians have asked whether Esther and Mordecai should have taken part in a pagan king's harem, concealed their identity, or married outside Israel. Scripture does not comment directly. Esther was an orphan in exile under an absolute monarch, likely with little choice. The book does not present her as a perfect model in every respect, but shows God working through people in difficult circumstances, as He did with Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon.

Chapter 3 — Haman's Plot

"After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes" (3:1). All the king's servants bowed to Haman by the king's command, "But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence" (3:2). When asked why, he told them he was a Jew (3:3-4). Jews normally showed respect to kings and officials (1 Samuel 24:8; 2 Samuel 14:4), so Mordecai's refusal was probably because Haman was an Amalekite, the age-old enemy of God's people, and perhaps because the honour demanded bordered on worship.

"Haman was full of wrath" (3:5), but he "thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone"; he decided to destroy "all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom" (3:6). In the first month of the twelfth year, Haman had "Pur, that is, the lot" cast to choose the day, and it fell on the twelfth month, Adar, eleven months away (3:7). The lot that Haman trusted gave God's people almost a year to respond. Haman then went to the king:

> *There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.*
>
> **Esther 3:8**

This mixture of truth and lies has been the pattern of antisemitic accusation through history: they are different, therefore disloyal, therefore dangerous. Haman did not even name the people. He offered 10,000 talents of silver to the king's treasury, a vast sum (3:9). The king gave Haman his signet ring and said, "The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee" (3:10-11).

On the thirteenth day of the first month, the eve of Passover, the decree was written and sealed with the king's ring, and sent by couriers to every province: "to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month... and to take the spoil of them for a prey" (3:12-13). "And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed" (3:15). This was an attempt to wipe out the entire Jewish people, and with them the line through which God had promised to send the Messiah. It was another chapter in the ancient enmity between the serpent's seed and the woman's Seed (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 12:13-17).

Chapter 4 — "For Such a Time as This"

When Mordecai learned of the decree, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city with "a loud and a bitter cry," as far as the king's gate (4:1-2). "And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes" (4:3). Though prayer is not named, fasting in sackcloth was the outward sign of crying to God (Joel 2:12-13; Jonah 3:5-8).

Esther, who did not know of the decree, sent clothes to Mordecai, but he refused them (4:4). Through her servant Hatach, Mordecai sent her the full account, the exact sum Haman had promised, and a copy of the decree, and charged her "to go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people" (4:5-8). Esther replied that anyone who entered the king's inner court uncalled would be put to death, unless the king held out the golden sceptre, "but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days" (4:9-11). Mordecai answered:

> *Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*
>
> **Esther 4:13-14**

Mordecai was certain the Jews would be delivered; God's covenant guaranteed it. The only question was whether Esther would be part of it. Her position was not an accident but a calling. Esther made her decision:

> *Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*
>
> **Esther 4:16**

She asked for the support of God's people, joined them in fasting, and committed herself to act at the risk of her life. "So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him" (4:17). The orphan who had obeyed now led.

Section II: The Triumph (Chapters 5-10)

Chapter 5 — Esther's First Banquet; Haman's Gallows

"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house" (5:1). When the king saw her, "she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre" (5:2). "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom" (5:3).

Esther did not rush. She invited the king and Haman to a banquet she had prepared (5:4-5). At the banquet the king asked again, and again she delayed, inviting them to a second banquet the next day (5:6-8). Her patience and wisdom gave time for God's providence to work, for that very night

everything would change.

Haman left "joyful and with a glad heart," but when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate, who "stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation" (5:9). At home he boasted to his wife Zeresh and his friends of his riches, his many sons, his promotions, and his exclusive invitation from the queen (5:10-12). "Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate" (5:13). Pride is never satisfied. Zeresh and his friends advised: build a gallows fifty cubits high (about 75 feet) and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai hanged on it, "then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made" (5:14).

Chapter 6 — The King's Sleepless Night

> *On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.*
>
> **Esther 6:1**

This is the turning point of the book. Of all the nights, the king could not sleep; of all the ways to pass the time, he asked for the royal records; of all the records, the reader came to the account of how Mordecai had saved the king's life (6:2). "What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?" "There is nothing done for him" (6:3). The man who keeps Israel "shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4); He kept the king of Persia awake.

At that very moment, Haman arrived in the outer court, coming early to ask the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had built (6:4). The king asked, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Haman thought, "To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?" (6:6). He described his dream: royal apparel the king had worn, the king's own horse, a royal crown, and one of the king's most noble princes leading him through the city proclaiming, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour" (6:7-9).

> *Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.*
>
> **Esther 6:10**

Haman had to lead his enemy through the streets, proclaiming his honour (6:11). Mordecai returned humbly to the king's gate; Haman hurried home "mourning, and having his head covered" (6:12). His wife and wise men now saw the truth: "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him" (6:13). Even pagans recognised that the Jews were under divine protection (compare Genesis 12:3; Numbers 23:23). While they were still talking, the king's servants arrived to rush Haman to Esther's banquet (6:14). "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

Chapter 7 — Haman Exposed and Hanged

At the second banquet, the king asked a third time, "What is thy petition, queen Esther?... even to the half of the kingdom" (7:2). Esther now revealed her identity and her plea:

> *If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.*
>
> **Esther 7:3-4**

She would have kept silent had they merely been sold as slaves (7:4). The king demanded, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" Esther answered, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman" (7:5-6). Haman was terrified. The king rose in fury and went into the palace garden (7:7). Haman stayed to beg Esther for his life, and in his desperation fell on the couch where she was reclining. When the king returned, he said, "Will he force the queen also before me in the house?" and the servants covered Haman's face, the sign of condemnation (7:8). One of the chamberlains, Harbonah, pointed out the fifty-cubit gallows standing at Haman's house, built for "Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king" (7:9).

> *So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.*
>
> **Esther 7:10**

"He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head" (Psalm 7:15-16). "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead" (Proverbs 11:8). "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein" (Proverbs 26:27).

Chapter 8 — The Counter-Decree

The same day, the king gave Esther the house of Haman, and Mordecai came before the king, "for Esther had told what he was unto her" (8:1). The king gave Mordecai the signet ring he had taken from Haman, and Esther set Mordecai over Haman's house (8:2). But the decree to destroy the Jews still stood. Esther again risked approaching the king and fell at his feet, weeping, begging him to reverse Haman's letters: "how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people?" (8:3-6). The king held out the sceptre again (8:4). But Persian law could not be revoked: "the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse" (8:8; compare Daniel 6:8, 15).

So the king authorised a second decree. Mordecai wrote it in the king's name, granting the Jews in every city the right "to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them" on the same day (8:9-12). This was not an order of aggression but a right of self-defence against anyone who attacked them. The decree was carried by riders on swift royal horses, "being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment" (8:10, 14).

Mordecai went out from the king "in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour" (8:15-16). In every province where the decree came, there

was feasting and a good day. "And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them" (8:17). God's deliverance of His people drew others to Him.

Chapter 9 — Victory and the Feast of Purim

On the thirteenth of Adar, "the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)" the Jews gathered and defended themselves, "and no man could withstand them" (9:1-2). The officials of the provinces helped them, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them, for Mordecai had become great in the king's house and his fame spread (9:3-4). In Shushan the Jews killed 500 men and the ten sons of Haman (9:6-10), "but on the spoil laid they not their hand" (9:10). The king granted Esther's request for a second day in Shushan and for the bodies of Haman's sons to be displayed, and 300 more of their enemies died there (9:12-15). In the provinces, the Jews "stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies," killing 75,000 of their enemies, "but they laid not their hands on the prey" (9:16). Three times the text stresses they took no plunder, though the decree permitted it (8:11). Their aim was survival, not gain, and they did not repeat Saul's sin with Amalek (1 Samuel 15:19).

The Jews rested on the 14th of Adar (in Shushan on the 15th) and made it "a day of feasting and gladness" (9:17-19). Mordecai wrote to all the Jews, establishing these days every year:

> *As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.*
>
> **Esther 9:22**

The feast was called Purim, from Pur, the lot Haman had cast (9:24-26). "And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city... nor the memorial of them perish from their seed" (9:28). Queen Esther confirmed it with full authority (9:29-32). Jews still keep Purim today, reading the book of Esther aloud in the synagogue. It is the only Old Testament festival not commanded in the law of Moses, established instead to remember God's deliverance.

Chapter 10 — The Greatness of Mordecai

Ahasuerus' power and Mordecai's greatness are recorded in "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia" (10:1-2). The book ends:

> *For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.*
>
> **Esther 10:3**

The man who sat in sackcloth at the king's gate became second only to the king, and used his position for the good and peace of his people.

Part Three: The Hidden Hand of God

The Chain of Providence

Every link in the story looks like coincidence, but together they reveal a guiding hand:

Providential Event	Reference	God's Purpose
The king's drunken anger removes Vashti	1:10-19	Opens the position of queen
Esther, a Jewish orphan, is chosen queen	2:17	Places God's servant where she is needed
Mordecai overhears the assassination plot	2:21-22	Puts the king in Mordecai's debt
Mordecai's deed is recorded but not rewarded	2:23	Saves the reward for the perfect moment
Haman's lot falls eleven months later	3:7	Gives time for God's people to respond
The king receives Esther uninvited	5:2	Opens the way for her request
Esther delays her request to a second banquet	5:8	Allows the night of chapter 6 to happen
Haman builds a gallows that night	5:14	Prepares his own execution
The king cannot sleep	6:1	The turning point
The records read are about Mordecai's deed	6:2	Reminds the king at exactly the right time
Haman arrives at that very moment	6:4	Forces him to honour his enemy
Haman falls on Esther's couch as the king returns	7:8	Seals his fate
The gallows is mentioned by a servant	7:9	The enemy hanged on his own gallows

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

The Great Reversal

The book is full of reversals. The text says the day "was turned to the contrary" (9:1) and the month was "turned unto them from sorrow to joy" (9:22):

- Haman planned Mordecai's honour for himself; he had to give it to Mordecai (6:6-11).
- Haman built a gallows for Mordecai; he was hanged on it (7:10).
- Haman's house went to Esther; his ring went to Mordecai (8:1-2).
- The decree to destroy the Jews became a day of Jewish victory (9:1).
- Mordecai's sackcloth (4:1) became royal apparel (8:15).
- Mourning, fasting and weeping (4:3) became light, gladness, joy and honour (8:16).

"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Luke 1:52).

Part Four: Christ in Esther

Esther as Intercessor

Esther	Esther	Christ	New Testament
Identified with her condemned people	4:14; 7:3-4	Took on our flesh and identified with sinners	Hebrews 2:14-17
Risked her life: "if I perish, I perish"	4:16	Did perish, laying down His life for us	John 10:11, 15
Appeared before the king on the third day	5:1	Raised the third day; appears in God's presence for us	1 Corinthians 15:4; Hebrews 9:24
Found favour; the golden sceptre was extended	5:2	Opened access to the throne of grace	Hebrews 4:16; Ephesians 3:12
Interceded for her people before the king	7:3-4; 8:3-6	"He ever liveth to make intercession for them"	Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34
Pleaded for those "sold... to be destroyed"	7:4	Redeemed those "sold under sin"	Romans 7:14; Galatians 3:13
Her intercession obtained life for her people	8:11	"One mediator between God and men"	1 Timothy 2:5

The difference: Esther risked death and survived; Christ actually died and rose again, and His intercession rests on His finished sacrifice.

Mordecai Exalted

Mordecai went from sackcloth at the gate to royal robes, a crown and the king's ring, second only to the king (6:11; 8:2, 15; 10:3), "the man whom the king delighteth to honour" (6:9). This pictures Christ, who humbled Himself and was "highly exalted" with "a name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:8-9), in whom the Father is "well pleased" (Matthew 3:17), and who sits at the right hand of the throne (Hebrews 1:3). Like Mordecai, Christ seeks the good of His people and speaks peace (10:3; Ephesians 2:17).

The Two Decrees

The first decree, sealed with the king's ring, condemned all the Jews to death and could not be revoked (3:13; 8:8). The second decree did not cancel the first, but gave the Jews power to stand and live (8:11). Many Christians see a picture of the gospel: God's righteous law, which condemns sin to death, cannot be set aside (Romans 6:23), but in Christ a new decree has gone out: "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). Like the swift couriers carrying the good news to every province (8:10, 14), the gospel must be carried to every nation (Matthew 28:19; Romans 10:15).

Haman and the Defeat of the Enemy

Haman, the Agagite, proud, demanding homage, and seeking to destroy God's people, pictures Satan and the spirit of antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 12:13-17). He was destroyed by the very instrument he prepared for God's servant. At the cross, Satan's apparent victory became his defeat: Christ "spoiled principalities and powers... triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14). "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Corinthians 2:8).

Preserving the Messianic Line

Haman's decree would have destroyed the Jewish people and, with them, the line of David through which the Messiah was promised (2 Samuel 7:12-16). Like Pharaoh's order to kill Hebrew boys (Exodus 1:22), Athaliah's massacre (2 Kings 11:1), and Herod's slaughter at Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16), it was an attack on the promised Seed (Genesis 3:15). God preserved His people so that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4).

Part Five: Promises Fulfilled

Promise	Source	Fulfillment in Esther
"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee"	Genesis 12:3	Haman destroyed; Mordecai and Esther blessed
War with Amalek from generation to generation	Exodus 17:14-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19	Haman the Agagite and his sons destroyed (7:10; 9:10)
"His king shall be higher than Agag"	Numbers 24:7	Mordecai exalted over Haman
"I will not cast them away... to destroy them utterly"	Leviticus 26:44	The Jews preserved in exile
"I will not make a full end of thee"	Jeremiah 30:11	The decree of total destruction overturned
"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper"	Isaiah 54:17	Haman's plot fails
"He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye"	Zechariah 2:8	Those who attacked the Jews fell
"The wicked plotteth against the just... Their sword shall enter into their own heart"	Psalm 37:12-15	Haman hanged on his own gallows
"The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead"	Proverbs 11:8	Mordecai delivered; Haman executed

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

Esther 3:8 — The Accusation Against God's People

Haman's charge contained a half-truth (the Jews' laws were different) twisted into a lie (they were disloyal). God's people are always different from the world (1 Peter 2:9-12), and the world often hates them for it (John 15:18-19). Haman's attempt at genocide foreshadows many later persecutions of the Jewish people. Christians must stand against such hatred, for God has not cast away His people (Romans 11:1-2, 28-29).

Esther 4:14 — "For Such a Time as This"

Mordecai's words teach several truths: God's purposes will be accomplished with or without us ("deliverance [will] arise... from another place"); refusing to act out of self-preservation is spiritually fatal ("thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed"); and our position, gifts and timing may be God's appointment for a specific task. Every believer is placed where they are for God's purposes (Acts 17:26; Ephesians 2:10).

Esther 4:16 — "If I Perish, I Perish"

Esther's courage was not reckless. She prepared through fasting, gathered God's people for support, acted at the right time, and accepted the outcome. True faith counts the cost and trusts God with the result (Daniel 3:17-18; Acts 20:24; Philippians 1:20).

Esther 6:1 — "On That Night Could Not the King Sleep"

God used a king's insomnia to change history. He controls the smallest details of life: sleep, memory, timing and the pages of a book. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD" (Psalm 37:23).

Esther 9:22 — Sorrow Turned to Joy

The feast of Purim celebrated a month "turned... from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day," with feasting, gifts to one another and gifts to the poor. Jesus told His disciples, "ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20). True celebration of God's deliverance includes generosity to others.

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Esther

1. The Providence of God

God is never named, yet He is everywhere at work, controlling kings, timing, events and outcomes for His people's good (Proverbs 16:33; 21:1; Romans 8:28).

2. God's Faithfulness to His Covenant People

God preserved the Jews in exile, keeping His promises to Abraham and David even when most of the people had not returned to the land (Jeremiah 31:35-37).

3. Courage and Responsibility

Esther had to choose between safety and obedience. God calls His people to use their positions for His purposes, even at great risk.

4. Pride and Humility

Haman's pride led to his downfall; Mordecai's humble faithfulness led to his exaltation (Proverbs 16:18; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5-6).

5. Justice and Retribution

The wicked fall into their own traps (Psalm 7:15-16; Galatians 6:7). God's justice may seem slow but is certain.

6. Fasting and Dependence on God

Fasting in times of crisis (4:3, 16) expressed dependence on God, even though the book does not name Him (Joel 2:12; Matthew 6:16-18).

7. The Spiritual Battle Behind History

Haman's hatred continues the ancient conflict of Amalek against Israel and of the serpent against the promised Seed (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 12).

8. Living Faithfully in a Hostile Culture

Like Joseph and Daniel, Esther and Mordecai served God within a pagan empire, showing loyalty to the king while remaining faithful to their people and their God (Jeremiah 29:7).

9. Remembering God's Deliverance

Purim was established so the deliverance would never be forgotten (9:27-28), like the Passover and the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

10. Using Influence for Others

Mordecai used his greatness to seek "the wealth of his people" and speak peace (10:3). Position and power are given for service (Mark 10:43-45).

Part Eight: Connections — How Esther Links to the Rest of the Bible

Esther and the New Testament

Esther is not quoted in the New Testament, but its themes are developed there:

Esther	New Testament	Connection
4:14; 6:1-3 (providence)	Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11	God works all things according to His will
4:16 (risking her life for her people)	John 10:11; 15:13; Romans 9:3	Laying down one's life for others
5:1-2 (the third day; the sceptre)	1 Corinthians 15:4; Hebrews 4:16; Ephesians 3:12	Resurrection; access to the throne of grace
7:3-4 (intercession)	Hebrews 7:25; 1 Timothy 2:5; Romans 8:34	Christ the Intercessor and Mediator
6:6-11; 7:10 (the proud humbled)	Luke 1:52; 14:11; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5-6	God resists the proud, exalts the humble
7:10 (the enemy on his own gallows)	Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Hebrews 2:14	Satan defeated by his own device at the cross
8:8, 11 (the second decree)	Romans 8:1-2	The law of the Spirit of life frees from the law of sin and death
8:10, 14 (couriers with good news)	Romans 10:15; Matthew 28:19	Spreading the good news to all nations
8:17 (many became Jews)	Acts 2:41; 11:21	People turning to God
9:22 (sorrow turned to joy)	John 16:20-22	Sorrow turned into joy
3:6, 13 (attempt to destroy the Jews)	Matthew 2:16; Revelation 12:4, 13-17	Satan's attacks on the Messianic line and God's people
Purim	John 5:1	"A feast of the Jews," which some suggest was Purim (uncertain)
God's people preserved	Romans 11:1-2, 28-29	God has not cast away His people

Esther in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The enmity between the seeds (3:15); blessing and cursing Abraham's seed (12:3); Joseph in a foreign court, exalted with robes, ring and a public proclamation (41:42-43; compare Esther 6:8-11; 8:2, 15)
Exodus	Amalek attacks Israel; "war with Amalek from generation to generation" (17:8-16); Pharaoh's attempt to destroy Israel's sons (1:22)

Book	Link
Numbers	"His king shall be higher than Agag" (24:7); Amalek's end (24:20)
Deuteronomy	Remember Amalek (25:17-19); the dispersed whose "life shall hang in doubt" (28:64-66)
1 Samuel	Saul son of Kish (9:1; Esther 2:5); Saul spares Agag and takes the spoil (15)
2 Kings	Jeconiah's exile, with which Mordecai's family was carried away (24:12-15; Esther 2:6)
1 Chronicles	The last of the Amalekites destroyed in Hezekiah's day (4:43)
Ezra	Accusation against the Jews under Ahasuerus (4:6); the events of Esther fall between chapters 6 and 7
Nehemiah	The same Persian palace at Shushan (1:1)
Daniel	A Jew serving faithfully in a pagan court; the unchangeable law of the Medes and Persians (6:8, 15); the plotters destroyed by their own plot (6:24); Shushan (8:2)
Psalms	God keeps Israel and never sleeps (121:4); "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick" (124:2-3); the wicked fall into their own pit (7:15-16; 9:15-16); the wicked plot against the just (37:12-15)
Proverbs	The lot and the LORD (16:33); the king's heart in God's hand (21:1); the righteous delivered and the wicked in his stead (11:8); whoso digs a pit will fall into it (26:27); pride before a fall (16:18)
Isaiah	No weapon formed against thee shall prosper (54:17)
Jeremiah	Seek the peace of the city of your captivity (29:7); God will not make a full end of Israel (30:11)
Joel	Fasting and weeping in crisis (2:12-13)
Zechariah	"He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye" (2:8)

Themes That Run from Esther Through Scripture

Theme	In Esther	Developed	Fulfilled
God's hidden providence	2:17-23; 6:1	Genesis 50:20; Ruth 2:3	Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11
The preservation of God's people	4:14; 9:1	Jeremiah 31:35-37	Romans 11:1-2, 26
Satan's war against the Seed	3:6, 13	Exodus 1:22; 2 Kings 11:1	Matthew 2:16; Revelation 12
Intercession at the risk of life	4:16; 7:3-4	Exodus 32:32	Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34
The humble exalted, the proud brought low	6-7	1 Samuel 2:7-8	Luke 1:52; Philippians 2:8-9

Theme	In Esther	Developed	Fulfilled
Sorrow turned to joy	9:22	Psalm 30:11	John 16:20; Revelation 21:4
Remembering God's deliverance	9:27-28	Exodus 12:14	Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **God is at work even when He seems silent** (the whole book).
- **Decisions made in anger and pride lead to regret** (1:12-22; 2:1).
- **Faithfulness in small things matters, even when unrewarded** (2:21-23; 6:3).
- **Be willing to stand alone** (3:2).
- **Hatred and pride are never satisfied** (5:13).
- **Grieve and fast before God in times of crisis** (4:1-3, 16).
- **Your position may be God's appointment** (4:14).
- **Silence in the face of evil is not neutral** (4:14).
- **Seek the prayers and support of God's people** (4:16).
- **Act with courage, and leave the outcome to God** (4:16).
- **Be wise and patient in timing** (5:4-8).
- **Pride goes before a fall** (6:6-13).
- **God can turn the enemy's plans upside down** (7:10).
- **Speak up for those facing destruction** (8:3-6; Proverbs 31:8-9).
- **Use your influence for the good of others** (10:3).
- **Celebrate God's deliverance, and share with the poor** (9:22).
- **Remember what God has done, and teach the next generation** (9:28).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:17	And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight
3:8	There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom
4:14	And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?
4:16	And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.
5:2	She obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand.
6:1	On that night could not the king sleep
7:10	So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.
8:16	The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.
9:22	The month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day
10:3	Seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

Conclusion

Esther is the book of God's hidden hand. In the splendour of the Persian court, among drunken feasts, royal decrees and palace intrigue, God's name is never spoken, yet He arranges every detail: a queen deposed, an orphan crowned, a plot overheard, a deed unrewarded, a lot that gives eleven months, a sleepless night, a page read at the right moment, and a gallows that becomes the enemy's own end. A whole people condemned to death is saved through a woman who risked her life to intercede, and through a man exalted from sackcloth to royal robes. The ancient enemy, Amalek, falls. Mourning becomes joy. The line of the Messiah is preserved. And the story points to Jesus Christ, the true Intercessor who did not merely risk death but died and rose the third day, who opened the way to the throne of grace, and who has issued a new decree of life to all who trust in Him.

> *And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*
>
> **Esther 4:14**

Job

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Unknown • Date: Patriarchal setting; date of writing uncertain • Chapters: 42

> *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*
>
> **Job 19:25**

Part One: Introduction to Job

The Book and Its Place

Job is the first of the five books of poetry and wisdom (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon). Apart from its prose opening and closing (chapters 1-2 and 42:7-17), it is written as Hebrew poetry, some of the most magnificent in all literature. It deals with one of the oldest and hardest questions human beings ask: if God is good and all-powerful, why do the righteous suffer?

Was Job a Real Man?

Scripture treats Job as a historical person. God names him alongside Noah and Daniel as righteous men (Ezekiel 14:14, 20), and James speaks of "the patience of Job" and "the end of the Lord" in his life (James 5:11). The book gives his home, "the land of Uz" (1:1), his family, possessions, friends and age.

Author and Date

The author is not named. Jewish tradition suggests Moses; others suggest Job himself, Elihu, Solomon or an unknown writer. The **setting** is clearly the age of the patriarchs (around the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob):

- Job acts as priest for his own family, offering burnt offerings himself (1:5), as the patriarchs did before the Levitical priesthood.
- His wealth is measured in livestock and servants (1:3), like Abraham's.
- He lived 140 years after his trials (42:16), a lifespan similar to the patriarchs'.
- There is no mention of the law of Moses, the Exodus, Israel, the tabernacle or the temple.
- The money mentioned, "a piece of money" (Hebrew kesitah, 42:11), appears elsewhere only in Genesis 33:19 and Joshua 24:32.
- The names connect to the families of Genesis: Uz (Genesis 10:23; 22:21; 36:28), Eliphaz the Temanite (Teman was Esau's grandson, Genesis 36:11), Bildad the Shuhite (Shuah was a son of Abraham and Keturah, Genesis 25:2), and Elihu the Buzite (Buz was Abraham's nephew, Genesis 22:21).

Many conservative scholars believe Job may be one of the oldest books of the Bible. Uz was probably in the region of Edom or northern Arabia (Lamentations 4:21).

Purpose and Theme

Job addresses several connected questions:

- **Why do the righteous suffer?** Job's friends insist that suffering is always punishment for personal sin. The book shows that this is not always so.
- **Does anyone serve God for nothing?** Satan's challenge, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" (1:9), asks whether people love God only for His gifts. Job's faithfulness proves that God is worthy of worship for who He is.

- **How should we respond to suffering we cannot understand?** Job wrestles honestly with God, refuses to curse Him, and finally bows before His majesty.
- **Who is God?** God never explains to Job the reason for his suffering. Instead He reveals Himself, His wisdom, power and care over creation, and that revelation is enough.

Key Verses

> *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*
>
> **Job 1:21**

> *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God*
>
> **Job 19:25-26**

> *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*
>
> **Job 42:5-6**

The Characters

Person	Description	Viewpoint
Job	A righteous, wealthy man of Uz; "perfect and upright" (1:1)	Honest wrestling: he knows he is not being punished for some secret sin, and he longs to meet God
Satan	"The adversary"; the accuser of God's people (1:6-12; 2:1-7)	People serve God only for what they get
Job's wife	Lost her children and wealth too	"Curse God, and die" (2:9)
Eliphaz the Temanite	Probably the oldest; speaks from experience and a vision	"Who ever perished, being innocent?" (4:7)
Bildad the Shuhite	Appeals to tradition	"Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age" (8:8)
Zophar the Naamathite	Blunt and dogmatic	"God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth" (11:6)
Elihu the Buzite	A younger man who waited to speak	God uses suffering to teach and refine, and He is always just (32-37)
The LORD	Speaks out of the whirlwind	Reveals His wisdom and power; vindicates Job; rebukes the friends

Outline of Job

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Prologue: Job's Trials	1-2	Prose
Job's character and blessing	1:1-5	A righteous man
The first test: possessions and children	1:6-22	"Blessed be the name of the LORD"
The second test: his health	2:1-10	"Shall we receive good... and not evil?"
The friends arrive	2:11-13	Seven days of silence
II. The Dialogue: Job and His Three Friends	3-31	Poetry
Job's lament	3	"Let the day perish wherein I was born"
First cycle of speeches	4-14	Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, with Job's replies
Second cycle	15-21	The fate of the wicked
Third cycle	22-27	Eliphaz accuses; Bildad brief; Zophar silent
Interlude: the hymn to wisdom	28	"The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom"
Job's final defence	29-31	Past glory, present misery, oath of innocence
III. Elihu's Speeches	32-37	God teaches through suffering
IV. The LORD Speaks	38-42:6	Out of the whirlwind
God's first speech: creation	38-39	"Where wast thou?"
Job's first reply	40:1-5	"I will lay mine hand upon my mouth"
God's second speech: behemoth and leviathan	40:6-41:34	God's power over the mightiest creatures
Job's repentance	42:1-6	"Now mine eye seeth thee"
V. Epilogue: Job Restored	42:7-17	Prose

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Prologue (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — The First Test

> *There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*
>
> **Job 1:1**

"Perfect" means blameless and whole-hearted, not sinless (Job later confesses sin, 7:21; 42:6). He had seven sons and three daughters, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 she-donkeys and many servants, "so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east" (1:2-3). When his children held feasts, Job rose early and offered burnt offerings for each of them: "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually" (1:5). He was a spiritual leader in his home and took sin seriously.

Then the scene moves to heaven. "There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them" (1:6). God asked, "Whence comest thou?" and Satan answered, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (1:7; compare 1 Peter 5:8). God said, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (1:8). Satan's reply is the central challenge of the book:

> *Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?... But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*
>
> **Job 1:9-11**

Satan accused Job of serving God only for the benefits, and implied that God is not worthy of worship for His own sake. God gave permission, with a limit: "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand" (1:12). Satan is real, but he is a created being, accountable to God and unable to act beyond what God permits.

In one day, four messengers arrived, each "while he was yet speaking": the Sabeans took the oxen and donkeys and killed the servants; "the fire of God" (lightning) burned up the sheep and shepherds; the Chaldeans took the camels and killed the servants; and a great wind struck the house where his children were feasting, and all ten died (1:13-19). Job's response:

> *Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*
>
> **Job 1:20-22**

He grieved openly (torn clothes, shaved head), yet he worshipped. He acknowledged God's sovereignty over both giving and taking, and blessed God's name. Satan's prediction failed. Paul echoes Job's words: "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Timothy 6:7).

Chapter 2 — The Second Test

Again the sons of God and Satan came before the LORD. God said Job "still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause" (2:3). Satan answered, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face" (2:4-5). God permitted it, again with a limit: "only save his life" (2:6). Satan "smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown," and Job sat among the ashes, scraping himself with a broken piece of pottery (2:7-8).

His wife, who had also lost her children, said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die" (2:9). Job answered:

> *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*
>
> **Job 2:10**

"Evil" here means adversity or calamity, not moral wickedness. Three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, heard and came "to mourn with him and to comfort him." When they saw him, they did not recognise him, wept aloud, tore their clothes, and threw dust on their heads. "So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great" (2:11-13). Their silent presence was their best comfort. Their trouble began when they started to speak (Romans 12:15).

The reader knows what Job and his friends never learn: the cause of his suffering was not his sin but God's confidence in his faithfulness, and a contest over whether God is worthy of love for His own sake. This is the key to reading the rest of the book.

Section II: The Dialogue (Chapters 3-31)

Chapter 3 — Job's Lament

After seven days, Job broke the silence and cursed the day he was born: "Let the day perish wherein I was born" (3:3). He wished he had died at birth (3:11), described death as a place of rest where "the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest" (3:17), and asked why life is given to those in misery (3:20-23). "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me" (3:25). Job did not curse God, but he poured out his anguish honestly. Jeremiah later used similar words (Jeremiah 20:14-18). Scripture makes room for honest lament.

Chapters 4-5 — Eliphaz's First Speech

Eliphaz began gently, reminding Job that he had comforted others (4:3-5), but then stated the principle that would drive all the friends' speeches:

> *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.*
>
> **Job 4:7-8**

He appealed to a frightening night vision in which a spirit asked, "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" (4:12-17). He urged Job to turn to God: "I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause" (5:8). He said many true things: "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (5:7); God "taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (5:13; quoted in 1 Corinthians 3:19); "happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty" (5:17; compare Proverbs 3:11; Hebrews 12:5). His error was not in his statements but in applying them wrongly: he assumed Job's suffering proved Job's sin.

Chapters 6-7 — Job's Reply to Eliphaz

"Oh that my grief were throughly weighed" (6:2). "The arrows of the Almighty are within me" (6:4). Job longed for God to end his life (6:8-9). He rebuked his friends as "deceitful," like streams that dry up when travellers most need water (6:15-20). "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred" (6:24). In chapter 7 he described life as hard service (7:1), with days "swifter than a weaver's shuttle" (7:6), and nights of terror (7:13-14). He turned to God: "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him?... why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?" (7:17-21), a bitter echo of the question later asked in praise (Psalm 8:4).

Chapter 8 — Bildad's First Speech

Bildad was blunter: "Doth God pervert judgment?... If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression" (8:3-4), a cruel suggestion that Job's children died for their own sins. "If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee" (8:6). He appealed to tradition: "enquire, I pray thee, of the former age" (8:8). He promised, "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase" (8:7), unknowingly predicting the end of the book (42:12), though for the wrong reason.

Chapters 9-10 — Job's Reply to Bildad

Job agreed that God is just, but asked, "how should man be just with God?" (9:2). He described God's overwhelming power, who "maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades" (9:4-10). How could he argue with such a God (9:14-20)? Then he expressed one of the deepest longings of the book:

> *For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*
>
> **Job 9:32-33**

A "daysman" is an umpire or mediator who could stand between two parties and touch both. Job longed for someone who could represent God to him and him to God. That longing is answered in Christ: "For

there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). In chapter 10 Job reminded God that He had made him: "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me... Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit" (10:8-12), and asked why God now seemed to destroy His own work.

Chapter 11 — Zophar's First Speech

Zophar was the harshest: "Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth" (11:6). He spoke the truth about God's unsearchable greatness: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" (11:7-8). And he urged repentance with promises of restored blessing (11:13-19). But like the others, he assumed Job was guilty of hidden sin.

Chapters 12-14 — Job's Reply to Zophar

Job answered with sarcasm: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you" (12:2). He knew God's power as well as they did: "ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee... In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind" (12:7-10). He called his friends "forgers of lies... physicians of no value" and said, "O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom" (13:4-5). Then came one of the great declarations of faith in Scripture:

> *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation*
>
> **Job 13:15-16**

Job trusted God even while he felt God was against him. In chapter 14 he reflected on human frailty: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down" (14:1-2). "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" (14:4). A tree cut down may sprout again (14:7-9), but what about a man? Then he asked the great question:

> *If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.*
>
> **Job 14:14-15**

Job reached toward the hope of resurrection, which he would state with confidence in chapter 19, and which Christ fulfilled: "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25).

Chapter 15 — Eliphaz's Second Speech

The second cycle focused on the fate of the wicked. Eliphaz accused Job of empty words and of undermining the fear of God (15:2-6). "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" (15:14). He described the terrors that pursue the wicked (15:20-35), implying Job was one of them.

Chapters 16-17 — Job's Reply

"I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all" (16:2). "I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead... But I would strengthen you with my mouth" (16:4-5). He described God as an enemy who had torn him, delivered him "to the ungodly," and set him up as a target (16:9-14). Men "have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully" (16:10; compare Psalm 22:13; Matthew 26:67). Yet in the darkness, his faith rose again:

> *Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high... O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!*
>
> **Job 16:19-21**

Job longed for a heavenly advocate. Believers have one: "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25). Chapter 17 ends in despair, though he holds that "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (17:9).

Chapter 18 — Bildad's Second Speech

Bildad described the fate of the wicked in vivid terms: his light put out, snares at his feet, terrors on every side, his memory perished (18:5-21). The implication was clear.

Chapter 19 — "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth"

"How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?" (19:2). Job described his total isolation: God had fenced his way and stripped him of glory (19:8-9); his brothers, relatives, friends, servants, even his wife and young children rejected him (19:13-19). "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth" (19:20). "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me" (19:21). He wished his words were written in a book, or engraved in rock for ever (19:23-24). They were, in this book. And then, from the lowest point, came the highest declaration of faith in the Old Testament:

> *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*
>
> **Job 19:25-27**

The word "redeemer" is goel, the kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 3-4), the near relative who buys back, defends and vindicates. Job declared: his Redeemer is **alive**; He will **stand on the earth** at the last day; Job will **see God** in his own **flesh**, after death, with his own eyes. This is a clear Old Testament hope of a living Redeemer and of bodily resurrection. It is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who became our kinsman (Hebrews 2:14-15), redeemed us (Galatians 3:13), rose bodily from the dead, and will stand on the earth again (Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11). "We shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53).

Chapter 20 — Zophar's Second Speech

Zophar insisted that "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment" (20:5), and that God's wrath would overtake him (20:6-29). He did not respond to Job's great confession at all.

Chapter 21 — Job's Reply: The Wicked Prosper

Job challenged the friends' whole system with observable facts: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?" (21:7). They live in safety, their children dance, they die peacefully, and yet they say to God, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?" (21:14-15). Some die prosperous and some die in bitterness, and "they shall lie down alike in the dust" (21:23-26). The friends' rule did not match reality. "How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?" (21:34). Asaph wrestled with the same question in Psalm 73, until he "went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end" (Psalm 73:17).

Chapter 22 — Eliphaz's Third Speech

In the third cycle, Eliphaz made specific false accusations: Job must have taken pledges from his brothers for nothing, stripped the naked of their clothing, withheld water from the weary, and "sent widows away empty" (22:5-9). None of this was true (compare 29:12-17; 31:16-22). When the friends' theory required Job to be guilty, they invented the evidence. Yet Eliphaz's appeal contained a beautiful truth: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee... lay up his words in thine heart" (22:21-22).

Chapters 23-24 — Job's Reply: "When He Hath Tried Me"

> *Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!*
>
> **Job 23:3**

Job longed to present his case to God. He searched in every direction, "forward... backward... on the left hand... on the right hand," but could not find Him (23:8-9). Yet he declared:

> *But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*
>
> **Job 23:10**

Job did not know where God was, but God knew where Job was. Trial refines like fire (1 Peter 1:6-7; Malachi 3:3). "My foot hath held his steps... I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (23:11-12; compare Matthew 4:4). "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth" (23:13). In chapter 24, Job catalogued the injustice in the world: the poor oppressed, the fatherless robbed, murderers and adulterers working in darkness, apparently unpunished (24:1-17), though he affirmed that the wicked are eventually cut off (24:18-25).

Chapter 25 — Bildad's Third Speech

Bildad's last speech was only six verses. He spoke of God's dominion and asked, "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?... How much less man, that is a worm?" (25:4-6). It is the right question, but Bildad had no answer. The answer would come in the gospel: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1; 3:26).

Chapters 26-27 — Job's Reply

Job mocked Bildad's help: "How hast thou helped him that is without power?" (26:2). Then he described God's power over creation in words of remarkable insight: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing" (26:7). God binds up the waters in the clouds (26:8) and "hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end" (26:10). "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" (26:14). In chapter 27, Job swore to hold to his integrity: "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live" (27:6). He also acknowledged the eventual doom of the wicked (27:13-23). Zophar gave no third speech; the friends had run out of arguments.

Chapter 28 — The Hymn to Wisdom

This chapter is a calm poem that stands between the heated dialogue and Job's final speeches. Men can dig deep mines for silver, gold, iron and precious stones, going where no bird or lion has gone (28:1-11). "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" (28:12). It cannot be found in the land of the living or in the depths of the sea, and it cannot be bought with gold or rubies (28:13-19). "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof" (28:23). Then God said to man:

> *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*
>
> **Job 28:28**

This is the conclusion that wisdom literature returns to again and again (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; Ecclesiastes 12:13). Christ is "the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24), "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).

Chapters 29-31 — Job's Final Defence

Chapter 29: past glory. "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; When his candle shined upon my head" (29:2-3). Job remembered his intimacy with God, his children around him, and the respect of the community (29:4-11). His righteousness had been practical: "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless... I put on righteousness, and it clothed me... I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor" (29:12-16).

Chapter 30: present misery. Now even worthless young men mocked him: "they spare not to spit in my face" (30:1, 9-10). "I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me" (30:20). "My harp also is turned to mourning" (30:31).

Chapter 31: the oath of innocence. Job called curses on himself if he had committed a long list of sins, revealing the depth of Old Testament ethics:

- **Lust:** "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" (31:1; compare Matthew 5:28).
- **Dishonesty** (31:5-8) and **adultery** (31:9-12).
- **Mistreating servants:** "Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?" (31:13-15), a striking statement of human equality before God.
- **Neglecting the poor, widows and orphans** (31:16-23).
- **Trusting in gold** (31:24-25) and **worshipping the sun or moon** (31:26-28).
- **Rejoicing at an enemy's downfall** (31:29-30).
- **Withholding hospitality** (31:31-32).
- **Hiding sin "as Adam"** (31:33-34).
- **Abusing the land and its workers** (31:38-40).

"Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me" (31:35). "The words of Job are ended" (31:40).

Section III: Elihu's Speeches (Chapters 32-37)

Chapter 32 — Elihu Introduced

The three friends stopped answering "because he was righteous in his own eyes" (32:1). Elihu, a younger man, became angry with Job "because he justified himself rather than God," and with the three friends "because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job" (32:2-3). He had waited out of respect for age (32:4-7), but declared, "there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise" (32:8-9).

Chapter 33 — God Speaks Through Dreams and Pain

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (33:4). Elihu corrected Job's complaint that God does not answer: "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (33:14). He speaks in dreams and visions "that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man" (33:15-18), and through pain and sickness (33:19-22). Then Elihu described how God rescues:

> *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.*
>
> **Job 33:23-24**

The man's flesh is restored "fresher than a child's" (33:25), he prays and sees God's face with joy, and confesses, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not" (33:26-28). Elihu glimpsed a mediator and a ransom that delivers from the pit. Christ is that Mediator, who came "to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

Chapter 34 — God Is Just

Elihu defended God's justice against Job's complaints: "far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity... Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment" (34:10-12). God sees all men's ways (34:21-22). Elihu rebuked Job for speaking without knowledge (34:35), though he too was harsh: "he addeth rebellion unto his sin" (34:37).

Chapter 35 — Songs in the Night

People cry out under oppression, "But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night" (35:9-10). God does not hear empty cries (35:13). Elihu urged Job to trust and wait (35:14).

Chapters 36-37 — God's Greatness in Suffering and in Nature

God "withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous" (36:7). When they are afflicted, "he openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity" (36:10). "He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression" (36:15). Suffering can be God's means of teaching. "Behold, God is great, and we know him not" (36:26). Elihu then described God's power in the rain cycle, "he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof" (36:27), in thunder, lightning, snow, ice and wind (36:27-37:13), as a storm seemed to gather. "Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (37:14). "With God is terrible majesty. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict" (37:22-23).

Evaluating Elihu. Christians differ in their view of Elihu. Many see him positively: he corrected both Job and the friends, emphasised that suffering can be God's discipline and teaching rather than only punishment, and prepared the way for God's appearance; notably, God does not rebuke him in 42:7. Others see him as another young man who spoke too confidently. His speeches are best read as a partial but helpful step toward the answer that only God Himself could give.

Section IV: The LORD Speaks (Chapters 38-42:6)

Chapters 38-39 — God's First Speech: "Where Wast Thou?"

> *Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*
>
> **Job 38:1-3**

God came, as Job had longed. But He did not answer Job's questions; He asked Job questions. He did not mention Satan or explain the trial. Instead He took Job on a tour of creation:

> *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding... When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*
>
> **Job 38:4, 7**

God described laying the earth's foundations (38:4-7), setting limits to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed" (38:8-11), commanding the morning (38:12-15), the springs of the sea and the gates of death (38:16-17), light and darkness (38:19-20), the storehouses of snow and hail (38:22-23), rain on the wilderness "where no man is" (38:26), and the constellations: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" (38:31-33). "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?" (38:36).

Then God described the animal world: the lion, the raven "when his young ones cry unto God" (38:39-41; compare Luke 12:24), the wild goats giving birth (39:1-4), the wild donkey (39:5-8), the wild ox ("unicorn" in the KJV) that will not serve man (39:9-12), the ostrich that leaves her eggs in the sand yet outruns the horse (39:13-18), the war horse that "mocketh at fear" (39:19-25), and the hawk and eagle (39:26-30). The lesson: God governs and cares for a vast world far beyond human knowledge or control. If Job cannot understand or manage creation, how can he judge the Creator's ways?

Chapter 40:1-5 — Job's First Response

"Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it" (40:2). Job answered:

> *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.*
>
> **Job 40:4-5**

Chapters 40:6-41:34 — God's Second Speech: Behemoth and Leviathan

God spoke again from the whirlwind: "Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?" (40:8). Job, in defending his innocence, had come close to accusing God. "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?" (40:9). If Job could clothe himself with majesty and humble every proud and wicked person, "Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee" (40:10-14). Only God can save.

God then described two mighty creatures:

- **Behemoth** (40:15-24), "the chief of the ways of God," which eats grass like an ox, with great strength, "he moveth his tail like a cedar," and bones like bars of iron. It is often identified with the hippopotamus or elephant; some creationists suggest a large dinosaur-like creature, since a cedar-like tail fits neither of those animals well.
- **Leviathan** (41), a terrifying creature of the waters that no man can catch with a hook or tame (41:1-9), with impenetrable scales, from whose mouth "go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out" (41:18-21). It is often identified with the crocodile, or with a great sea creature now extinct; its fiery description may be poetic. "He is a king over all the children of pride" (41:34). Elsewhere, leviathan is used as a symbol of chaos and of God's enemies, whom He will slay (Psalm 74:14; Isaiah 27:1).

If Job cannot stand before a creature God made, how can he stand before God? "Who then is able to stand before me? Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine" (41:10-11; quoted in Romans 11:35).

Chapter 42:1-6 — Job's Repentance

> *I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee... therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not... I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*
>
> **Job 42:2-6**

Job did not repent of some hidden sin that caused his suffering; the friends were wrong about that. He repented of speaking about things he did not understand and questioning God's justice. He never received an explanation, but he received something better: a personal encounter with God. Knowing God was enough. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Section V: The Epilogue (Chapter 42:7-17)

Chapter 42:7-17 — Job Restored

God spoke to Eliphaz: "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath" (42:7). Job's honest wrestling with God was more right than the friends' tidy but false theology. They had misrepresented God by claiming all suffering is punishment for sin. God commanded them to offer seven bullocks and seven rams, "and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept" (42:8). The man they had accused became their intercessor. They obeyed (42:9).

> *And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*
>
> **Job 42:10**

His restoration came as he prayed for those who had wronged him (Matthew 5:44). His brothers, sisters and acquaintances came, ate with him, comforted him, and each gave him a piece of money and a gold earring (42:11). "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning" (42:12): 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen and 1,000 she-donkeys, exactly double (42:12). He again had seven sons and three daughters (42:13), the same number, not double. Many have noted that his first ten children were not lost for ever, so with ten more he now had twenty in all. His daughters, Jemima, Kezia and Keren-happuch, were the most beautiful in the land, and he gave them an inheritance with their brothers (42:14-15), unusual in that culture. Job lived 140 more years and saw four generations. "So Job died, being old and full of days" (42:16-17).

James draws the lesson: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). The end of Job's story revealed God's heart.

Part Three: Christ in Job

Job's Longings Fulfilled in Christ

Throughout his suffering, Job cried out for things that only Christ could provide:

Job's Longing	Job	Fulfillment in Christ
A daysman (mediator) to lay his hand on both God and man	9:33	"One mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5)
How can a man be just with God?	9:2; 25:4	"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1)
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?	14:4	Christ born holy, of a virgin (Luke 1:35; Hebrews 7:26)
If a man die, shall he live again?	14:14	"I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25)
A witness and advocate in heaven	16:19-21	"We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25)
A living Redeemer who will stand on the earth	19:25	Christ our Redeemer, risen and returning (Galatians 3:13; Acts 1:11; Zechariah 14:4)
To see God in his own flesh	19:26-27	Bodily resurrection; "we shall see him as he is" (1 Corinthians 15:52-53; 1 John 3:2)
To find God and come to His seat	23:3	"Come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16)
Where shall wisdom be found?	28:12	Christ "the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24; Colossians 2:3)
A messenger, an interpreter, and a ransom from the pit	33:23-24	Christ gave "himself a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:6; Mark 10:45)

Job as a Picture of Christ

Job was not sinless (42:6), but his sufferings foreshadow Christ's in striking ways:

Job	Job	Christ	New Testament
A righteous man whom God called "my servant"	1:8; 42:7-8	God's righteous Servant	Isaiah 42:1; 53:11
Suffered though innocent of the charges	1:22; 42:7	Suffered "the just for the unjust"	1 Peter 3:18
His suffering was permitted by God within God's purpose	1:12; 2:6	"Delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God"	Acts 2:23
Attacked by Satan	1-2	Tempted by Satan; the serpent bruised His heel	Matthew 4:1-11; Genesis 3:15
Rejected by friends and family	19:13-19	"His own received him not"; forsaken by His disciples	John 1:11; Matthew 26:56
Mocked, spat upon, struck on the cheek	16:10; 30:9-10	Spat upon and struck	Matthew 26:67; 27:30

Job	Job	Christ	New Testament
"God hath delivered me to the ungodly"	16:11	Delivered into the hands of sinful men	Matthew 26:45
Felt abandoned by God	23:3, 8-9	"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Matthew 27:46
Interceded for those who wronged him	42:8-10	"Father, forgive them"	Luke 23:34
Exalted and given double afterward	42:10-12	Highly exalted; divides the spoil	Philippians 2:9; Isaiah 53:12

The Creator Who Speaks from the Whirlwind

The God who laid the earth's foundations and told the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further" (38:11) is revealed in the New Testament as working through the Son: "All things were made by him" (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). When Jesus rebuked the wind and the sea, the disciples asked, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (Mark 4:39-41).

Leviathan and the Final Victory

Leviathan, "king over all the children of pride" (41:34), whom no man can conquer, is used in Scripture as a picture of God's great enemy: "In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent" (Isaiah 27:1). Christ has defeated "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 12:9; 20:2, 10; Colossians 2:15).

Part Four: Understanding Satan and Suffering in Job

What Job Teaches About Satan

- **He is real and personal** (1:6-12; 2:1-7).
- **He is accountable to God**, appearing before Him and acting only by His permission (1:12; 2:6).
- **He is limited**: he could not touch Job's person at first, nor take his life (1:12; 2:6). "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- **He roams the earth** seeking whom he may attack (1:7; 1 Peter 5:8).
- **He is "the accuser of our brethren"** (Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1), slandering both God's people and God Himself.
- **He uses people and nature**: raiders, lightning, wind and disease (1:13-19; 2:7).
- **He can be defeated by faith**: Job's trust proved Satan wrong. Jesus told Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Luke 22:31-32).

What Job Teaches About Suffering

Truth	Job	Further Scripture
Not all suffering is punishment for personal sin	1:1, 8; 42:7	John 9:2-3; Luke 13:1-5
Suffering may have purposes hidden from us	1-2	Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33
Suffering can test and refine faith	23:10	1 Peter 1:6-7; James 1:2-4
Suffering can be God's teaching and discipline	33:14-30; 36:8-15	Hebrews 12:5-11; Psalm 119:71
God is present and sovereign in suffering	1:21; 2:10	Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Honest lament is not sin	3; 42:7	Psalms 13; 22; 88
False comfort can wound	16:2; 21:34	Proverbs 25:20; Romans 12:15
God's answer is Himself, not an explanation	38-42	2 Corinthians 4:6; Philippians 3:8-10
Suffering is temporary; God's end is good	42:10-17	Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17; James 5:11

The Friends' Error

Each friend argued from a different source: Eliphaz from experience and a vision ("Even as I have seen," 4:8), Bildad from tradition ("enquire... of the former age," 8:8), and Zophar from bare assertion (11:6; 20:4-5). All shared one premise: God always punishes sin and rewards righteousness in this life, so great suffering proves great sin. There is truth in the principle of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7), but they made it absolute and applied it without love or knowledge. God said they had "not spoken of me the thing that is right" (42:7). Their failure warns every counsellor: be slow to speak, avoid assuming hidden sin, and "weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15; James 1:19).

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Job 1:21 — Worship in Loss

Job's response models faith in grief: he mourned honestly (torn clothes), humbled himself (fell on the ground), worshipped, recognised that everything was God's gift ("the LORD gave"), accepted God's sovereign right ("the LORD hath taken away"), and praised Him anyway ("blessed be the name of the LORD"). Grief and worship are not opposites.

Job 13:15 — Faith in the Dark

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job could not see God's purpose, and felt God was against him, yet he refused to let go of trust. Faith is not the absence of struggle but holding on to God within it (Habakkuk 3:17-18).

Job 19:25-27 — The Living Redeemer

This passage reveals more of the gospel than almost any other part of the early Old Testament: a personal, living Redeemer; His standing on the earth at the end; life after death; and bodily resurrection in which the believer sees God with his own eyes. Handel set it to music in "Messiah," and Christians have read it at funerals for centuries as a declaration of hope in the risen Christ.

Job 23:10 — Coming Forth as Gold

Gold is refined by fire, which removes impurities but does not destroy the gold. Job's trial was not meant to destroy his faith but to prove and purify it. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7).

Job 38-41 — God's Answer from the Whirlwind

God's speeches never mention Job's suffering, Satan or the friends. Instead they reveal God's infinite wisdom, power, creativity and care for His creation. The message is not "stop asking," but "trust Me, because you know who I am." Job's questions were not answered; they were overwhelmed by God's presence. Paul reaches a similar conclusion: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33-36, quoting Job 41:11).

Job 42:5-6 — From Hearing to Seeing

Job had known God by hearsay; now he knew Him personally. Suffering, rightly received, can move a believer from second-hand faith to first-hand knowledge of God. This is the true end of the book: not mainly the doubled possessions, but the deepened relationship.

Part Six: Job and Creation

God's speeches and Job's own words contain statements about the natural world that are striking for so ancient a book. Job is poetry, not a science textbook, but its descriptions are consistent with what we now know:

- **The earth suspended in space:** "hangeth the earth upon nothing" (26:7).
- **The circular horizon:** "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end" (26:10).
- **The water cycle:** "he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly" (36:27-28).
- **Springs in the sea:** "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?" (38:16).
- **The constellations:** Pleiades, Orion and Arcturus (9:9; 38:31-32).
- **Heat beneath the earth:** "under it is turned up as it were fire" (28:5).

Above all, God's speeches teach that He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and that creation itself testifies to His wisdom (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20).

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Job

1. The Sovereignty of God

God rules over Satan, nature, nations and every circumstance. Nothing happens outside His permission and purpose (1:12; 2:6; 42:2).

2. God Is Worthy of Worship for Who He Is

Satan claimed Job served God only for blessings (1:9). Job's faithfulness proved that God is worthy of love even when the gifts are gone.

3. The Reality and Limits of Satan

Satan is a real, malicious accuser, but he is under God's authority and cannot go beyond the limits God sets.

4. The Mystery of Suffering

Suffering is not always explained, and not always caused by the sufferer's sin. God's purposes may be hidden, but they are wise and good.

5. The Danger of Simplistic Theology

The friends' rigid system led them to accuse an innocent man and misrepresent God (42:7).

6. Honest Prayer

Job spoke honestly, even bitterly, to God, and God said he had spoken what was right compared to the friends (42:7). God welcomes honest prayer from a heart that holds on to Him.

7. The Need for a Mediator and Redeemer

Job's cries for a daysman, an advocate and a redeemer point to Christ (9:33; 16:19; 19:25).

8. Hope of Resurrection

Job looked beyond death to seeing God in his flesh (14:14; 19:25-27).

9. True Wisdom

"The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (28:28).

10. Humility Before God's Majesty

The right response to God's greatness is humble trust: "I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (40:4); "now mine eye seeth thee" (42:5).

11. Intercession and Forgiveness

Job's restoration came when he prayed for the friends who had wronged him (42:10).

12. God's Compassion and Final Good

"The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). The end of the story reveals the goodness of God.

Part Eight: Connections — How Job Links to the Rest of the Bible

Job in the New Testament

Job	New Testament	Use
1:7; 1-2 (Satan)	1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9-10; Luke 22:31-32	The adversary walking about; the accuser; sifted as wheat
1:21	1 Timothy 6:7	We brought nothing in and can carry nothing out
1:12; 2:6 (limits on Satan)	1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9	God limits testing; grace sufficient
5:13	1 Corinthians 3:19	"He taketh the wise in their own craftiness"
5:17	Hebrews 12:5-6	Despise not the chastening of the Lord
9:33	1 Timothy 2:5	One mediator between God and men
13:16; 19:25-27	1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 John 3:2; John 11:25	Salvation; resurrection; seeing Christ
16:10; 30:10	Matthew 26:67; 27:30	Struck on the cheek; spat upon
16:19-21	1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25	An advocate in heaven
23:10	1 Peter 1:6-7; James 1:2-4	Faith tried as gold
28:28	1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3	Christ the wisdom of God
31:1	Matthew 5:28	Lust in the heart
33:24	Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6	A ransom
38:41	Luke 12:24	God feeds the ravens
41:11	Romans 11:35	Who hath first given to God?
42:5	Matthew 5:8	The pure in heart shall see God
42:8-10	Matthew 5:44; Luke 23:34	Praying for those who wrong us
The whole book	James 5:11	The patience of Job and the end of the Lord
The friends' error	John 9:2-3; Luke 13:1-5	Suffering not always due to personal sin

Job in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The names Uz, Buz, Shuah and Teman (10:23; 22:21; 25:2; 36:11, 28); the patriarchal setting; the serpent (3), the accuser of Job; creation (1; Job 38)
Exodus	God's character: merciful and gracious (34:6; James 5:11)
Deuteronomy	The blessings and curses (28), which the friends wrongly turned into an absolute rule for individuals

Book	Link
Ruth	The goel, the kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 3-4; Job 19:25)
1 Chronicles	Satan provokes David (21:1)
Psalms	"What is man?" (8:4; Job 7:17); the prosperity of the wicked (37; 73; Job 21); lament in darkness (22; 88); God's works in creation (104; Job 38-39); leviathan (74:14; 104:26); "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (17:15)
Proverbs	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (1:7; 9:10; Job 28:28); despise not the chastening of the LORD (3:11-12; Job 5:17)
Ecclesiastes	Life's mysteries and the conclusion to fear God (12:13)
Isaiah	God's incomparable wisdom and power (40:12-26); "my thoughts are not your thoughts" (55:8-9); leviathan punished (27:1); the righteous Servant who suffers (53)
Jeremiah	Cursing the day of birth (20:14-18; Job 3)
Lamentations	"The daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz" (4:21)
Ezekiel	Noah, Daniel and Job as righteous men (14:14, 20)
Daniel	Resurrection: "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (12:2)
Habakkuk	Why do the wicked prosper? Faith in the midst of loss (1:2-4; 3:17-18)
Zechariah	Satan the accuser standing before the LORD (3:1-2)

Themes That Run from Job Through Scripture

Theme	In Job	Developed	Fulfilled
The suffering righteous one	1-2; 16; 19	Psalm 22; Isaiah 53	Matthew 27; 1 Peter 2:21-24
The Redeemer	19:25	Ruth 4; Isaiah 59:20	Galatians 3:13; Titus 2:14
The Mediator	9:33; 16:19-21; 33:23	Isaiah 53:12	1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25
Resurrection	14:14; 19:26	Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2	1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:16
Satan the accuser	1-2	Zechariah 3:1	Revelation 12:10; 20:10
Wisdom from God	28	Proverbs 8	1 Corinthians 1:24; Colossians 2:3
God's sovereignty in suffering	1:21; 42:2	Genesis 50:20	Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4:17
Trial refining faith	23:10	Malachi 3:3	1 Peter 1:7; James 1:2-4

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **Guard your family spiritually** (1:5).
- **Remember that Satan's power is limited by God** (1:12; 2:6).
- **Worship even in loss** (1:20-21).
- **Accept both good and hard things from God's hand** (2:10).
- **Sit with the suffering; say less** (2:13).
- **Don't assume suffering means sin** (4:7; John 9:3).
- **Comfort with love, not lectures** (16:2-5).
- **Pray honestly; God can handle your questions** (3; 7; 10).
- **Trust Him even when you cannot see Him** (13:15; 23:8-10).
- **Hold on to the hope of resurrection** (19:25-27).
- **Value God's Word more than your food** (23:12).
- **Make a covenant with your eyes** (31:1).
- **Treat every person with dignity, because God made them** (31:13-15).
- **Listen for God in your trials** (33:14-30).
- **Consider God's works in creation** (37:14).
- **Humble yourself before His majesty** (40:4).
- **Seek to know God, not just answers** (42:5).
- **Pray for those who have hurt you** (42:10).
- **Remember the end of the Lord** (James 5:11).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:21	Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.
2:10	Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?
13:15	Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him
14:14	If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.
19:25	For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth
23:10	But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.
26:7	He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.
28:28	Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.
38:4	Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
42:2	I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.
42:5	I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.
42:10	And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends

Conclusion

Job takes on the hardest question human beings ask, and answers it not with a formula but with a Person. A righteous man loses everything in a contest he never sees, sits in ashes while his friends accuse him, cries out for a mediator, a witness and a redeemer, and holds on to God in the dark: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." God never explains Satan's challenge, but He comes in the whirlwind and reveals His wisdom, power and care, and Job's questions give way to worship: "now mine eye seeth thee." Job is vindicated, prays for his friends, and is restored twice over. The book points to the One Job longed for: Jesus Christ, the Daysman who lays His hand on both God and man, the Advocate in heaven, the living Redeemer who will stand on the earth, the true Righteous Sufferer whose suffering accomplished salvation, and through whom every believer will one day see God with their own eyes.

> *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*
>
> **Job 19:25**

Psalms

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: David (73), Asaph, sons of Korah, Solomon, Moses and others • Date: c. 1440-450 BC • Chapters: 150

> *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
>
> **Psalm 23:1**

Part One: Introduction to Psalms

The Name

The Hebrew title is Tehillim, "Praises." The English title comes from the Greek psalmoi, songs sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. The collection is also called the Psalter. Psalms is the Bible's hymnbook and prayer book: 150 inspired songs and prayers covering every experience of the believer's life, from despair to delight, from confession to celebration. It is the longest book in the Bible, and contains both the longest chapter (Psalm 119, 176 verses) and the shortest (Psalm 117, 2 verses).

Authors

Many psalms have titles (superscriptions) naming their author or occasion. In the Hebrew Bible these titles are part of the text, and the New Testament treats them as reliable (Matthew 22:43-45; Acts 2:25-31).

Author	Psalms	Notes
David	73 by title (3-9, 11-32, 34-41, 51-65, 68-70, 86, 101, 103, 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138-145)	Also Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25) and Psalm 95 (Hebrews 4:7); "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1)
Asaph	12 (50, 73-83)	David's chief musician and seer (1 Chronicles 16:5; 2 Chronicles 29:30)
The sons of Korah	11 (42, 44-49, 84-85, 87-88)	Levite singers descended from the rebel Korah (Numbers 16; 26:11)
Solomon	2 (72, 127)	
Moses	1 (90)	The oldest psalm
Heman the Ezrahite	1 (88, with the sons of Korah)	A temple singer and wise man (1 Kings 4:31)
Ethan the Ezrahite	1 (89)	A temple singer
Anonymous	About 50	Including many in Books IV and V

The psalms span about a thousand years, from Moses (around 1440 BC, Psalm 90) to the return from exile (Psalms 126 and 137, around 500 BC).

The Five Books of Psalms

The Psalter is divided into five books, each ending with a doxology (a closing word of praise). Jewish tradition compared them to the five books of Moses.

Book	Psalms	Main Authors	Closing Doxology	Character
I	1-41	Mostly David	41:13	Personal prayers; David's conflicts; the righteous and the wicked

Book	Psalms	Main Authors	Closing Doxology	Character
II	42-72	David; sons of Korah	72:18-20	Deliverance; the King; "the prayers of David... are ended"
III	73-89	Asaph; sons of Korah	89:52	The nation in crisis; the sanctuary; the covenant with David questioned
IV	90-106	Mostly anonymous	106:48	The LORD reigns; God's faithfulness through history
V	107-150	David and anonymous	150 (the whole psalm)	Thanksgiving, ascents, the Word, and climactic praise

The book moves from lament toward praise: it begins with the blessed man (Psalm 1) and ends with "Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD" (150:6).

Types of Psalms

Psalm Type	Description	Examples
Praise (hymns)	Celebrate God's character and works	8, 19, 29, 33, 100, 103, 145-150
Lament (individual)	Cry to God in distress, usually ending in trust	3, 13, 22, 42-43, 88
Lament (community)	The nation cries out in disaster	44, 74, 79, 80, 137
Thanksgiving	Thanks for specific deliverance	18, 30, 34, 116, 118
Penitential	Confession of sin	6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143
Royal and Messianic	The king, and the coming Messiah	2, 18, 20-21, 45, 72, 89, 110
Wisdom	Teaching about how to live	1, 37, 49, 73, 112, 127-128
Historical	Retell God's acts in Israel's history	78, 105, 106, 135, 136
Imprecatory	Call for God's judgment on the wicked	35, 58, 69, 109, 137
Songs of Ascents	Pilgrim songs going up to Jerusalem	120-134
Trust	Confidence in God's care	11, 16, 23, 27, 62, 91, 121
Acrostic	Each verse or section begins with the next Hebrew letter	9-10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145

Hebrew Poetry

Hebrew poetry rhymes ideas rather than sounds, through **parallelism**:

- **Synonymous:** the second line repeats the first in different words. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (19:1).

- **Antithetic:** the second line contrasts with the first. "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (1:6).
- **Synthetic:** the second line completes or develops the first. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (23:1).

Because it rhymes thought rather than sound, Hebrew poetry translates into every language with its power intact. The word **"Selah"** appears 71 times in Psalms (and three times in Habakkuk 3). Its meaning is uncertain; it is probably a musical or liturgical direction, perhaps a pause to reflect or a call to lift up the voice.

Psalms and Christ

Psalms is quoted in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament book. Jesus said, "all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). The Psalms foretell Christ's sonship (2), His incarnation (40), His betrayal (41), His crucifixion (22; 69), His resurrection (16), His ascension (68), His priesthood (110) and His eternal reign (45; 72; 110). Jesus prayed the Psalms on the cross (22:1; 31:5), and the early church sang them (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

Purpose and Theme

The Psalms teach God's people how to worship, pray, trust, lament, confess and praise. They show that every emotion can be brought honestly to God. Their central theme is the LORD Himself, His reign, His faithfulness and His salvation, and the right response of His people: trust and praise.

> *Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.*
>
> **Psalm 150:6**

Part Two: Psalm-by-Psalm Analysis

Book I: Psalms 1-41

Psalm 1 — The Two Ways

The gateway to the Psalter contrasts two ways of life. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (1:1-2). Notice the downward progression of walking, standing and sitting with sin. The righteous man is "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (1:3); the ungodly "are like the chaff which the wind driveth away" (1:4). "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (1:6). Christ is the perfectly blessed Man who delighted in God's law (40:8), and through Him believers become fruitful trees (John 15:5; Jeremiah 17:7-8).

Psalm 2 — The LORD's Anointed King

The nations rage and plot "against the LORD, and against his anointed" (2:1-2). God laughs (2:4) and declares, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (2:6). The King speaks: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee" (2:7). He will receive the nations as an inheritance and rule them "with a rod of iron" (2:8-9). The psalm ends with a warning and invitation: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (2:12). The early church applied 2:1-2 to the plot against Jesus (Acts 4:25-27); Paul applied 2:7 to His resurrection (Acts 13:33); Hebrews to His superiority over angels (Hebrews 1:5; 5:5); and Revelation to His rule (Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15). Psalms 1 and 2 together introduce the whole book: the blessed man and the blessed King.

Psalm 3 — Peace in Danger

Written "when he fled from Absalom his son" (2 Samuel 15). "LORD, how are they increased that trouble me!" (3:1). Many said, "There is no help for him in God" (3:2). "But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head" (3:3). "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me" (3:5). "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD" (3:8).

Psalm 4 — An Evening Prayer

"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress" (4:1). "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (4:4; quoted in Ephesians 4:26 from the Greek). "LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us" (4:6). "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety" (4:8).

Psalm 5 — A Morning Prayer

"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (5:3). God hates wickedness and lies (5:4-6), but David enters God's house "in the multitude of thy mercy" (5:7). The enemies' "throat is an open sepulchre" (5:9; quoted in Romans 3:13). "For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield" (5:12).

Psalm 6 — A Cry for Mercy

The first of the seven penitential psalms. "O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger" (6:1). "Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak" (6:2). "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears" (6:6). Then the turn: "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping" (6:8; Jesus echoes this in Matthew 7:23).

Psalm 7 — The Righteous Judge

David appeals to God against false accusation by "Cush the Benjamite." "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day" (7:11). The wicked man "made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head" (7:15-16).

Psalm 8 — The Glory of God and the Dignity of Man

"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens" (8:1). "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength" (8:2; quoted by Jesus in Matthew 21:16). Looking at the heavens, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (8:4-6). Man's dignity comes from God's creation (Genesis 1:26-28). Hebrews 2:6-9 shows that this dominion, lost by Adam, is fulfilled in Jesus, "who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour" (also 1 Corinthians 15:27).

Psalms 9-10 — God, the Judge and the Refuge of the Oppressed

These two psalms together form an acrostic. "I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works" (9:1). "The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee" (9:9-10). "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (9:17). Psalm 10 asks, "Why standest thou afar off, O LORD?" (10:1), describes the proud wicked man who says "God hath forgotten" (10:4, 11), and his mouth "full of cursing and deceit" (10:7; Romans 3:14), and ends, "The LORD is King for ever and ever" (10:16).

Psalm 11 — When the Foundations Are Destroyed

Advised to "Flee as a bird to your mountain," David answers, "In the LORD put I my trust" (11:1). "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (11:3). The answer: "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven" (11:4). "For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright" (11:7).

Psalm 12 — Pure Words in a Lying World

"Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth" (12:1). People speak "with flattering lips and with a double heart" (12:2). In contrast, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever" (12:6-7), a verse often cited for God's preservation of His Word.

Psalm 13 — How Long?

"How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" (13:1). Four times "How long?" Then, without any change in circumstances: "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me" (13:5-6). Lament turns to trust.

Psalm 14 — The Fool and Universal Sin

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (14:1). "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (14:3). Paul quotes this to prove that "all have sinned" (Romans 3:10-12). It closes with longing: "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" (14:7). Psalm 53 nearly repeats it.

Psalm 15 — Who Shall Dwell in God's Presence?

"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?" (15:1). The answer is a portrait of integrity: he walks uprightly, speaks truth in his heart, does not slander or harm his neighbour, honours those who fear the LORD, keeps his word even when it hurts ("He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not"), and does not take bribes or usury (15:2-5). Only Christ perfectly meets this standard; in Him we are made acceptable (Ephesians 1:6).

Psalm 16 — The Resurrection Psalm

"Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust" (16:1). "The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance... The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places" (16:5-6). "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (16:8).

> *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*
>
> **Psalm 16:10-11**

Peter preached at Pentecost that David could not have meant himself, since "he is both dead and buried," but "being a prophet... he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ" (Acts 2:25-31). Paul made the same argument (Acts 13:35-37).

Psalm 17 — The Apple of the Eye

A prayer for vindication and protection: "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings" (17:8). It ends with resurrection hope: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (17:15; 1 John 3:2).

Psalm 18 — The LORD My Rock

David's great song of deliverance from Saul (also in 2 Samuel 22). "I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer" (18:1-2). God came down in storm and earthquake (18:7-15) and "drew me out of many waters" (18:16). "As for God, his way is perfect" (18:30). "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (18:35). Paul quotes 18:49 for the Gentiles praising God (Romans 15:9).

Psalm 19 — The Two Books of God

God speaks through creation: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (19:1). The sun runs its course "as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber" (19:5). Their message goes "to the end of the world" (19:4; Romans 10:18). God speaks even more clearly through His Word: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (19:7). His Word is "more to be desired... than gold... sweeter also than honey" (19:10). It warns and rewards (19:11). The psalm ends with personal prayer: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins... Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer" (19:12-14).

Psalms 20-21 — Prayer for the King and Praise for His Victory

Psalm 20 is the people's prayer before battle: "The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble" (20:1). "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God" (20:7). Psalm 21 gives thanks after victory: the king "asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever" (21:4), words fulfilled in Christ, the King who lives for ever.

Psalm 22 — The Crucifixion Psalm

Written by David about a thousand years before Christ, and centuries before crucifixion was invented, this psalm describes the cross from the inside. It begins with the cry Jesus spoke from the cross:

> *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*
>
> **Psalm 22:1**

The sufferer is despised and mocked: "All they that see me laugh me to scorn... He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him" (22:7-8; Matthew 27:39-43). He is surrounded by enemies, "strong bulls of Bashan" and "dogs" (22:12, 16). His body is described: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax... my tongue cleaveth to my jaws" (22:14-15; John 19:28). "They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (22:16-18; John 19:23-24; 20:25). Then at verse 21 the psalm turns: "thou hast heard me." The sufferer declares God's name to his brethren (22:22; quoted of Christ in Hebrews 2:12), and his deliverance results in

worldwide worship: "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD" (22:27). It ends, "they shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this" (22:31), echoing "It is finished" (John 19:30). See the full table in Part Three.

Psalm 23 — The LORD Is My Shepherd

The best-loved psalm.

> *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*
>
> **Psalm 23**

David, a shepherd, describes God as his Shepherd: providing (rest, food, water), restoring, guiding, protecting through death, hosting a feast in the presence of enemies, and bringing him home for ever. Jesus declared, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Many see Psalms 22, 23 and 24 as a trilogy: the Good Shepherd who dies (22; John 10:11), the Great Shepherd who cares (23; Hebrews 13:20), and the Chief Shepherd who will come in glory (24; 1 Peter 5:4).

Psalm 24 — The King of Glory

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof" (24:1; 1 Corinthians 10:26). "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?... He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart" (24:3-4). Probably sung when David brought the ark to Jerusalem: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle... The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory" (24:7-10). Christians have sung it of Christ's ascension and His return.

Psalm 25 — Teach Me Thy Paths

An acrostic prayer for guidance and forgiveness. "Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul" (25:1). "Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths" (25:4). "Remember not the sins of my youth" (25:7). "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant" (25:14).

Psalm 26 — Integrity

"Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity" (26:1). "Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart" (26:2). "LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house" (26:8).

Psalm 27 — The LORD Is My Light

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (27:1). "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD" (27:4). "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up" (27:10). "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart" (27:14).

Psalm 28 — The LORD My Strength and Shield

A cry not to be treated like the wicked, followed by praise: "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped" (28:7).

Psalm 29 — The Voice of the LORD

A thunderstorm psalm. Seven times "the voice of the LORD" sounds over the waters, breaks the cedars, divides flames of fire and shakes the wilderness (29:3-9). "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (29:2). "The LORD sitteth King for ever. The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace" (29:10-11).

Psalm 30 — Joy Comes in the Morning

A thanksgiving for healing. "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (30:5). "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing" (30:11).

Psalm 31 — Into Thine Hand

"Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth" (31:5). Jesus spoke these words as He died (Luke 23:46), and Stephen echoed them (Acts 7:59). "My times are in thy hand" (31:15). "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD" (31:24).

Psalm 32 — The Joy of Forgiveness

A penitential psalm, probably after David's sin with Bathsheba. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity" (32:1-2). Paul quotes this as proof of justification without works (Romans 4:6-8). While David kept silent, "my bones waxed old" (32:3-4). "I acknowledged my sin unto thee... and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (32:5). "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (32:8).

Psalm 33 — Sing a New Song

"Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright" (33:1). "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made" (33:6). "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (33:12). "Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield" (33:20).

Psalm 34 — Taste and See

An acrostic from when David feigned madness before Achish (1 Samuel 21). "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (34:1). "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (34:4). "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him" (34:7). "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (34:8; 1 Peter 2:3). Peter quotes 34:12-16 (1 Peter 3:10-12). "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart" (34:18). "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken" (34:20; fulfilled in John 19:36).

Psalm 35 — Plead My Cause

An imprecatory psalm against false accusers. "Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me" (35:1). "False witnesses did rise up" (35:11; Matthew 26:59-60). "Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause" (35:19; John 15:25).

Psalm 36 — The Fountain of Life

The wicked have "no fear of God before his eyes" (36:1; Romans 3:18). In contrast, "Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens... How excellent is thy lovingkindness... For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (36:5-9).

Psalm 37 — Fret Not

An acrostic wisdom psalm on the prosperity of the wicked. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers" (37:1). "Trust in the LORD, and do good" (37:3). "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (37:4-5). "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him" (37:7). "The meek shall inherit the earth" (37:11; Matthew 5:5). "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD" (37:23). "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (37:25).

Psalm 38 — The Burden of Sin

A penitential psalm. "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head" (38:3-4). "Lord, all my desire is before thee" (38:9). "Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation" (38:22).

Psalm 39 — The Brevity of Life

"LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am" (39:4). "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (39:5). "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee" (39:7).

Psalm 40 — "Lo, I Come"

"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me... He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock... And he hath put a new song in my mouth" (40:1-3).

> *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*
>
> **Psalm 40:6-8**

Hebrews 10:5-10 applies these words to Christ coming into the world: "a body hast thou prepared me." He came to do God's will by offering Himself once for all, replacing the animal sacrifices.

Psalm 41 — The Betrayed Friend

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor" (41:1). David, sick and surrounded by enemies, said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (41:9). Jesus quoted this of Judas (John 13:18). Book I closes with a doxology: "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen" (41:13).

Book II: Psalms 42-72

Psalms 42-43 — Thirsting for God

These two psalms belong together, sharing a refrain. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (42:1-2). The psalmist, far from the temple and mocked ("Where is thy God?" 42:3), remembers leading worship (42:4). The refrain speaks to his own soul: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance" (42:5, 11; 43:5). "Deep calleth unto deep" (42:7). "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me" (43:3). Spiritual depression is answered by preaching hope to oneself.

Psalm 44 — Faithful Yet Suffering

A national lament. Israel remembers God's past victories, "they got not the land in possession by their own sword... but thy right hand" (44:3), yet now has been defeated though it had not forsaken God (44:17-22). "Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (44:22), quoted by Paul of Christian suffering, followed by "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:36-37).

Psalm 45 — The Royal Wedding

A song for a royal wedding that clearly looks beyond any earthly king. "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips" (45:2).

> *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*
>
> **Psalm 45:6-7**

The King is addressed as "God," yet anointed by "God, thy God." Hebrews 1:8-9 applies this to the Son, a clear witness to Christ's deity and to the distinct persons of the Godhead. The bride, "the queen in gold

of Ophir" (45:9), is called to forget her father's house (45:10), a picture of the church as Christ's bride (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-8).

Psalm 46 — God Is Our Refuge

> *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea*
>
> **Psalm 46:1-2**

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (46:4). "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (46:7, 11). "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (46:10). Martin Luther based his hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" on this psalm.

Psalm 47 — God Is King of All the Earth

"O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth" (47:1-2). "God is gone up with a shout" (47:5), often read in connection with Christ's ascension. "God reigneth over the heathen" (47:8).

Psalm 48 — The City of the Great King

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion... the city of the great King" (48:2; Matthew 5:35). Kings came against it and fled in terror (48:4-7). "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (48:14).

Psalm 49 — Riches Cannot Redeem

A wisdom psalm. Wealth cannot buy life: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (49:7). The rich die like animals (49:12, 20). "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (49:15). Only God can pay the ransom (Mark 10:45; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

Psalm 50 — God Judges His People

Asaph's psalm pictures God summoning His people to judgment. He does not need their sacrifices: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills" (50:10). "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (50:14-15). He rebukes the hypocrite who recites His covenant but lives wickedly (50:16-21).

Psalm 51 — Create in Me a Clean Heart

David's prayer after Nathan confronted him about Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12), the greatest prayer of repentance in Scripture.

> *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*
>
> **Psalm 51:1-2**

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (51:4; Romans 3:4). "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (51:5): original sin. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (51:7). "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (51:10-12). Restored, he would teach transgressors God's ways (51:13). "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (51:17).

Psalm 52 — Against Doeg

Written when Doeg the Edomite betrayed David to Saul (1 Samuel 22:9-19). The boastful man who trusted in riches will be uprooted, "But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever" (52:8).

Psalm 53 — The Fool (Again)

Nearly identical to Psalm 14, using the name "God" (Elohim) rather than "the LORD." "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (53:1). The repetition underlines universal sinfulness (Romans 3:10-12).

Psalm 54 — Betrayed by the Ziphites

When the Ziphites betrayed David (1 Samuel 23:19). "Save me, O God, by thy name" (54:1). "Behold, God is mine helper" (54:4).

Psalm 55 — Betrayed by a Friend

"Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest" (55:6). The pain is betrayal by a close companion: "it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company" (55:13-14), a picture of Judas. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray" (55:17). "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee" (55:22; 1 Peter 5:7).

Psalm 56 — When I Am Afraid

When the Philistines seized David in Gath (1 Samuel 21:10-15). "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee... I will not fear what flesh can do unto me" (56:3-4). "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?" (56:8). God records every tear.

Psalm 57 — In the Cave

When David fled from Saul into the cave (1 Samuel 22; 24). "In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast" (57:1). "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise" (57:7). "Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens" (57:5, 11).

Psalm 58 — Unjust Judges

An imprecatory psalm against corrupt rulers. "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth" (58:11).

Psalm 59 — Watched by Saul's Men

When Saul sent men to watch David's house to kill him (1 Samuel 19:11). "Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy" (59:17).

Psalm 60 — Through God We Shall Do Valiantly

From David's wars with Aram and Edom (2 Samuel 8:13). After a defeat, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" (60:4). "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly" (60:11-12).

Psalm 61 — The Rock That Is Higher Than I

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (61:2). "I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings" (61:4).

Psalm 62 — My Soul Waiteth Upon God

"Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation" (62:1-2). "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us" (62:8). "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (62:10). "Power belongeth unto God. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy" (62:11-12).

Psalm 63 — Thirsting in the Wilderness

Written in the wilderness of Judah. "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is" (63:1). "Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee" (63:3). "I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches" (63:6).

Psalm 64 — Secret Plots Exposed

The wicked shoot words like arrows in secret (64:3-4), but "God shall shoot at them with an arrow" (64:7). "The righteous shall be glad in the LORD" (64:10).

Psalm 65 — The God of the Harvest

"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion" (65:1). "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (65:2). God forgives (65:3), stills the seas (65:7), and waters the earth: "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness... The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing" (65:11-13).

Psalm 66 — Come and See

"Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands" (66:1). "Come and see the works of God" (66:5): He turned the sea into dry land (66:6). He tested His people "as silver is tried" (66:10-12). "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (66:18). "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (66:16).

Psalm 67 — Let All the Nations Praise Thee

A missionary psalm built on the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24-26): "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (67:1-3). God blesses His people so that the nations will know Him.

Psalm 68 — God Marches in Triumph

"Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered" (68:1; Numbers 10:35). "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families" (68:5-6). God's procession from Sinai to Zion (68:7-18):

> *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.*
>
> **Psalm 68:18**

Paul applies this to Christ's ascension and His gifts to the church (Ephesians 4:8-12). "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits" (68:19).

Psalm 69 — The Suffering of the Righteous Servant

After Psalm 22, the most quoted psalm of Christ's sufferings in the New Testament. "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul" (69:1). "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head" (69:4; John 15:25). "I am become a stranger unto my brethren" (69:8; John 7:5). "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me" (69:9; John 2:17; Romans 15:3). "Reproach hath broken my heart... I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (69:20-21; Matthew 27:34, 48). The imprecations that follow (69:22-28) are applied to Judas and to Israel's unbelief (Acts 1:20; Romans 11:9-10). The psalm ends in praise and hope for Zion (69:30-36).

Psalm 70 — Make Haste

A short, urgent prayer (nearly identical to 40:13-17). "Make haste, O God, to deliver me... But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God" (70:1, 5).

Psalm 71 — Faith in Old Age

"In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion" (71:1). "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth" (71:9). "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth... Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation" (71:17-18).

Psalm 72 — The King's Righteous Reign

"A Psalm for Solomon," a prayer for the king that describes a reign far greater than Solomon's: the King will judge the poor with righteousness (72:2-4), endure "as long as the sun and moon" (72:5), and "come down like rain upon the mown grass" (72:6). "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (72:8). "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (72:10-11; compare the wise men, Matthew 2:11; Isaiah 60:6). "His name shall endure for ever... and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed" (72:17). Book II closes: "Blessed be the LORD God... And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended" (72:18-20).

Book III: Psalms 73-89

Psalm 73 — When the Wicked Prosper

Asaph confesses: "my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (73:2-3). They seemed to have no troubles (73:4-12), and he wondered whether his faithfulness was in vain (73:13-14). "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end" (73:17): they stand on slippery ground and will be destroyed (73:18-20). Then his heart turned to God:

> *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*
>
> **Psalm 73:25-26**

"It is good for me to draw near to God" (73:28).

Psalm 74 — The Sanctuary Destroyed

A lament after the enemy destroyed the temple (likely 586 BC). "O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever?" (74:1). "We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet" (74:9). Israel appeals to God's past power: He divided the sea and broke "the heads of leviathan" (74:13-14). "Have respect unto the covenant" (74:20).

Psalm 75 — God Is the Judge

"For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (75:6-7). God holds the cup of judgment (75:8).

Psalm 76 — God's Victory in Zion

Probably celebrating the defeat of Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:35). "In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel" (76:1). "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee" (76:10).

Psalm 77 — Remembering in the Night

"I cried unto God with my voice... my soul refused to be comforted" (77:1-2). "Will the Lord cast off for ever?... Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" (77:7-9). Then: "I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old" (77:11). He recalls the Red Sea: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron" (77:19-20). Remembering God's past faithfulness lifts present despair.

Psalm 78 — Lessons from History

The longest historical psalm. "I will open my mouth in a parable" (78:2; applied to Jesus' parables, Matthew 13:35). Its purpose: to tell the next generation "that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation" (78:4-8). It recounts Israel's repeated unbelief in the wilderness (78:9-41): "they tempted God in their heart" and asked, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" (78:18-19). God gave manna, "the corn of heaven... man did eat angels' food" (78:24-25; John 6:31), yet "they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation" (78:22). "But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity" (78:38). It reviews the plagues, the conquest, the loss of the ark at Shiloh (78:60-64), and ends with God choosing Judah, Zion and David, "from following the ewes... to feed Jacob his people" (78:67-72).

Psalm 79 — Jerusalem in Ruins

"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps" (79:1). "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake" (79:9).

Psalm 80 — Turn Us Again

A refrain repeated three times: "Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved" (80:3, 7, 19). Israel is a vine God brought out of Egypt and planted, now broken down (80:8-16; compare Isaiah 5; John 15). "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself" (80:17).

Psalm 81 — Open Thy Mouth Wide

A festival psalm. "Sing aloud unto God our strength" (81:1). God reminds Israel of the Exodus and His command against other gods (81:6-10): "open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (81:10). "But my people would not hearken to my voice... So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust" (81:11-12). "Oh that my people had hearkened unto me" (81:13).

Psalm 82 — God Judges the Judges

"God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods" (82:1). The "gods" are human judges with God-given authority who judge unjustly (82:2-4). "I have said, Ye are gods... But ye shall die like men" (82:6-7). Jesus quoted 82:6 when accused of blasphemy for calling Himself the Son of God (John 10:34-36). "Arise, O God, judge the earth" (82:8).

Psalm 83 — Against the Confederacy

Nations conspire to wipe out Israel, "that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (83:4). The psalmist asks God to deal with them "as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin" (83:9; Judges 4-7), "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth" (83:18).

Psalm 84 — How Amiable Are Thy Tabernacles

A pilgrim's love for God's house. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD" (84:1-2). Even the sparrow finds a home near God's altars (84:3). "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house" (84:4). Pilgrims passing "through the valley of Baca [weeping] make it a well" and "go from strength to strength" (84:6-7).

> *For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*
>
> **Psalm 84:10-11**

Psalm 85 — Revive Us Again

"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (85:6). "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (85:10), a beautiful picture fulfilled at the cross, where God's justice and mercy meet (Romans 3:26).

Psalm 86 — Teach Me Thy Way

"Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy" (86:1). "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee" (86:5). "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee" (86:9). "Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name" (86:11).

Psalm 87 — Born in Zion

A short prophecy that people from the nations, Egypt ("Rahab"), Babylon, Philistia, Tyre and Ethiopia, will be counted as born in Zion (87:4-6). "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God" (87:3). Paul speaks of "Jerusalem which is above... which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26), and Hebrews of "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22-23).

Psalm 88 — The Darkest Psalm

Heman's lament is one of the very few psalms that end without a clear turn to hope. "My soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave" (88:3). "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness" (88:6). "LORD, why castest thou off my soul?" (88:14). It ends: "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness" (88:18). Yet it begins, "O LORD God of my salvation" (88:1): even in the deepest darkness, Heman keeps praying to God. Scripture includes this psalm to show that faith can survive seasons without answers.

Psalm 89 — The Covenant with David

Ethan celebrates God's covenant with David: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (89:3-4). "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him" (89:20). "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father... Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth" (89:26-27; compare Revelation 1:5). Even if his sons sin, "My covenant will I not break... Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (89:30-37). But then the psalm laments that the crown has been cast to the ground (89:38-45), likely after the exile: "Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?" (89:49). The answer is Christ, the Son of David who reigns for ever (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30). Book III closes: "Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen" (89:52).

Book IV: Psalms 90-106

Psalm 90 — Teach Us to Number Our Days

"A Prayer of Moses the man of God," the oldest psalm, probably written as the generation of the Exodus died in the wilderness. "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth... even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (90:1-2). Man is like grass, "in the evening it is cut down, and withereth" (90:5-6). "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past" (90:4; 2 Peter 3:8). "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years" (90:10).

> *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*
>
> **Psalm 90:12**

"And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us" (90:17).

Psalm 91 — Under the Shadow of the Almighty

> *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*
>
> **Psalm 91:1-2**

God protects from the snare, pestilence, terror by night and arrow by day (91:3-8). "There shall no evil befall thee... For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (91:10-11). Satan quoted 91:11-12 to tempt Jesus to throw Himself from the temple, leaving out "in all thy ways"; Jesus answered, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matthew 4:6-7). God's promise is for those who walk in His ways, not for those who presume on Him. "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him... He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble" (91:14-16).

Psalm 92 — It Is Good to Give Thanks

"A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day." "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD... To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night" (92:1-2). "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree... They shall still bring forth fruit in old age" (92:12-14).

Psalm 93 — The LORD Reigneth

The first of several "The LORD reigneth" psalms (93; 96-99). "The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty... Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting" (93:1-2). The floods roar, "The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters" (93:4). "Holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever" (93:5).

Psalm 94 — God of Vengeance

"O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself" (94:1). "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" (94:9). "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD" (94:12). "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul" (94:19).

Psalm 95 — Come, Let Us Worship

"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation" (95:1). "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand" (95:6-7). Then a warning: "To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation... Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest" (95:7-11). Hebrews 3-4 builds its warning about unbelief on these verses and attributes the psalm to David (Hebrews 4:7).

Psalm 96 — Sing unto the LORD a New Song

"O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth" (96:1). "Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people" (96:3). "For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens" (96:5). "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (96:9). "Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth... for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness" (96:10-13). Much of it appears in 1 Chronicles 16:23-33.

Psalm 97 — Clouds and Darkness Round About Him

"The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice" (97:1). "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne" (97:2). "Worship him, all ye gods" (97:7; compare Hebrews 1:6). "Ye that love the LORD, hate evil" (97:10). "Light is sown for the righteous" (97:11).

Psalm 98 — Joy to the World

"O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory" (98:1). "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (98:3). Creation joins the praise: "Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth" (98:8-9). Isaac Watts based "Joy to the World" on this psalm.

Psalm 99 — Holy Is He

"The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims" (99:1). Three times the psalm declares God holy (99:3, 5, 9). "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them" (99:6).

Psalm 100 — Enter His Gates with Thanksgiving

> *Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*
>
> **Psalm 100**

The basis of the "Old Hundredth" hymn, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell."

Psalm 101 — A King's Resolutions

David's commitment to integrity in his life and court: "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way... I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes" (101:2-3). He will not tolerate slanderers or the proud (101:5-7).

Psalm 102 — The Unchanging God

A penitential prayer of "the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed." "My days are like a shadow that declineth" (102:11). "But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever" (102:12). God will rebuild Zion, "for the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD" (102:13-18). "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth... They shall perish, but thou shalt endure... But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (102:25-27). Hebrews 1:10-12 applies these words to the Son, the unchanging Creator.

Psalm 103 — Bless the LORD, O My Soul

> *Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies*
>
> **Psalm 103:1-4**

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (103:8; Exodus 34:6). "He hath not dealt with us after our sins... As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (103:10-14). Man is like grass, "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him" (103:15-17). All creation is called to bless Him (103:19-22).

Psalm 104 — The Creator's Works

A hymn on creation, following the order of Genesis 1. God is "clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain" (104:1-2). He set the earth's foundations (104:5), bounds for the sea (104:9), springs and rivers for animals (104:10-13), grass for cattle and "wine that maketh glad the heart of man" (104:14-15), trees, birds, mountains, the moon and sun (104:16-23). "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all" (104:24). Leviathan plays in the sea (104:26). All creatures wait on God: "thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good... thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created" (104:27-30). "I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live" (104:33).

Psalm 105 — Remember His Covenant

A historical psalm of God's faithfulness. "O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people" (105:1). "He hath remembered his covenant for ever... Which covenant he made with Abraham" (105:8-9). It recounts the patriarchs, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm" (105:15), Joseph sold as a servant (105:17-22), the plagues, the Exodus, the cloud, quails, manna and water from the rock (105:23-41), "For he remembered his holy promise" (105:42).

Psalm 106 — Israel's Unfaithfulness and God's Mercy

The companion of Psalm 105, telling the same history from the side of Israel's sin. "We have sinned with our fathers" (106:6). They forgot God at the Red Sea, yet "he saved them for his name's sake" (106:7-8). They lusted in the wilderness, "And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul" (106:15). They made a calf at Horeb (106:19-20); Moses "stood before him in the breach" (106:23). They believed not God's word (106:24), joined Baal-peor, and Phinehas stood up (106:28-31). In Canaan they sacrificed their children to idols (106:37-38). Yet "he regarded their affliction... and remembered for them his covenant" (106:44-45). "Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen" (106:47). Book IV closes: "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD" (106:48).

Book V: Psalms 107-150

Psalm 107 — Let the Redeemed Say So

"O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so" (107:1-2). Four pictures of people in distress who "cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them": wanderers in the desert (107:4-9), prisoners in darkness (107:10-16), the sick near death (107:17-22) ("He sent his word, and healed them," 107:20), and sailors in a storm (107:23-32) ("He maketh the storm a calm," 107:29; compare Mark 4:39). Each section ends, "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" (107:8, 15, 21, 31).

Psalm 108 — My Heart Is Fixed

Combined from parts of Psalms 57:7-11 and 60:5-12. "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise" (108:1). "Through God we shall do valiantly" (108:13).

Psalm 109 — Prayer Against a Betrayer

The strongest imprecatory psalm. David is attacked by those he loved: "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer" (109:4). Peter applied 109:8, "let another take his office," to the replacement of Judas (Acts 1:20). See Part Five on the imprecatory psalms.

Psalm 110 — The Lord at God's Right Hand

The most quoted psalm in the New Testament.

> *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*
>
> **Psalm 110:1**

David calls the Messiah "my Lord." Jesus asked the Pharisees, "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matthew 22:41-46). The answer: the Messiah is both David's Son (by human descent) and David's Lord (as God). Peter used this verse at Pentecost to prove Christ's exaltation (Acts 2:34-36); Hebrews repeatedly cites it (1:13; 10:12-13). The LORD's people "shall be willing in the day of thy power" (110:3).

> *The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*
>
> **Psalm 110:4**

The Messiah is both King and eternal Priest, like Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18). Hebrews 5-7 explains this priesthood at length. The psalm ends with His judgment on the nations (110:5-6).

Psalm 111 — Great Are the Works of the LORD

An acrostic of praise. "The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (111:2). "He sent redemption unto his people... holy and reverend is his name" (111:9). "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (111:10).

Psalm 112 — The Blessed Man

An acrostic companion to 111. "Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments" (112:1). "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness" (112:4). "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD" (112:7). "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor" (112:9; 2 Corinthians 9:9).

Psalms 113-118 — The Egyptian Hallel

These six psalms were sung at Jewish festivals, especially Passover: 113-114 before the meal and 115-118 after. When Jesus and His disciples "had sung an hymn" after the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30), they likely sang Psalms 115-118, with their words about the cup of salvation, death and the rejected stone.

Psalm 113 — Who Is Like unto the LORD? "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised" (113:3). He dwells on high yet "humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust" (113:5-7).

Psalm 114 — When Israel Went Out of Egypt. The sea fled and the Jordan was driven back; the mountains skipped like rams (114:1-6). "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord... Which turned the rock into a standing water" (114:7-8).

Psalm 115 — Not unto Us. "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory" (115:1). Idols "have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not... They that make them are like unto them" (115:5-8). "O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield" (115:9).

Psalm 116 — I Love the LORD. "I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice" (116:1). "The sorrows of death compassed me... Then called I upon the name of the LORD" (116:3-4). "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD" (116:12-13). "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints" (116:15). Paul quotes 116:10, "I believed, therefore have I spoken" (2 Corinthians 4:13).

Psalm 117 — The Shortest Psalm. "O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD" (117:1-2). Paul quotes it to show that God always intended the Gentiles to praise Him (Romans 15:11).

Psalm 118 — The Stone Which the Builders Refused. "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever" (118:1). "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" (118:6; Hebrews 13:6). "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (118:8).

> *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*
>
> **Psalm 118:22-24**

Jesus applied this to His rejection and exaltation (Matthew 21:42), as did Peter (Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7). "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD" (118:26) was shouted at the triumphal entry (Matthew 21:9), and Jesus said Israel would say it again at His return (Matthew 23:39).

Psalm 119 — The Word of God

The longest chapter in the Bible: 176 verses in 22 sections of eight verses, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, each verse in a section beginning with that letter. Almost every verse refers to God's Word, using words such as law, testimonies, ways, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments and word. The psalm is a love song to Scripture:

- **Purity:** "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (119:9). "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (119:11).
- **Spiritual sight:** "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (119:18).
- **Comfort in affliction:** "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me" (119:50). "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (119:71).
- **Eternal and settled:** "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (119:89).
- **Love and meditation:** "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (119:97). "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (119:103).
- **Guidance:**

> *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*
>
> **Psalm 119:105**

- **Understanding:** "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (119:130).
- **Truth:** "Thy word is true from the beginning" (119:160). Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).
- **Peace:** "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (119:165).
- **Humility:** "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments" (119:176).

Christ is the living Word (John 1:1, 14), who perfectly loved and obeyed God's law (Psalm 40:8).

Psalms 120-134 — The Songs of Degrees (Ascents)

Fifteen short psalms sung by pilgrims "going up" to Jerusalem for the feasts (Jerusalem stands high in the hills). They move from distress far away (120) to blessing in God's house (134).

Psalm 120 — Distress Among Liars. "In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me" (120:1). "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war" (120:7).

Psalm 121 — The LORD Thy Keeper. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth" (121:1-2). "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (121:4). "The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (121:8).

Psalm 122 — Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (122:1). "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (122:6).

Psalm 123 — Eyes Unto Thee. "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters... so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us" (123:2).

Psalm 124 — If the LORD Had Not Been on Our Side. "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick" (124:2-3). "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers... Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth" (124:7-8).

Psalm 125 — As the Mountains Are Round About Jerusalem. "They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed... As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people" (125:1-2).

Psalm 126 — Sowing in Tears. "When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter" (126:1-2). "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (126:3). "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (126:5-6).

Psalm 127 — Except the LORD Build the House. By Solomon. "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (127:1). "He giveth his beloved sleep" (127:2). "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (127:3).

Psalm 128 — The Blessed Home. "Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways" (128:1). "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine... thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (128:3).

Psalm 129 — Persecuted but Not Destroyed. "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth... yet they have not prevailed against me" (129:2). "The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows" (129:3), a picture often linked with Christ's scourging.

Psalm 130 — Out of the Depths. A penitential psalm. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD" (130:1). "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (130:3-4). "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning" (130:6). "With the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous

redemption" (130:7).

Psalm 131 — Like a Weaned Child. "LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty... Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother" (131:1-2).

Psalm 132 — The LORD Hath Chosen Zion. David's vow to find a place for the ark (132:1-5; 2 Samuel 6). "Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength" (132:8; 2 Chronicles 6:41). "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David... Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne" (132:11; Acts 2:30). "There will I make the horn of David to bud" (132:17; Luke 1:69).

Psalm 133 — Unity. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (133:1). It is like the anointing oil on Aaron's head and the dew of Hermon, "for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (133:2-3).

Psalm 134 — Bless Ye the LORD. The pilgrims' farewell to the night-watch priests: "Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD" (134:1).

Psalm 135 — Praise the Name of the LORD

"Praise ye the name of the LORD" (135:1). "For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself" (135:4). "Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth" (135:6). It recounts the Exodus and conquest and mocks idols (135:15-18; compare 115:4-8).

Psalm 136 — His Mercy Endureth for Ever

The "Great Hallel." Each of its 26 verses ends with the refrain "for his mercy endureth for ever." It praises God as the Creator (136:4-9), the Redeemer from Egypt (136:10-15), the Guide through the wilderness (136:16), the Conqueror of kings (136:17-22), and the One "Who remembered us in our low estate" (136:23). Every act of God, in creation, redemption and providence, flows from His enduring covenant love.

Psalm 137 — By the Rivers of Babylon

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (137:1). The exiles hung their harps on the willows when their captors demanded songs of Zion: "How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" (137:2-4). "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" (137:5). It ends with a terrible cry for judgment on Edom and Babylon (137:7-9), an echo of what Babylon had done to Jerusalem's children and of God's own prophecy against Babylon (Isaiah 13:16). See Part Five on the imprecatory psalms.

Psalm 138 — Thy Word Above Thy Name

"I will praise thee with my whole heart" (138:1). "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (138:2). "Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly" (138:6). "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me" (138:8; Philippians 1:6).

Psalm 139 — Searched and Known

One of the most personal psalms. God knows everything about David: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off... For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether" (139:1-4). He is everywhere present: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there... the darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (139:7-12). He made David in the womb:

> *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works... Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written*
>
> **Psalm 139:13-16**

This psalm teaches God's omniscience, omnipresence and creative care for each person from conception, the foundation of the value of every human life. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" (139:17). It ends: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (139:23-24).

Psalm 140 — Deliver Me from the Evil Man

"Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man" (140:1). The wicked "have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips" (140:3; Romans 3:13).

Psalm 141 — Set a Watch Before My Mouth

"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (141:2; Revelation 5:8). "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (141:3). "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness" (141:5).

Psalm 142 — In the Cave

"A Prayer when he was in the cave." "I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble" (142:2). "No man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living" (142:4-5).

Psalm 143 — Teach Me to Do Thy Will

The last penitential psalm. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (143:2; Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16). "My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land" (143:6). "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness" (143:10).

Psalm 144 — What Is Man?

"Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war" (144:1). "LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him!... Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow" (144:3-4). "Happy is that people, whose God is the LORD" (144:15).

Psalm 145 — Great Is the LORD

David's last psalm in the book, an acrostic of praise. "I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever" (145:1). "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another" (145:3-4). "The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The LORD is good to all" (145:8-9). "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" (145:13). "The LORD upholdeth all that fall" (145:14). "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (145:15-16). "The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (145:18).

Psalms 146-150 — The Final Hallelujah

Each of the last five psalms begins and ends with "Praise ye the LORD" (Hallelujah). Together they form the climax of the Psalter.

Psalm 146 — Put Not Your Trust in Princes. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help" (146:3). "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help" (146:5). The LORD executes judgment for the oppressed, feeds the hungry, frees prisoners, opens blind eyes, raises those bowed down, and protects strangers, widows and orphans (146:7-9), the very works Jesus did (Luke 4:18; 7:22). "The LORD shall reign for ever" (146:10).

Psalm 147 — He Healeth the Broken in Heart. "The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names" (147:2-4). "The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy" (147:11). "He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly" (147:15).

Psalm 148 — All Creation Praise Him. Everything in heaven (angels, sun, moon, stars, waters above) and on earth (sea creatures, weather, mountains, trees, animals, kings, young and old) is called to praise the LORD, "for he commanded, and they were created" (148:5). "Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven" (148:13).

Psalm 149 — A New Song for His Saints. "Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints" (149:1). "For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation" (149:4). The saints' praise is linked with God's judgment on the nations (149:6-9; compare Revelation 19:1-15).

Psalm 150 — Let Every Thing Praise the LORD. The grand finale. Praise God in His sanctuary and in the heavens (150:1), for His mighty acts and excellent greatness (150:2), with trumpet, psaltery, harp, timbrel, dance, stringed instruments, organs and cymbals (150:3-5).

> *Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.*

> **Psalm 150:6**

The Psalter that began with the blessed man meditating on God's law ends with all creation praising God, anticipating the worship of heaven, where "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth... heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:13).

Part Three: Christ in the Psalms

Messianic Prophecies in the Psalms

Psalm	Prophecy	Fulfillment
2:1-2	The rulers plot against the LORD's Anointed	Acts 4:25-28
2:7	"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee"	Matthew 3:17; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5
2:9	He will rule the nations with a rod of iron	Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15
8:2	Praise from the mouths of children	Matthew 21:15-16
8:4-6	Made a little lower than the angels; all things under His feet	Hebrews 2:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:27
16:8-11	His soul not left in hell; His body not to see corruption	Acts 2:25-31; 13:35-37
22:1	"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34
22:7-8	Mocked: "let him deliver him"	Matthew 27:39-43
22:16	"They pierced my hands and my feet"	Luke 24:39-40; John 20:25-27
22:18	Lots cast for His clothing	John 19:23-24
22:22	Declares God's name to His brethren	Hebrews 2:11-12
31:5	"Into thine hand I commit my spirit"	Luke 23:46
34:20	"Not one of them is broken"	John 19:32-36
35:11	False witnesses rise up	Matthew 26:59-61
35:19; 69:4	Hated without a cause	John 15:24-25
40:6-8	"Lo, I come... I delight to do thy will"	Hebrews 10:5-10
41:9	Betrayed by a familiar friend	John 13:18; Matthew 26:47-50
45:6-7	"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"	Hebrews 1:8-9
68:18	Ascended on high, led captivity captive, gave gifts	Ephesians 4:8-12
69:9	Zeal for God's house	John 2:17
69:21	Gall and vinegar	Matthew 27:34, 48; John 19:28-30
69:25; 109:8	The betrayer's office given to another	Acts 1:16-20
72:10-11	Kings bring Him gifts; all nations serve Him	Matthew 2:1-11; Revelation 21:24
78:2	Speaking in parables	Matthew 13:34-35
89:3-4, 26-27	David's seed on the throne for ever; the firstborn	Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 1:5
91:11-12	Angels charged to keep Him	Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:10-11
102:25-27	The unchanging Creator	Hebrews 1:10-12

Psalm	Prophecy	Fulfillment
110:1	Seated at God's right hand; David's Lord	Matthew 22:43-45; Acts 2:34-35; Hebrews 1:13
110:4	A priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek	Hebrews 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21
118:22-23	The rejected stone becomes the head of the corner	Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7
118:26	"Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD"	Matthew 21:9; 23:39
132:11	The fruit of David's body on his throne	Luke 1:32; Acts 2:30

Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion

Psalm 22	The Crucifixion
"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (22:1)	Jesus' cry from the cross (Matthew 27:46)
Crying in the daytime and the night season (22:2)	Darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour (Matthew 27:45)
"A reproach of men, and despised of the people" (22:6)	Despised and rejected (Isaiah 53:3; Luke 23:35)
"All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head" (22:7)	"They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads" (Matthew 27:39)
"He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him" (22:8)	"He trusted in God; let him deliver him now" (Matthew 27:43)
Surrounded by strong bulls and roaring lions (22:12-13)	Surrounded by hostile rulers and soldiers (Matthew 27:27-31)
"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint" (22:14)	The physical agony of crucifixion
"My tongue cleaveth to my jaws" (22:15)	"I thirst" (John 19:28)
"The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me" (22:16)	Crucified among transgressors (Mark 15:27-28)
"They pierced my hands and my feet" (22:16)	The nail prints (John 20:25-27)
"I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me" (22:17)	"The people stood beholding" (Luke 23:35)
"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (22:18)	The soldiers divided His garments and cast lots for His coat (John 19:23-24)
"Thou hast heard me" (22:21)	Raised from the dead (Hebrews 5:7)
"I will declare thy name unto my brethren" (22:22)	The risen Christ calls His disciples "my brethren" (John 20:17; Hebrews 2:12)
"All the ends of the world shall... turn unto the LORD" (22:27)	The gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19; Revelation 7:9)
"He hath done this" (22:31)	"It is finished" (John 19:30)

David wrote this psalm about a thousand years before Jesus' birth, long before the Romans used crucifixion. The details go far beyond anything David himself experienced; as Peter said of another psalm, "being a prophet... he seeing this before spake" of Christ (Acts 2:30-31).

The Offices of Christ in the Psalms

Office	Psalms	New Testament
Son of God	2:7, 12	Hebrews 1:5; Matthew 3:17
God Himself	45:6; 102:25-27	Hebrews 1:8, 10-12; John 20:28
King	2:6; 45; 72; 110:1-2	Revelation 19:16; Hebrews 1:13
Priest	110:4	Hebrews 5-7
Prophet	22:22; 40:9-10; 78:2	Matthew 13:35; Hebrews 2:12
Suffering Servant	22; 69	Matthew 27; John 19
Risen Lord	16:10; 118:17, 22	Acts 2:24-32; 4:10-11
Ascended Lord	24:7-10; 47:5; 68:18	Ephesians 4:8; Acts 1:9-11
Shepherd	23; 80:1	John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:4
Coming Judge	96:13; 98:9	Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Besides the Messianic prophecies above, the Psalms contain promises fulfilled in Israel's history and in the church:

Prophecy or Promise	Psalm	Fulfillment
God will gather Israel from the nations	106:47; 147:2	The return from exile (Ezra 1-2; Nehemiah 1-7)
"Their line is gone out through all the earth"	19:4	The worldwide spread of the gospel (Romans 10:18)
The nations will praise the LORD	67; 117	The Gentiles brought to God (Romans 15:9-11)
"Let another take his office"	109:8	Matthias replaces Judas (Acts 1:20-26)
The LORD's people willing in the day of His power	110:3	Pentecost (Acts 2:41)
The captivity of Zion turned	126:1	The return from Babylon
"Thou wilt arise, and have mercy upon Zion"	102:13	The rebuilding of Jerusalem

Part Five: Key Passages and Issues in Depth

Psalm 1 — The Foundation of the Psalter

Psalm 1 sets the tone for the whole book: there are only two ways, the way of the righteous who delight in God's Word, and the way of the ungodly. The blessed life is not built on avoiding sin alone ("walketh not... standeth not... sitteth not") but on positive delight in and meditation on God's law. Meditation means turning the Word over in the mind continually (Joshua 1:8). The result is stability, fruitfulness and prosperity in God's sense.

Psalm 23 — The Shepherd's Care

The psalm moves from green pastures (rest and provision) to paths of righteousness (guidance) to the valley of the shadow of death (protection in danger) to the banquet table (honour in the presence of enemies) to the house of the LORD for ever (eternal home). The pronouns change in verse 4, from "he" to "thou," as the psalmist speaks directly to God in the dark valley: "for thou art with me." The Shepherd's presence, not the absence of danger, removes fear.

Psalm 51 — The Anatomy of Repentance

Psalm 51 shows true repentance: an appeal to God's mercy, not to one's own merit (51:1); full confession of sin as sin against God (51:3-4); recognition of a sinful nature from birth (51:5); a desire for inward truth (51:6); a request for cleansing (51:7), a new heart (51:10), the Spirit's presence (51:11) and restored joy (51:12); a commitment to teach others (51:13); and the offering of a broken and contrite heart (51:17). It is the pattern for every believer who has fallen (1 John 1:9).

Psalm 119 — The Sufficiency of Scripture

Psalm 119 teaches that God's Word is perfect, true, eternal and sufficient. It cleanses (9), keeps from sin (11), comforts (50), gives understanding (104, 130), guides (105), sustains in affliction (92) and gives great peace (165). Meditation on it is to be continual (97) and delight in it is to be sweeter than honey (103). The psalmist's response is love, obedience, prayer and praise.

Psalm 139 — God's Knowledge and the Value of Life

Psalm 139 is the Bible's clearest statement of God's personal knowledge of each human being, His presence everywhere, and His creative work in the womb. Each person is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and God sees the unborn child's "substance, yet being unperfect" (139:14-16). Christians have rightly drawn from this psalm the sanctity of human life from conception (compare Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41-44).

The Imprecatory Psalms

Some psalms ask God to judge the wicked in strong terms (35; 58; 69; 109; 137). How should Christians read them, given Jesus' command to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44)?

- **They are prayers, not personal revenge.** The psalmists hand vengeance to God rather than taking it themselves (Romans 12:19). David personally spared Saul twice (1 Samuel 24; 26).
- **They express zeal for God's justice and honour.** The enemies are God's enemies who oppose His people and His righteousness (139:21-22).
- **They often echo God's own declared judgments** (compare Psalm 137:8-9 with Isaiah 13:16 and Jeremiah 51:24, 56).
- **They are honest.** God allows His suffering people to express their pain and desire for justice to Him.
- **The New Testament uses them.** Psalm 69 and 109 are applied to Judas (Acts 1:20), and Psalm 69:22-23 to Israel's unbelief (Romans 11:9-10). Revelation shows the martyrs asking, "How long, O Lord... dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?" (Revelation 6:10).
- **Christ reveals a fuller way.** He prayed for His enemies (Luke 23:34), and the New Testament calls believers to bless those who curse them while trusting God to judge justly (Romans 12:14-21; 1 Peter 2:23). Final justice belongs to Him (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9).

Lament: Honesty with God

About a third of the Psalms are laments. They teach that believers may bring confusion, grief, fear and even complaint to God. Most laments follow a pattern: address to God, complaint, request, expression of trust, and praise (Psalm 13 is a clear example). Lament is not unbelief; it is faith speaking honestly to the God it still trusts. Jesus Himself prayed a lament from the cross (22:1).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of the Psalms

1. God Is King

"The LORD reigneth" (93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1). God rules over creation, nations and history, and His kingdom is everlasting (145:13).

2. God Is Creator

The heavens declare His glory (19:1); He made all things by His word (33:6, 9); His works are manifold and wise (104:24). Creation calls all people to praise Him (148).

3. God's Steadfast Love and Faithfulness

His "mercy endureth for ever" (136), His lovingkindness is "better than life" (63:3), and His faithfulness reaches to the clouds (36:5).

4. God's Holiness and Justice

He is holy (99:3-9), hates wickedness (5:4-6), and will judge the world in righteousness (96:13).

5. The Word of God

God's Word is perfect, pure and eternal (12:6; 19:7-11; 119:89), the source of wisdom, guidance and life.

6. Sin, Repentance and Forgiveness

All have sinned (14:3); God forgives the penitent (32:1-5; 51; 103:3, 12; 130:3-4).

7. Trust in Trouble

God is refuge, fortress, rock and shield (18:2; 46:1; 91:1-2). The Psalms model faith under pressure.

8. Worship and Praise

Praise is the goal of the Psalter: with the whole heart (9:1; 138:1), with music (150), in the congregation (22:22; 35:18), and by all creation (148; 150:6).

9. The Messiah

The Psalms present the coming King, Son, Priest and Suffering Servant, fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Luke 24:44).

10. The Two Ways

The righteous and the wicked, their character and their destiny, are contrasted throughout (1; 37; 73).

11. Life, Death and Hope Beyond the Grave

Life is brief (39:4-5; 90:10; 103:15), but believers hope in God beyond death (16:10-11; 17:15; 49:15; 73:24).

12. God's Purpose for the Nations

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD" (22:27; 67; 96:3; 117).

Part Seven: Connections — How the Psalms Link to the Rest of the Bible

The Psalms in the New Testament

In addition to the Messianic quotations in Part Three, the New Testament uses the Psalms throughout:

Psalm	New Testament	Use
4:4	Ephesians 4:26	"Be ye angry, and sin not"
5:9; 10:7; 14:1-3; 36:1; 140:3	Romans 3:10-18	All have sinned
6:8	Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:27	"Depart from me, ye that work iniquity"
19:4	Romans 10:18	The gospel to the ends of the world
24:1	1 Corinthians 10:26, 28	The earth is the Lord's
32:1-2	Romans 4:6-8	Justification without works
34:8	1 Peter 2:3	"Ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious"
34:12-16	1 Peter 3:10-12	He that will love life
37:11	Matthew 5:5	The meek shall inherit the earth
44:22	Romans 8:36	Sheep for the slaughter
48:2	Matthew 5:35	The city of the great King
51:4	Romans 3:4	That thou mightest be justified
62:12	Romans 2:6; Revelation 22:12	Rendering to every man according to his works
69:22-23	Romans 11:9-10	Israel's judicial blindness
78:24	John 6:31	Bread from heaven
82:6	John 10:34-36	"Ye are gods"
90:4	2 Peter 3:8	A thousand years as one day
94:11	1 Corinthians 3:20	The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise
95:7-11	Hebrews 3:7-4:11	Harden not your hearts
97:7	Hebrews 1:6	Let all the angels worship Him
104:4	Hebrews 1:7	His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire
112:9	2 Corinthians 9:9	He hath given to the poor
116:10	2 Corinthians 4:13	"I believed, and therefore have I spoken"
117:1	Romans 15:11	Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles
118:6	Hebrews 13:6	"The Lord is my helper"
143:2	Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16	No flesh justified by the works of the law

Psalm	New Testament	Use
113-118	Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26	The hymn sung after the Last Supper
The Psalms in worship	Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; James 5:13	Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs

The Psalms in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Creation (8; 19; 104); Melchizedek (14:18; Psalm 110:4); the covenant with Abraham (105:8-11)
Exodus	The Exodus and the wilderness (77:16-20; 78; 105; 106; 114; 136); God "merciful and gracious" (34:6; Psalms 86:15; 103:8; 145:8)
Numbers	The priestly blessing (6:24-26; Psalm 67:1); Korah's sons as psalmists (26:11); "Let God arise" (10:35; Psalm 68:1); Baal-peor and Phinehas (25; Psalm 106:28-31)
Deuteronomy	Meditating on God's law (6:6-9; Psalm 1:2); remembering God's works (8:2; Psalm 103:2)
Joshua	Meditating day and night (1:8; Psalm 1:2)
1 Samuel	Hannah's song and the LORD's anointed (2:1-10; Psalm 2); David's flight from Saul (Psalms 34; 52; 54; 56; 57; 59; 142)
2 Samuel	David's song (22 = Psalm 18); the Davidic covenant (7; Psalms 89; 132); David's sin (11-12; Psalms 32; 51); Absalom (15; Psalm 3)
1 Chronicles	David's psalm at the ark's arrival (16:8-36 = Psalms 105, 96, 106); the singers Asaph, Heman and Ethan (6; 15; 25)
2 Chronicles	"His mercy endureth for ever" (5:13; 7:3; 20:21; Psalm 136); Psalm 132:8-10 in Solomon's prayer (6:41-42)
Ezra and Nehemiah	The return from exile (Psalms 126; 147:2)
Job	"What is man?" (7:17; Psalm 8:4); the prosperity of the wicked (21; Psalm 73)
Proverbs	The fear of the LORD as the beginning of wisdom (1:7; Psalm 111:10)
Isaiah	The LORD reigneth and the nations praise (52:7; Psalms 93-99); the suffering servant (53; Psalm 22); Babylon's judgment (13:16; Psalm 137:8-9)
Jeremiah	The blessed man like a tree by the waters (17:7-8; Psalm 1:3)
Lamentations	Grief over Jerusalem's fall (Psalms 74; 79; 137)
Daniel	The Son of man and the everlasting kingdom (7:13-14; Psalm 2; 110)
Jonah	Jonah's prayer from the fish is full of phrases from the Psalms (2:2-9)
Habakkuk	A prayer psalm with "Selah" (3)
Zechariah	The King riding on a donkey and the shepherd smitten (9:9; 13:7; Psalm 118:26)

Themes That Run from the Psalms Through Scripture

Theme	In the Psalms	Developed	Fulfilled
The Messianic King	2; 45; 72; 110	Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 7:13-14	Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 19:16
The suffering righteous one	22; 69	Isaiah 53	Matthew 27; 1 Peter 2:21-24
The Good Shepherd	23; 80:1	Ezekiel 34	John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20
The Word of God	19:7-11; 119	Isaiah 40:8	John 1:1, 14; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16
Forgiveness of sin	32; 51; 103; 130	Isaiah 1:18; Micah 7:18-19	Romans 4:6-8; 1 John 1:9
God's presence and refuge	46; 91	Isaiah 43:2	Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5-6
Praise from all nations	67; 117; 150	Isaiah 49:6	Romans 15:9-11; Revelation 5:9-13
The priest-king after Melchizedek	110:4	Zechariah 6:13	Hebrews 7
Resurrection hope	16:10; 17:15; 49:15	Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2	Acts 2:24-32; 1 Corinthians 15

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Delight in and meditate on God's Word daily** (1:2; 119:97).
- **Bring every emotion to God honestly** (13; 42; 88).
- **Preach hope to your own soul** (42:5).
- **Trust God in the dark** (13:5; 23:4).
- **Confess sin fully and quickly** (32:3-5; 51).
- **Seek God early** (5:3; 63:1).
- **Wait on the LORD patiently** (27:14; 37:7; 40:1).
- **Don't envy the wicked; consider their end** (37:1; 73:17).
- **Remember God's past faithfulness** (77:11; 103:2).
- **Number your days** (90:12).
- **Make God your refuge** (46:1; 91:1-2).
- **Give thanks in everything** (100:4; 107:1).
- **Hide God's Word in your heart** (119:11).
- **Pray for unity and peace among God's people** (122:6; 133:1).
- **Ask God to search your heart** (139:23-24).
- **Guard your mouth** (141:3).
- **Don't trust in princes** (146:3).
- **Praise the LORD with everything you have** (103:1; 150:6).
- **Teach the next generation God's works** (78:4-7; 145:4).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:1-2	Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly... But his delight is in the law of the LORD
16:11	Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.
19:14	Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.
23:1	The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
27:1	The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
37:4	Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
46:1	God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
46:10	Be still, and know that I am God
51:10	Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.
90:12	So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
103:12	As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
118:24	This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
119:11	Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.
119:105	Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
121:1-2	I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills... My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.
139:14	I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made
150:6	Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Conclusion

The Psalms are the heart of the Bible set to music. Written over a thousand years, from Moses to the return from exile, they give voice to every human experience: joy and grief, fear and trust, guilt and forgiveness, loneliness and worship. They teach God's people to pray honestly, repent fully, trust deeply, and praise wholeheartedly. They reveal the LORD as King, Creator, Shepherd, Refuge and Redeemer, whose mercy endures for ever. And above all, they point to Jesus Christ: the Son declared in Psalm 2, the Sufferer of Psalm 22, the Shepherd of Psalm 23, the risen Holy One of Psalm 16, the King of Psalm 45, and the Priest-King at God's right hand in Psalm 110. Jesus prayed these psalms, fulfilled them, and died with their words on His lips. The book that begins with one blessed man ends with all creation praising God, and so will history end, around the throne of God and of the Lamb.

> *Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.*
>
> **Psalm 150:6**

Proverbs

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Solomon (mostly), Agur, Lemuel • Date: c. 950-700 BC • Chapters: 31

> *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
>
> **Proverbs 1:7**

Part One: Introduction to Proverbs

The Name

The Hebrew title, Mishle, means "proverbs" or "sayings." A proverb (mashal) is a short, memorable statement of truth, often built on a comparison. The book is a collection of God-given wisdom for everyday life. In the Bible, "wisdom" (chokmah) is not merely knowledge or intelligence; it is skill in living according to God's ways. The same word describes the skill of the craftsmen who built the tabernacle (Exodus 31:3-6). Proverbs teaches the craft of a godly life.

Authors

Section	Chapters	Author
Prologue and the father's instruction	1-9	Solomon (1:1)
The proverbs of Solomon	10:1-22:16	Solomon (10:1)
The words of the wise	22:17-24:34	Unnamed wise men, collected (22:17; 24:23)
Solomon's proverbs copied by Hezekiah's men	25-29	Solomon, compiled under King Hezekiah (25:1)
The words of Agur	30	Agur son of Jakeh (30:1)
The words of King Lemuel	31:1-9	Taught him by his mother (31:1)
The virtuous woman	31:10-31	An alphabetic poem, probably part of Lemuel's section

Solomon "spake three thousand proverbs" (1 Kings 4:32) after God gave him "wisdom and understanding exceeding much" (1 Kings 4:29). Most of the book comes from his reign (around 970-930 BC), with the final collection completed after Hezekiah's time (around 700 BC). The identities of Agur and Lemuel are unknown.

Purpose

The book states its own purpose:

> *To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning*
>
> **Proverbs 1:2-5**

It is written especially for the young (the frequent address "My son"), but also for the wise who want to grow.

The Key Verse

> *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
>
> **Proverbs 1:7**

"The fear of the LORD" means reverent awe and submission to God. It is the foundation and starting point of true wisdom (9:10; 15:33; Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10). The book begins with this verse and ends with "a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised" (31:30). All of Proverbs is wisdom built on reverence for God, not mere human cleverness.

How to Read Proverbs

- **Proverbs are general principles, not unconditional promises.** They describe how life usually works in God's ordered world. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" (10:4) is generally true, but Scripture also recognises that the righteous sometimes suffer (Job; Psalm 73) and that God's timing and purposes vary. "Train up a child in the way he should go" (22:6) is a principle of wise parenting, not a guarantee that overrides a child's own responsibility (Ezekiel 18:20).
- **Proverbs must be applied with wisdom.** "Answer not a fool according to his folly... Answer a fool according to his folly" (26:4-5) appear side by side on purpose: wisdom knows which response fits the situation.
- **Proverbs use vivid contrast and comparison.** Most of the sayings in chapters 10-15 contrast the righteous and the wicked, the wise and the fool.
- **Proverbs are rooted in God.** Behind every practical saying stands the LORD, who sees all (15:3), weighs the heart (16:2; 21:2) and directs human steps (16:9).

The Characters of Proverbs

Character	Description	Key Verses
The father (and mother)	Teaches his son God's wisdom	1:8; 4:1-4; 6:20
The son	The young learner who must choose	1:10; 2:1; 3:1
Wisdom	Personified as a noble woman calling in the streets, inviting to her feast	1:20-33; 8; 9:1-6
Folly and the strange woman	The seductress and Dame Folly, leading to death	2:16-19; 5; 7; 9:13-18
The simple	Naive, easily led, open either way	1:22; 14:15; 22:3
The fool	Self-confident, stubborn, despises correction	1:7; 12:15; 18:2; 26:11
The scorner	Mocks wisdom and refuses rebuke	9:7-8; 13:1; 21:24
The sluggard	Lazy, full of excuses	6:6-11; 24:30-34; 26:13-16
The wise and righteous	Fears God, receives correction, walks uprightly	9:9; 10:11; 12:15
The virtuous woman	Wisdom lived out in daily life	31:10-31

Outline of Proverbs

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Call to Wisdom	1-9	A father's instruction; Wisdom and Folly
Purpose and foundation	1:1-7	The fear of the LORD
Warnings and invitations	1:8-4:27	Wise living and the value of wisdom
Warnings against immorality	5-7	The strange woman
Wisdom and Folly personified	8-9	Two invitations
II. The Proverbs of Solomon	10:1-22:16	Short sayings for every area of life
III. The Words of the Wise	22:17-24:34	Longer sayings and warnings
IV. Hezekiah's Collection of Solomon's Proverbs	25-29	Kings, fools, sluggards, friends
V. The Words of Agur	30	Humility and numerical sayings
VI. The Words of Lemuel and the Virtuous Woman	31	A king's duty; a godly wife

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Call to Wisdom (Chapters 1-9)

Chapter 1 — The Beginning of Knowledge

After stating the book's purpose (1:1-6) and foundation (1:7), the father begins: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (1:8). Parental instruction is an ornament of grace (1:9).

The first warning is against the gang: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (1:10). They invite the young man to join them in ambush and robbery for easy money (1:11-14). "My son, walk not thou in the way with them... For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood" (1:15-16; Romans 3:15). They are setting a trap for themselves: "So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof" (1:19).

Then Wisdom herself cries out in the streets and at the city gates (1:20-21): "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you" (1:22-23). But those who refuse will find it too late: "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me" (1:28). "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (1:33).

Chapter 2 — Seeking Wisdom as Hidden Treasure

Wisdom must be sought wholeheartedly: "If thou... receive my words... incline thine ear unto wisdom... criest after knowledge... seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (2:1-5). Yet it is ultimately God's gift: "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (2:6; James 1:5). Wisdom guards from two dangers: the evil man who speaks perverse things (2:12-15), and the strange woman, "the stranger which flattereth with her words; Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. For her house inclineth unto death" (2:16-18).

Chapter 3 — Trust in the LORD

"My son, forget not my law... For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee" (3:1-2). "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart" (3:3).

> *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*
>
> **Proverbs 3:5-7**

"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase" (3:9). "My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (3:11-12; quoted in Hebrews 12:5-6).

Wisdom is more precious than silver, gold and rubies; "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her" (3:13-18). "The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth" (3:19). The chapter closes with duties to neighbours: "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (3:27), and the principle "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly" (3:34; quoted in James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5).

Chapter 4 — Get Wisdom; Keep Thy Heart

The father passes on what his own father taught him (4:1-4): "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding" (4:7). He contrasts the two paths: "Enter not into the path of the wicked" (4:14). "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness" (4:18-19). Then the most important instruction:

> *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*
>
> **Proverbs 4:23**

Jesus taught that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34) and that evil comes "out of the heart" (Matthew 15:19). Guard the heart, the mouth (4:24), the eyes (4:25) and the feet (4:26-27).

Chapter 5 — The Bitter End of Immorality

"For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. Her feet go down to death" (5:3-5). "Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house" (5:8). Sexual sin costs honour, years, wealth, health and finally brings regret: "How have I hated instruction" (5:9-14). The positive answer is faithful married love: "Drink waters out of thine own cistern... Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth... and be thou ravished always with her love" (5:15-19). God sees everything: "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings" (5:21). "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself" (5:22).

Chapter 6 — Surety, Sloth, the Seven Abominations, and Adultery

Rash pledges (6:1-5). If you have guaranteed another's debt, go humbly and get yourself released.

The sluggard (6:6-11). "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer" (6:6-8). "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth" (6:10-11).

The troublemaker (6:12-15) who "soweth discord."

Seven things God hates:

> *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

> **Proverbs 6:16-19**

Adultery (6:20-35). "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light" (6:23). "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" (6:27). "Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul" (6:32).

Chapter 7 — The Seduction of the Simple

"Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye" (7:2). The father describes watching from his window as "a young man void of understanding" walks at twilight near the house of an adulteress (7:6-9). She meets him dressed as a harlot, flatters him, claims she has made her religious offerings, and says her husband is away (7:10-20). "With her much fair speech she caused him to yield... He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter" (7:21-22). "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death" (7:27). The young man's downfall began with wandering near temptation in the dark. Joseph shows the opposite: he fled (Genesis 39:12; 2 Timothy 2:22).

Chapter 8 — Wisdom's Call and Her Eternal Origin

Wisdom calls to all people from the high places and the gates (8:1-5): "my mouth shall speak truth" (8:7); "Receive my instruction, and not silver... For wisdom is better than rubies" (8:10-11). "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice" (8:15). "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (8:17).

Then Wisdom describes her existence before creation:

> *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was... When he prepared the heavens, I was there... Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him*
>
> **Proverbs 8:22-30**

"For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (8:35-36). Christians have long seen in this passage a foreshadowing of Christ, "the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24), the Word who "was in the beginning with God" and through whom "all things were made" (John 1:1-3). Wisdom here is a poetic personification of God's own attribute; it does not teach that Christ was created, as the ancient Arians claimed. The word "possessed" describes eternal possession, and the New Testament is clear that the Son is eternal God (John 1:1; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8). See Part Three.

Chapter 9 — Two Invitations

Wisdom has built her house on seven pillars, prepared a feast, and sent out her maidens: "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither... Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live" (9:1-6). Correcting the wise and the scornful brings different results: "rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser" (9:8-9).

> *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*
>
> **Proverbs 9:10**

Folly also calls, loud and ignorant, sitting at her door: "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell" (9:13-18). Every person must accept one invitation or the other, as Jesus' parables of the great supper and the two builders also teach (Luke 14:16-24; Matthew 7:24-27).

Section II: The Proverbs of Solomon (Chapters 10:1-22:16)

These chapters contain about 375 individual proverbs, mostly two-line sayings. Chapters 10-15 mostly contrast the righteous and the wicked; chapters 16-22 contain more varied sayings, many about God's sovereignty and practical relationships. Each chapter below highlights its main themes and key verses.

Chapter 10 — The Righteous and the Wicked

"A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother" (10:1). "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (10:4). "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot" (10:7). "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely" (10:9). "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins" (10:12; 1 Peter 4:8). "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (10:19). "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (10:22). "The fear of the LORD prolongeth days" (10:27).

Chapter 11 — Integrity and Generosity

"A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight" (11:1). "When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" (11:2). "The integrity of the upright shall guide them" (11:3). "Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death" (11:4). "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (11:14). "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion" (11:22). "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth... The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (11:24-25; 2 Corinthians 9:6). "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (11:30).

Chapter 12 — Correction, Speech and Work

"Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish" (12:1). "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband" (12:4). "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast" (12:10). "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (12:15). "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health" (12:18). "Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight" (12:22). "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad" (12:25).

Chapter 13 — Discipline and Companions

"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life" (13:3). "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life" (13:12). "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed" (13:13). "Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard" (13:15).

> *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*
>
> **Proverbs 13:20**

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children" (13:22). "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (13:24): loving discipline is part of good parenting (Hebrews 12:7-11; Ephesians 6:4).

Chapter 14 — The Way That Seems Right

"Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands" (14:1). "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going" (14:15).

> *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*
>
> **Proverbs 14:12 (repeated in 16:25)**

"In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury" (14:23). "In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence... The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life" (14:26-27). "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding" (14:29). "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker" (14:31). "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (14:34).

Chapter 15 — The Soft Answer

> *A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*
>
> **Proverbs 15:1**

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (15:3). "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life" (15:4). "The prayer of the upright is his delight" (15:8). "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance" (15:13). "Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith" (15:16-17). "Without counsel purposes are disappointed" (15:22). "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (15:23). "The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility" (15:33).

Chapter 16 — Man Plans, God Directs

This chapter stresses God's sovereignty over human plans. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD" (16:1). "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits" (16:2). "Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established" (16:3). "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (16:7).

> *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.*

> **Proverbs 16:9**

> *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*
>
> **Proverbs 16:18**

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (16:24). "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (16:31). "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (16:32). "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD" (16:33).

Chapter 17 — Peace, Friendship and a Merry Heart

"Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife" (17:1). "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts" (17:3). "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (17:9). "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" (17:14).

> *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*
>
> **Proverbs 17:17**

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (17:22). "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise" (17:28).

Chapter 18 — The Strong Tower

> *The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*
>
> **Proverbs 18:10**

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility" (18:12). "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (18:13; James 1:19). "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (18:14). "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (18:21). "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD" (18:22). "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (18:24).

Chapter 19 — Patience and Pity on the Poor

"Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips" (19:1). "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression" (19:11). "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD" (19:14). "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (19:17; Matthew 25:40). "Chasten thy son while there is hope" (19:18). "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand" (19:21).

Chapter 20 — Wine, Honesty and God's Searching

> *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*
>
> **Proverbs 20:1**

"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling" (20:3). "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold" (20:4). "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (20:9; Romans 3:23). "Even a child is known by his doings" (20:11). "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee" (20:22; Romans 12:17-19). "Man's goings are of the LORD" (20:24). "The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts" (20:27).

Chapter 21 — The King's Heart in God's Hand

> *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*
>
> **Proverbs 21:1**

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts" (21:2). "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice" (21:3; 1 Samuel 15:22). "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house" (21:9, 19). "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (21:13). "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life" (21:21). "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (21:23). "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD" (21:30-31).

Chapter 22:1-16 — A Good Name; Training Children

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold" (22:1). "The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all" (22:2). "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself" (22:3). "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life" (22:4).

> *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*
>
> **Proverbs 22:6**

This is a principle of patient, consistent, God-centred upbringing (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:15). "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (22:7). "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (22:15).

Section III: The Words of the Wise (Chapters 22:17-24:34)

Chapter 22:17-29 — Introduction to the Words of the Wise

"Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise" (22:17). Their purpose: "That thy trust may be in the LORD" (22:19), so that the reader may know "the certainty of the words of truth" (22:21). Some scholars have noted similarities between parts of this section and an ancient Egyptian wisdom text; whatever literary forms were common in the ancient world, these sayings are given here as God's inspired Word with a distinctly God-centred aim. "Rob not the poor... For the LORD will plead their cause" (22:22-23). "Make no friendship with an angry man" (22:24-25). "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (22:28; Deuteronomy 19:14). "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings" (22:29).

Chapter 23 — Riches, Discipline, Truth and Wine

At a ruler's table, "put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite" (23:1-3). "Labour not to be rich... For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (23:4-5; 1 Timothy 6:9-10). "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (23:7). "Withhold not correction from the child... Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (23:13-14). "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long" (23:17). "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (23:23). "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (23:26). The chapter ends with a vivid warning against drunkenness: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?... They that tarry long at the wine... At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (23:29-35).

Chapter 24 — Strength in Adversity; the Sluggard's Field

"Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established" (24:3). "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small" (24:10). "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death... doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it?" (24:11-12): we are responsible to rescue those in danger. "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again" (24:16). "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth" (24:17). "Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me" (24:29). The section closes with the sluggard's overgrown field: "it was all grown over with thorns... Yet a little sleep... So shall thy poverty come" (24:30-34).

Section IV: Hezekiah's Collection (Chapters 25-29)

Chapter 25 — Words Fitly Spoken

"These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out" (25:1), probably during Hezekiah's revival. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter" (25:2). "Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king... For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower" (25:6-7); Jesus taught the same at a feast (Luke 14:8-11).

> *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*
>
> **Proverbs 25:11**

"A soft tongue breaketh the bone" (25:15). "Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee" (25:17). "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat... For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee" (25:21-22; quoted in Romans 12:20). "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (25:25). "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls" (25:28).

Chapter 26 — Fools, Sluggards and Gossips

Fools (26:1-12). "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (26:4-5): sometimes it is wise not to engage, and sometimes it is necessary to expose folly. "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly" (26:11; 2 Peter 2:22). "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him" (26:12).

Sluggards (26:13-16). "The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way" (26:13). "As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed" (26:14).

Gossips and deceivers (26:17-28). "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" (26:20). "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein" (26:27).

Chapter 27 — Tomorrow, Friends and Iron

> *Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*
>
> **Proverbs 27:1**

James echoes this (James 4:13-15). "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth" (27:2). "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (27:6). "Better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off" (27:10).

> *Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*
>
> **Proverbs 27:17**

"As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man" (27:19). "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (27:20). "Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks" (27:23).

Chapter 28 — Confession and Boldness

"The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion" (28:1). "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (28:9).

> *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*
>
> **Proverbs 28:13**

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent" (28:20). "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (28:26). "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack"

(28:27).

Chapter 29 — Rebuke, Vision and the Fear of Man

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (29:1). "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn" (29:2). "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (29:15).

> *Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*
>
> **Proverbs 29:18**

"Vision" here means prophetic revelation from God; where God's Word is absent or ignored, people "cast off restraint" (the meaning of "perish"). "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit" (29:23). "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (29:25).

Section V: The Words of Agur (Chapter 30)

Agur begins in humility: "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man" (30:2). He asks profound questions:

> *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*
>
> **Proverbs 30:4**

The answer is God, and the hint of "his son's name" points to Christ: "no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man" (John 3:13). "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (30:5-6; Revelation 22:18). Agur's prayer is a model of contentment:

> *Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*
>
> **Proverbs 30:8-9**

The rest of the chapter contains numerical sayings drawn from observation: a generation that curses parents and is pure in its own eyes (30:11-14); four things never satisfied (30:15-16); four things too wonderful to understand, "the way of an eagle in the air... and the way of a man with a maid" (30:18-19); four things that disturb the earth (30:21-23); four small but wise creatures, the ant, the coney, the locusts and the spider (30:24-28); and four stately things (30:29-31).

Section VI: The Words of Lemuel and the Virtuous Woman (Chapter 31)

Chapter 31:1-9 — A Mother's Counsel to a King

King Lemuel's mother taught him not to give his strength to women or his ways to that which destroys kings (31:3), and not to drink wine and strong drink, "Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (31:4-5). Leaders must keep a clear mind for justice. "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy" (31:8-9).

Chapter 31:10-31 — The Virtuous Woman

An alphabetic poem (each verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet) describing a woman of strength and character.

> *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*
>
> **Proverbs 31:10**

Her husband trusts her completely (31:11-12). She works willingly with her hands (31:13), rises early to provide for her household (31:15), buys a field and plants a vineyard with her earnings (31:16), and is strong and diligent (31:17-19). "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (31:20). Her household is prepared and clothed (31:21-22); her husband is respected in the gates (31:23); she runs a business (31:24). "Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness" (31:25-26). Her children rise up and call her blessed, and her husband praises her (31:28-29).

> *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.*
>
> **Proverbs 31:30**

Ruth is called "a virtuous woman" with the same Hebrew phrase (Ruth 3:11). The book that began with "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7) ends with wisdom lived out by a woman who fears the LORD. Many also see in her a picture of the church, the faithful bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-8).

Part Three: Christ in Proverbs

Christ, the Wisdom of God

Proverbs personifies wisdom as a person who was with God before creation, through whom the world was made, and who calls people to life. The New Testament reveals Christ as the fulfillment:

Wisdom in Proverbs	Proverbs	Christ	New Testament
Possessed by God "from everlasting"	8:22-23	"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God"	John 1:1-2
Present at creation; "I was there"	8:27-30	"All things were made by him"	John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2
The Father's daily delight	8:30	"My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"	Matthew 3:17; John 17:24
"Whoso findeth me findeth life"	8:35	"In him was life"; "He that hath the Son hath life"	John 1:4; 1 John 5:12
Calls to the simple in the streets	1:20-23; 8:1-5	"Come unto me, all ye that labour"	Matthew 11:28
Prepares a feast and invites all	9:1-5	The great supper; the bread of life	Luke 14:16-24; John 6:35
Rejecting her brings death	1:24-32; 8:36	"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life"	John 3:36
More precious than rubies	3:15; 8:11	"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"	Colossians 2:3
A tree of life	3:18	Access to the tree of life restored	Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14
"Wisdom is justified of her children"	8:32-36	Jesus applies wisdom's vindication to Himself	Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:35

Paul declares that Christ is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God" and "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30). Jesus spoke as Wisdom: "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles" (Luke 11:49), and He claimed to be "greater than Solomon" (Matthew 12:42). As a child He "increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52), and the Spirit of wisdom rested on Him (Isaiah 11:2).

Other Pictures of Christ

- **The Son's name (30:4).** The One who ascended and descended, the Son of the Creator (John 3:13).
- **The strong tower (18:10).** The name of the LORD as refuge; "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- **The friend that sticketh closer than a brother (18:24).** "I have called you friends" (John 15:13-15).
- **The righteous King (16:12; 20:28; 25:5; 29:14).** "A king that reigneth in righteousness" (Isaiah 32:1), fulfilled in Christ.

- **The bridegroom and the virtuous bride (31).** Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:25-32).

Part Four: The Major Topics of Proverbs

Proverbs scatters its teaching on each subject throughout the book. This table gathers the main topics:

Topic	Key Verses	Teaching
The fear of the LORD	1:7; 9:10; 14:26-27; 15:33; 19:23; 31:30	The foundation of wisdom, confidence and life
Trusting God	3:5-6; 16:3, 9; 18:10; 29:25	Depend on God, not your own understanding
God's sovereignty	16:1, 4, 9, 33; 19:21; 21:1, 30-31	God directs all things
The heart	4:23; 16:2; 17:3; 20:27; 23:7; 27:19	Guard it; God weighs it
Speech	10:19; 12:18; 15:1, 23; 18:21; 21:23; 25:11; 26:20	Words bring life or death
Work and laziness	6:6-11; 10:4; 12:24; 13:4; 20:4; 24:30-34; 26:13-16	Diligence prospers; sloth leads to poverty
Money and wealth	3:9-10; 11:24-25; 13:11; 22:7; 23:4-5; 28:20; 30:8-9	Generosity, honesty and contentment
The poor	14:31; 19:17; 21:13; 22:22-23; 28:27; 31:8-9, 20	God defends them; we must help them
Marriage	5:15-19; 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 21:9; 31:10-31	A good wife is God's gift; faithfulness
Sexual purity	2:16-19; 5; 6:24-35; 7; 9:13-18	Flee immorality; it leads to death
Parenting and discipline	13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17	Teach and correct in love
Honouring parents	1:8; 10:1; 15:20; 20:20; 23:22; 30:17	Listen to and honour father and mother
Friendship	17:17; 18:24; 27:6, 9-10, 17	True friends are loyal and honest
Companions	1:10-19; 13:20; 22:24-25	You become like those you walk with
Anger and self-control	14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; 25:28; 29:11	Slow to anger is strength
Pride and humility	3:34; 11:2; 16:18-19; 18:12; 22:4; 29:23	God humbles the proud, honours the humble
Honesty and integrity	10:9; 11:1, 3; 12:22; 19:1; 20:23	God delights in truth
Receiving correction	3:11-12; 9:8-9; 12:1; 13:18; 15:31-32; 29:1	The wise love rebuke
Wise counsel	11:14; 12:15; 15:22; 19:20; 20:18	Plans succeed with many counsellors
Alcohol	20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-7	Strong drink deceives and destroys
Justice	11:1; 17:15, 23; 21:3; 24:23-25; 29:4	Fair dealing and impartial judgment
Planning and the future	16:3, 9; 19:21; 27:1	Plan wisely, but submit plans to God

Part Five: Wisdom and Folly Compared

The Wise	The Fool
Fears the LORD (1:7)	Despises wisdom and instruction (1:7)
Receives correction and grows (9:8-9; 12:1)	Hates reproof (12:1; 15:5)
Listens before speaking (18:13)	Speaks before listening; pours out folly (15:2; 18:2)
Holds back words (10:19; 17:27)	Talks too much (10:8, 14)
Seeks counsel (12:15)	Is right in his own eyes (12:15)
Controls anger (14:29; 29:11)	Shows his anger at once (12:16; 29:11)
Walks with the wise (13:20)	Keeps company with fools (13:20)
Plans ahead (6:6-8; 22:3)	Goes on and is punished (22:3)
Is humble (11:2)	Is proud (16:18)
Builds a house (14:1; 24:3)	Tears it down (14:1)
Is a tree of life (11:30)	Returns to his folly (26:11)

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

Proverbs 1:7 — The Beginning of Knowledge

The fear of the LORD is the starting point of all true knowledge. Without it, human learning, however brilliant, misses the most important truth: that we are creatures accountable to our Creator. This fear is not terror but reverent awe, love and submission, which drives out the fear of man (29:25) and leads to life (14:27).

Proverbs 3:5-6 — Trust and Guidance

Four parts: **trust** the LORD with all your heart (total confidence); **lean not** on your own understanding (do not make your reasoning the final authority); **acknowledge Him** in all your ways (bring every area of life under His lordship); and the promise, **He shall direct thy paths** (make them straight and lead you to the right end).

Proverbs 4:23 — Keep Thy Heart

The heart in Scripture is the centre of thought, desire and will. Everything in life flows from it. Guarding the heart means watching what enters it (eyes, ears, companions, 4:24-27) and filling it with God's Word (Psalm 119:11). Only God can give a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26); once given, it must be diligently kept.

Proverbs 8 — Wisdom Before Creation

This chapter lifts wisdom beyond practical advice to a divine reality present with God before the world began. It prepares the way for the New Testament revelation of the eternal Son, the Word through whom all things were made. Read in the light of John 1, Colossians 1 and Hebrews 1, it teaches that the wisdom by which God made the world is the same wisdom that came into the world in Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 28:13 — Confession and Mercy

Covering sin brings failure; confessing and forsaking it brings mercy. True repentance involves both admitting sin and turning from it. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9; Psalm 32:3-5).

Proverbs 31:10-31 — Wisdom in Real Life

The virtuous woman shows what wisdom looks like when it is lived out: trustworthiness, hard work, generosity, wise speech, kindness, preparation, and above all the fear of the LORD. Her beauty is in her character, not her appearance (31:30; 1 Peter 3:3-4). The poem honours godly women and sets a pattern for every believer.

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Proverbs

1. Wisdom Begins with God

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7). True wisdom is God-centred, not human-centred.

2. Wisdom Is a Choice

Two ways, two women, two invitations (1-9). Every person chooses daily between wisdom and folly.

3. God Rules Over All

Human plans are real, but God directs their outcome (16:9, 33; 19:21; 21:1).

4. The Power of Words

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (18:21). Words can heal or wound, build up or tear down.

5. The Importance of the Heart

God weighs the heart (16:2; 21:2), and life flows from it (4:23).

6. Character Shapes Destiny

Diligence, honesty, humility, generosity and self-control generally lead to blessing; laziness, deceit, pride, greed and anger lead to ruin.

7. Family Matters

Parents must teach and discipline; children must honour and listen; marriage must be faithful and loving (1:8; 5:15-19; 22:6; 31:10-31).

8. Relationships Shape Us

Friends and companions influence us for good or evil (13:20; 27:17).

9. Care for the Poor

God identifies with the poor; to oppress them is to insult Him, and to help them is to lend to Him (14:31; 19:17).

10. Humility and Teachability

The wise love correction and grow; the fool despises it and is destroyed (9:8-9; 29:1).

11. Contentment and Generosity

Agur's prayer (30:8-9) and the principle of the liberal soul (11:24-25) show that true wealth lies in godliness with contentment (1 Timothy 6:6).

12. Christ Is Our Wisdom

The wisdom Proverbs calls us to is fully found in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3).

Part Eight: Connections — How Proverbs Links to the Rest of the Bible

Proverbs in the New Testament

Proverbs	New Testament	Use
1:16	Romans 3:15	Feet swift to shed blood
3:4	Romans 12:17; 2 Corinthians 8:21	Honest in the sight of God and man
3:7	Romans 12:16	Be not wise in your own conceits
3:11-12	Hebrews 12:5-6; Revelation 3:19	Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth
3:34	James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5	God resisteth the proud, giveth grace to the humble
4:23	Matthew 12:34-35; 15:18-19	Out of the heart
8:22-31	John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2-3	Wisdom and the eternal Word
9:1-6	Luke 14:16-24; Matthew 22:1-10	The invitation to the feast
10:12	1 Peter 4:8; James 5:20	Love covers sins
11:31	1 Peter 4:18	"If the righteous scarcely be saved"
14:12	Matthew 7:13-14	The broad way that leads to destruction
17:13	Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15	Render not evil for evil
18:24	John 15:13-15	A friend closer than a brother
19:17	Matthew 25:40	Giving to the least, giving to the Lord
20:9	Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8	No one can say his heart is clean
20:22	Romans 12:17-19	Do not repay evil
24:12	Romans 2:6; Revelation 22:12	Render to every man according to his works
25:6-7	Luke 14:8-11	Take the lowest seat
25:21-22	Romans 12:20	Feed your enemy; coals of fire
26:11	2 Peter 2:22	The dog returns to his vomit
27:1	James 4:13-15	Boast not of tomorrow
28:13	1 John 1:9	Confession and mercy
30:4	John 3:13	The One who ascended and descended
30:6	Revelation 22:18	Add not to His words
Christ the wisdom of God	1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3; Matthew 12:42	Wisdom personified fulfilled
Practical wisdom	James 1:5; 3:13-18	Wisdom from above

Proverbs in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Creation by wisdom (1; Proverbs 3:19-20; 8:22-31); Joseph fleeing the adulteress (39:7-12; Proverbs 7)
Exodus	Wisdom as skill given by God's Spirit (31:3-6); honour father and mother (20:12)
Leviticus	Love your neighbour; just weights (19:18, 35-36; Proverbs 3:27-29; 11:1)
Deuteronomy	Teach God's words to your children (6:6-9; Proverbs 1:8; 22:6); the ancient landmark (19:14; Proverbs 22:28); just weights (25:13-16)
Ruth	"A virtuous woman" (3:11; Proverbs 31:10)
1 Samuel	Obedience better than sacrifice (15:22; Proverbs 21:3)
2 Samuel	David's sin and its consequences (11-12), illustrating Proverbs 6:32
1 Kings	God gives Solomon wisdom (3:9-12; 4:29-34); Solomon's fall despite his own warnings (11:1-8)
2 Chronicles	Hezekiah's revival, when his men copied Solomon's proverbs (29-31; Proverbs 25:1)
Job	"The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" (28:28; Proverbs 1:7)
Psalms	The two ways (1); the fear of the LORD the beginning of wisdom (111:10); love of God's law (119)
Ecclesiastes	Companion wisdom book by Solomon; "Fear God, and keep his commandments" (12:13)
Song of Solomon	Married love celebrated (Proverbs 5:18-19)
Isaiah	The Spirit of wisdom resting on the Messiah (11:2); woe to those wise in their own eyes (5:21; Proverbs 3:7)
Jeremiah	"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom... but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me" (9:23-24)
Daniel	God gives wisdom to the wise (2:21)

Themes That Run from Proverbs Through Scripture

Theme	In Proverbs	Developed	Fulfilled
The fear of the LORD	1:7; 9:10	Job 28:28; Ecclesiastes 12:13	Acts 9:31; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Philippians 2:12
Wisdom personified	1; 8; 9	Job 28	1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3
The two ways	4:18-19; 14:12	Psalm 1; Jeremiah 21:8	Matthew 7:13-14
The power of the tongue	18:21	Psalm 141:3	James 3:1-12
Humility exalted	3:34; 15:33	Isaiah 57:15	James 4:6, 10; 1 Peter 5:5-6
Care for the poor	14:31; 19:17	Isaiah 58:7	Matthew 25:35-40; James 2:15-16

Theme	In Proverbs	Developed	Fulfilled
Sexual purity	5-7	Malachi 2:14-16	1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5
The tree of life	3:18; 11:30	Genesis 2:9	Revelation 2:7; 22:2

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **Start with the fear of the LORD** (1:7).
- **Listen to godly parents** (1:8; 6:20).
- **Say no to sinful companions** (1:10).
- **Seek wisdom like hidden treasure** (2:4).
- **Trust God, not your own understanding** (3:5-6).
- **Honour God with your money first** (3:9).
- **Receive God's discipline as love** (3:11-12).
- **Guard your heart** (4:23).
- **Flee sexual temptation, and rejoice in your marriage** (5:8, 18).
- **Work hard; learn from the ant** (6:6).
- **Speak less, and speak gently** (10:19; 15:1).
- **Be generous** (11:24-25).
- **Love correction** (12:1).
- **Choose wise friends** (13:20).
- **Discipline children in love** (13:24; 22:6).
- **Help the poor** (14:31; 19:17).
- **Commit your plans to the LORD** (16:3, 9).
- **Be slow to anger** (16:32).
- **Be a loyal friend** (17:17; 18:24).
- **Listen before you answer** (18:13).
- **Run to the name of the LORD** (18:10).
- **Avoid drunkenness** (20:1; 23:29-35).
- **Choose a good name over riches** (22:1).
- **Don't boast about tomorrow** (27:1).
- **Confess and forsake sin** (28:13).
- **Don't fear people; trust God** (29:25).
- **Ask God for contentment** (30:8-9).
- **Value character over beauty** (31:30).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:7	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
3:5-6	Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.
4:23	Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
9:10	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.
14:12	There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
15:1	A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.
16:9	A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.
16:18	Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
17:17	A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.
18:10	The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
22:6	Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
27:17	Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.
28:13	He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.
29:25	The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.
31:30	Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

Conclusion

Proverbs is God's practical guide for daily living. It teaches the craft of a godly life in every area: speech, work, money, marriage, parenting, friendship, anger, honesty and care for the poor. Its foundation is the fear of the LORD, and its method is the patient, repeated contrast between two ways: wisdom, which leads to life, and folly, which leads to death. Wisdom is personified as a gracious woman calling all to her feast, and as the eternal companion of God at creation, a portrait fulfilled in Jesus Christ, "the wisdom of God," who calls the simple to Himself and is made to us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The book that begins with the fear of the LORD ends with a woman who fears the LORD, showing that true wisdom is not cleverness but a life lived reverently before God.

> *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*
>
> **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Ecclesiastes

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Solomon ("the Preacher") • Date: c. 935 BC • Chapters: 12

> *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:13**

Part One: Introduction to Ecclesiastes

The Name

The Hebrew title is Qoheleth, usually translated "the Preacher" (1:1). The word describes one who gathers or addresses an assembly. The English title comes from the Greek Ekklesiastes, "one who speaks in the assembly," related to ekklesia, the New Testament word for "church." Ecclesiastes is the record of a wise man's search for meaning in life, and his conclusion.

Author and Date

The book introduces its author as "the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem" (1:1), who "was king over Israel in Jerusalem" (1:12), had more wisdom than all before him in Jerusalem (1:16), and possessed great wealth, servants, building projects, gardens, singers and many wives and concubines (2:4-9). Jewish and Christian tradition has identified him as Solomon, writing in his later years, perhaps looking back after his fall into idolatry (1 Kings 11). Some scholars argue from the book's language that it was written later by someone speaking in Solomon's voice, but the details match Solomon's life closely, and many conservative scholars hold to Solomonic authorship, around 935 BC.

Key Words

- **"Vanity"** (Hebrew hebel) appears about 38 times. It literally means "vapour" or "breath": something fleeting, insubstantial, impossible to grasp. "Vanity of vanities" (1:2; 12:8) is a Hebrew way of saying "utterly meaningless" or "completely fleeting." The same word is the name of Abel (Genesis 4:2), whose brief life vanished like a breath.
- **"Under the sun"** appears about 29 times. It describes life viewed from a purely earthly perspective, as if there were nothing above the sun.
- **"Vexation of spirit"** means "striving after wind" or "chasing the wind" (1:14; 2:11).
- **"Labour"** and **"profit"**: "What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" (1:3).
- **"God"** appears about 40 times, always as Elohim, the Creator, never as "the LORD."

Purpose and Theme

Ecclesiastes is a sermon on the emptiness of life without God. The Preacher tested every path to satisfaction: wisdom, pleasure, achievement, wealth and fame. All proved to be "vanity and vexation of spirit." Death comes to wise and foolish alike, and nothing "under the sun" can satisfy the human heart, because God "hath set the world [eternity] in their heart" (3:11). Yet the book is not hopeless. Running through it is a second theme: life and its simple joys are gifts from God to be received with gratitude (2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18-20; 9:7-10). And its conclusion is clear:

> *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

> **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

How to Read Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes records the Preacher's search, including his observations and frustrations along the way. Not every statement is his final conclusion. When he says that man has no advantage over a beast (3:19), or that "the dead know not any thing" (9:5), he is describing how things appear "under the sun," from a purely earthly viewpoint. The book itself corrects these impressions: "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (12:7), and "God shall bring every work into judgment" (12:14). Individual verses should be read in light of the whole book and the rest of Scripture. Ecclesiastes is like a doctor's diagnosis: it shows the disease of life without God so clearly that the reader longs for the cure.

Outline of Ecclesiastes

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Prologue: All Is Vanity	1:1-11	The endless cycles of life
II. The Preacher's Experiments	1:12-2:26	Testing every path to satisfaction
Wisdom	1:12-18	Much wisdom, much grief
Pleasure, works and wealth	2:1-11	All vanity
Wisdom and folly; labour	2:12-26	Death levels all; enjoy God's gifts
III. Observations on Life	3-6	Time, injustice, work, worship and wealth
A time for everything	3	Eternity in the heart
Oppression, envy and companionship	4	Two are better than one
Worship and riches	5	Let thy words be few
Wealth without enjoyment	6	The appetite is not filled
IV. Counsel for Living	7:1-12:7	Wisdom in a broken world
Wisdom in adversity	7	The house of mourning
Authority and injustice	8	It shall be well with them that fear God
Death and the enjoyment of life	9	Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do
Wisdom and folly	10	Dead flies in the ointment
Generosity, diligence and youth	11	Cast thy bread upon the waters
Remember thy Creator	12:1-7	Old age and death
V. Conclusion	12:8-14	Fear God and keep His commandments

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Prologue — All Is Vanity (Chapter 1:1-11)

Chapter 1:1-11 — The Endless Cycles

> *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 1:2-3**

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever" (1:4). The Preacher looks at nature and sees endless repetition: the sun rises and sets and hurries back to its place (1:5); the wind goes round and round (1:6); "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (1:7), an accurate description of the water cycle. Human life is just as wearisome: "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (1:8). "There is no new thing under the sun" (1:9). And everything is forgotten: "There is no remembrance of former things" (1:11). Without God, life is a treadmill going nowhere.

Section II: The Preacher's Experiments (Chapters 1:12-2:26)

Chapter 1:12-18 — The Search Through Wisdom

"I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven" (1:12-13). His verdict: "all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (1:14). Some things cannot be fixed: "That which is crooked cannot be made straight" (1:15). He gained more wisdom than anyone before him (1:16), but "in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (1:18). Knowledge without God only shows more clearly how broken the world is.

Chapter 2 — The Search Through Pleasure, Works and Wealth

Pleasure (2:1-3). "I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity" (2:1). Laughter was "mad" and mirth accomplished nothing (2:2). He tried wine while keeping his wisdom (2:3).

Great works (2:4-6). "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards... I made me pools of water" (2:4-6; compare 1 Kings 7; 9:15-19).

Possessions and luxury (2:7-8). Servants, herds, silver, gold, the treasures of kings, singers, and "the delights of the sons of men" (2:7-8).

Total indulgence (2:9-10). "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy" (2:10).

> *Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 2:11**

The man who had everything the world can offer found it empty. Jesus asked, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

Wisdom versus folly (2:12-17). Wisdom is better than folly, "as far as light excelleth darkness" (2:13). Yet "one event happeneth to them all": both the wise and the fool die and are forgotten (2:14-16). "Therefore I hated life" (2:17).

The futility of labour (2:18-23). He hated his labour, because he must leave it to someone who might be a fool (2:18-19). Jesus told the parable of the rich fool who stored up goods and died that night: "then whose shall those things be?" (Luke 12:16-21).

The gift of God (2:24-26). Then the first ray of light:

> *There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 2:24**

Simple joys cannot give ultimate meaning, but received as God's gifts they can be enjoyed. "For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy" (2:26). The difference is whether life is lived with God or without Him (1 Timothy 6:17).

Section III: Observations on Life (Chapters 3-6)

Chapter 3 — A Time for Everything; Eternity in the Heart

> *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 3:1**

Fourteen pairs of opposites describe the whole range of human experience: a time to be born and to die, to plant and to pluck up, to kill and to heal, to break down and to build up, to weep and to laugh, to mourn and to dance, to cast away stones and to gather them, to embrace and to refrain, to get and to lose, to keep and to cast away, to tear and to sew, to keep silence and to speak, to love and to hate, a time of war and a time of peace (3:2-8). Life is governed by times and seasons that God appoints, not that we control.

> *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 3:11**

The Hebrew word translated "world" here is olam, usually "eternity." God has placed a longing for eternity in every human heart. That is why nothing temporal can satisfy us. We sense there is more than

"under the sun," yet we cannot see the whole of God's plan.

The Preacher again concludes that enjoying life is God's gift (3:12-13). "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him" (3:14). He sees injustice where there should be justice (3:16), but trusts that "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose" (3:17). Then, viewing man "under the sun," he notes that man and beast both die and return to dust (3:18-20), and asks, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" (3:21). The book later answers: "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (12:7).

Chapter 4 — Oppression, Envy and Companionship

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter" (4:1). Much human labour is driven by envy (4:4). "Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit" (4:6). He describes a lonely man who works endlessly with no one to share it with: "neither is his eye satisfied with riches" (4:7-8). Then he praises companionship:

> *Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up... and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

Many apply the "threefold cord" to a marriage bound together with God. Popularity also fades: "Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished" (4:13), yet even the new leader's popularity passes (4:14-16).

Chapter 5 — Worship, Vows and Wealth

> *Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools... Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 5:1-2**

Worship requires reverence and listening, not empty words (Matthew 6:7; James 1:19). "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it... Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (5:4-5; Deuteronomy 23:21-23). "Fear thou God" (5:7). Oppression by officials should not surprise us, for there are higher authorities over them (5:8).

On wealth: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase" (5:10; 1 Timothy 6:9-10). More wealth means more people to consume it (5:11). "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet... but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep" (5:12). Riches can be kept to their owners' hurt and lost in an instant (5:13-14). "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand" (5:15; Job 1:21; 1 Timothy 6:7). Yet when God gives riches and the power to enjoy them, "this is the gift of God" (5:18-20).

Chapter 6 — Wealth Without Enjoyment

The Preacher describes a tragic evil: a man to whom God gives riches and honour, "yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it" (6:2). Even a man with a hundred children and a long life, if his soul is not satisfied, is worse off than a stillborn child (6:3-6). "All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (6:7). Human desire can never be satisfied by earthly things. The section ends with two questions: "For who knoweth what is good for man in this life... and who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?" (6:12). Only God can answer them.

Section IV: Counsel for Living (Chapters 7:1-12:7)

Chapter 7 — Wisdom in Adversity

The Preacher now offers a series of "better than" proverbs:

> *A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 7:1-2**

Facing death makes us wise about life (Psalm 90:12). "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better" (7:3). "It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools" (7:5). "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools" (7:8-9). "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this" (7:10).

"Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other" (7:13-14). God is sovereign over both good times and bad. "Be not righteous over much... Be not over much wicked" (7:16-17) warns against both self-righteous extremes and reckless sin; "he that feareth God shall come forth of them all" (7:18).

> *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 7:20**

This is the universal sinfulness that Paul also declares (Romans 3:10, 23). "Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken... For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others" (7:21-22). The Preacher, who had a thousand wives and concubines (1 Kings 11:3), reflects bitterly on his search: "one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found" (7:28). His conclusion: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (7:29). God created humanity good; sin is man's doing (Genesis 1:31; 3).

Chapter 8 — Authority, Injustice and the Fear of God

"A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine" (8:1). Respect the king's command "in regard of the oath of God" (8:2; Romans 13:1). "Where the word of a king is, there is power" (8:4). No one controls the day of death: "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death" (8:8).

> *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God... But it shall not be well with the wicked*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 8:11-13**

God's delay in judgment is patience, not approval (2 Peter 3:9). Even though life under the sun seems unfair, the Preacher trusts that the fear of God will prove right in the end. "Then I commended mirth," he says again, enjoying God's gifts in the midst of labour (8:15). But "a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun" (8:17): God's ways are beyond human discovery (Romans 11:33).

Chapter 9 — Death and the Joy of Life

"The righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God" (9:1). Yet "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked" (9:2): death comes to everyone. "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion" (9:4). "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten" (9:5). From the viewpoint "under the sun," the dead no longer share in anything done on earth (9:6). This is not a full teaching on the afterlife, which other Scriptures give (Luke 16:19-31; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23).

Therefore, enjoy life while you have it, as God's gift: "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works" (9:7). "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity" (9:9).

> *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 9:10**

Opportunities for work and service end at death; use them now (John 9:4; Colossians 3:23). "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise... but time and chance happeneth to them all" (9:11): human ability does not guarantee success. A poor wise man saved a besieged city, "yet no man remembered that same poor man" (9:14-15). "Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised" (9:16). "One sinner destroyeth much good" (9:18).

Chapter 10 — The Value of Wisdom, the Danger of Folly

> *Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 10:1**

A small act of foolishness can ruin a good reputation. The Preacher observes folly in high places, with servants on horses and princes walking (10:5-7). Every task has risks: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (10:8). "If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct" (10:10): sharpen the axe before you swing harder. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself" (10:12). "By much slothfulness the building decayeth" (10:18). "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things" (10:19), an observation of how the world works, not an endorsement. "Curse not the king, no not in thy thought... for a bird of the air shall carry the voice" (10:20).

Chapter 11 — Generosity, Diligence and Youth

> *Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 11:1-2**

Be generous and venture boldly, spreading your giving and investments widely, because the future is uncertain (2 Corinthians 9:6; Luke 6:38). "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap" (11:4): if you wait for perfect conditions you will never act. "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all" (11:5; compare John 3:8; Psalm 139:13-16). "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that" (11:6; Galatians 6:9).

"Truly the light is sweet" (11:7). "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth... but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (11:9). Enjoy youth, but responsibly, remembering accountability to God. "Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity" (11:10), fleeting like a breath (2 Timothy 2:22).

Chapter 12:1-7 — Remember Thy Creator

> *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:1**

The Preacher's great appeal is to turn to God while young, before old age and death. He then paints a poetic picture of growing old (12:2-7), commonly understood as follows:

Ecclesiastes 12	Likely Meaning
"While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened" (12:2)	The dimming of life's joys and of the mind
"The keepers of the house shall tremble" (12:3)	The hands and arms shake
"The strong men shall bow themselves" (12:3)	The legs weaken and bend
"The grinders cease because they are few" (12:3)	Teeth are lost
"Those that look out of the windows be darkened" (12:3)	The eyes grow dim
"The doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low" (12:4)	Hearing fails; less activity outside
"He shall rise up at the voice of the bird" (12:4)	Light sleep; waking early
"All the daughters of musick shall be brought low" (12:4)	The voice weakens; music is hard to hear
"They shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way" (12:5)	Fear of heights and of falling
"The almond tree shall flourish" (12:5)	White hair, like almond blossom
"The grasshopper shall be a burden" (12:5)	Even light things become heavy
"Desire shall fail" (12:5)	Appetite and desire decline
"Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" (12:5)	Death and the funeral
"The silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken... the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern" (12:6)	The breaking of life itself

> *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:7**

This answers the question of 3:21. The body returns to dust (Genesis 3:19), but the human spirit returns to God, its Creator and Judge (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; Hebrews 12:23).

Section V: The Conclusion (Chapter 12:8-14)

Chapter 12:8-14 — The Whole Duty of Man

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity" (12:8). The book closes as it began. Then an epilogue describes the Preacher: he was wise, taught the people knowledge, carefully arranged many proverbs, and "sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth" (12:9-10).

> *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:11**

Wise words prod us forward like goads and hold firm like nails, and they come from "one shepherd," God Himself, the source of all true wisdom (Psalm 23:1; John 10:11). "And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (12:12). Endless human study cannot answer life's deepest questions. God's Word does:

> *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

After examining everything under the sun, the Preacher points above it. The meaning of life is found in a right relationship with God: fearing Him, obeying Him, and living in light of His coming judgment (Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Part Three: Christ in Ecclesiastes

Christ, the Answer to Vanity

Ecclesiastes diagnoses the emptiness of life "under the sun." The New Testament reveals Jesus Christ as the One who came from above the sun to give life meaning, purpose and eternal hope. Paul uses the same Greek word that translates "vanity" in Ecclesiastes (mataiotes) when he writes: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:20-21). The vanity of Ecclesiastes is the result of the fall, and Christ is the hope of its reversal.

Ecclesiastes Under the Sun	Reference	Christ's Answer	New Testament
"All is vanity"	1:2	"I am come that they might have life, and... more abundantly"	John 10:10
"The eye is not satisfied with seeing"	1:8	"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst"	John 4:13-14
"There is no new thing under the sun"	1:9	"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"; "Behold, I make all things new"	2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5
"That which is crooked cannot be made straight"	1:15; 7:13	"The crooked shall be made straight"	Luke 3:5; Isaiah 40:4
"What profit hath a man of all his labour?"	1:3; 2:11	"Your labour is not in vain in the Lord"	1 Corinthians 15:58
"He hath set the world [eternity] in their heart"	3:11	"This is life eternal, that they might know thee... and Jesus Christ"	John 17:3
One event, death, comes to all	2:14; 9:2-3	Christ destroyed death and him that had its power	Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57
"There is not a just man upon earth... that sinneth not"	7:20	Christ "the just for the unjust"	1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21
"Who can tell a man what shall be after him?"	6:12; 10:14	"I go to prepare a place for you"	John 14:2-3
Riches cannot be carried away	5:15	Treasure in heaven	Matthew 6:19-21
"The spirit shall return unto God"	12:7	"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"	Luke 23:46
"Given from one shepherd"	12:11	"I am the good shepherd"	John 10:11, 16
"God shall bring every work into judgment"	12:14	God will judge the world by Christ	Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10

A Greater Than Solomon

Solomon had every resource for the search: wisdom, wealth, power and pleasure, and found them all empty. Jesus said, "behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42). What Solomon could not find under the sun, Christ brings from heaven: "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). Paul, who like Solomon had many advantages, counted them all "but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:7-8).

Life Above the Sun

The cure for life "under the sun" is life lived in relationship with the One above it: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1-2).

Part Four: The Preacher's Search Summarised

What He Tried	Ecclesiastes	His Verdict	The Biblical Answer
Wisdom and knowledge	1:12-18; 2:12-16	"In much wisdom is much grief"	True wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD (Proverbs 9:10) and is found in Christ (Colossians 2:3)
Pleasure and laughter	2:1-3	"This also is vanity"	"In thy presence is fulness of joy" (Psalm 16:11)
Great works and achievement	2:4-6, 11	"No profit under the sun"	Work done for the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58)
Wealth and possessions	2:7-8; 5:10-17	"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied"	"Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6)
Fame and power	4:13-16	Forgotten by the next generation	"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17)
Labour for heirs	2:18-21	You may leave it to a fool	An inheritance incorruptible (1 Peter 1:4)
Simple enjoyment as God's gift	2:24; 3:13; 5:18; 9:7-9	Good, when received from God's hand	"God... giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17)
Fearing God	3:14; 5:7; 8:12; 12:13	"The whole duty of man"	"Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Peter 2:17)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Ecclesiastes 1:2 — Vanity of Vanities

"Vanity" is breath, vapour: real but fleeting and impossible to hold. James uses the same idea: "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). The Preacher is not saying life has no value, but that nothing in this life can bear the weight of ultimate meaning. Trying to make created things into God leaves us chasing the wind.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 — Time and Eternity

God has appointed the seasons of life, and He makes "every thing beautiful in his time." We live in time, but God has placed eternity in our hearts. This explains the restless longing in every person, which Augustine famously expressed: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in thee." Only the eternal God can fill a heart made for eternity.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 — Reverent Worship

Before God, listen more than you speak, keep your promises, and remember who He is: "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth." Worship is not a performance but a humble approach to a holy God (Hebrews 12:28-29).

Ecclesiastes 7:1-4 — The House of Mourning

Funerals teach what feasts cannot: life is short, and we must prepare to meet God. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

Ecclesiastes 12:1 — Remember Thy Creator in Youth

Youth is the best time to turn to God, before habits harden, opportunities pass and the body fails. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). Remembering God means not merely recalling Him, but committing one's life to Him.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 — The Conclusion of the Whole Matter

The book's final answer has three parts: **fear God** (reverence and trust), **keep his commandments** (obedience), and remember that **God shall bring every work into judgment** (accountability). Under the sun life is vanity; lived before God, it has eternal significance.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Ecclesiastes

1. Life Without God Is Empty

Wisdom, pleasure, achievement and wealth cannot satisfy when pursued apart from God (1:2; 2:11).

2. God Has Placed Eternity in the Heart

Human beings are made for more than this world (3:11), which explains our restlessness.

3. God Is Sovereign Over Time and Events

There is a time for everything (3:1-8), and God's works stand for ever (3:14; 7:13-14).

4. Death Comes to All

Wise and foolish, rich and poor, all die (2:14-16; 9:2-3). Facing death brings wisdom (7:2).

5. Life's Joys Are God's Gifts

Food, drink, work, marriage and youth are to be enjoyed with gratitude as gifts from God (2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18-19; 9:7-9; 11:9).

6. All Have Sinned

"There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (7:20). God made man upright, but man has sought out many inventions (7:29).

7. The Limits of Human Wisdom

No one can fully understand God's work (3:11; 8:17; 11:5). Human study is endless and wearying (12:12).

8. Reverence in Worship

Approach God with reverence, few words and kept promises (5:1-7).

9. Wise Living in a Broken World

Patience, contentment, diligence, generosity and companionship are wise ways to live in a fallen world (4:6, 9-12; 7:8-9; 9:10; 11:1-6).

10. Coming Judgment

God will judge every work, including every secret thing (3:17; 11:9; 12:14).

11. The Whole Duty of Man

To fear God and keep His commandments (12:13).

Part Seven: Connections — How Ecclesiastes Links to the Rest of the Bible

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Ecclesiastes	New Testament	Connection
1:2 (vanity)	Romans 8:20-21	Creation subjected to vanity, in hope
1:9 (nothing new)	2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5	All things made new in Christ
2:4-11 (all is vanity)	Matthew 16:26; Philippians 3:7-8	Gaining the world, losing the soul; all loss for Christ
2:18-21; 5:13-15	Luke 12:16-21; 1 Timothy 6:7	The rich fool; we carry nothing out
2:24; 3:13; 5:18-19	1 Timothy 6:17	God gives richly all things to enjoy
3:1 (a time for everything)	Ephesians 5:16; Galatians 6:9	Redeeming the time; reaping in due season
3:17; 11:9; 12:14	Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10	God will judge every work and every secret
5:1-2 (few words)	Matthew 6:7; James 1:19	No vain repetitions; swift to hear, slow to speak
5:4-5 (vows)	Matthew 5:33-37	Keep your word
5:10 (love of money)	1 Timothy 6:9-10; Hebrews 13:5	The love of money; be content
5:15	1 Timothy 6:7	We brought nothing in and can carry nothing out
7:2 (the house of mourning)	Hebrews 9:27	Appointed once to die, then judgment
7:20 (no just man)	Romans 3:10, 23; 1 John 1:8	All have sinned
9:10 (do it with thy might)	Colossians 3:23; John 9:4	Work heartily; work while it is day
11:1, 6 (sow generously)	2 Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 6:9	Sow bountifully; be not weary in well doing
11:5 (the way of the spirit)	John 3:8	The wind blows where it listeth
11:9-10 (youth and judgment)	2 Timothy 2:22	Flee youthful lusts
12:7 (the spirit returns to God)	Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; 2 Corinthians 5:8	Committing the spirit to God; absent from the body, present with the Lord
12:11 (one shepherd)	John 10:11, 16; Hebrews 13:20	The good shepherd
Life is a vapour	James 4:14	"What is your life? It is even a vapour"
The world passes away	1 Corinthians 7:31; 1 John 2:15-17	The fashion of this world passeth away

Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Man made upright (1:31; Ecclesiastes 7:29); dust returns to dust (3:19; Ecclesiastes 3:20; 12:7); the curse on labour (3:17-19; Ecclesiastes 2:22-23); Abel, whose name is hebel, "vanity" (4:2)
Deuteronomy	Keep your vows (23:21-23; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5)
1 Kings	Solomon's wisdom (3:12; 4:29-34; Ecclesiastes 1:16); his building, wealth and gardens (7; 9-10; Ecclesiastes 2:4-9); his many wives (11:3; Ecclesiastes 7:28)
Job	Naked we come and go (1:21; Ecclesiastes 5:15); the mystery of God's ways; injustice in the world (21; Ecclesiastes 8:14)
Psalms	"Every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (39:5-6); riches cannot redeem (49); the prosperity of the wicked (73); "teach us to number our days" (90:12); "except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain" (127:1-2, by Solomon); "man is like to vanity" (144:4)
Proverbs	Solomon's practical wisdom; the fear of the LORD (1:7; Ecclesiastes 12:13); boast not of tomorrow (27:1)
Song of Solomon	Enjoying married love as God's gift (Ecclesiastes 9:9)
Isaiah	All flesh is grass (40:6-8); "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?" (55:2)
Jeremiah	"My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (2:13)
Habakkuk	The people "weary themselves for very vanity" (2:13)

Themes That Run from Ecclesiastes Through Scripture

Theme	In Ecclesiastes	Developed	Fulfilled
Vanity of life without God	1:2; 2:11	Psalm 39:5-6; Isaiah 55:2	Romans 8:20-21; John 10:10
Eternity in the heart	3:11	Psalm 16:11	John 17:3; 2 Corinthians 4:18
Death and its defeat	2:14-16; 9:5; 12:7	Psalm 49:15; Isaiah 25:8	1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Hebrews 2:14-15
Universal sin	7:20, 29	Psalm 14:3	Romans 3:10-23
Judgment to come	3:17; 11:9; 12:14	Daniel 12:2	Acts 17:31; Revelation 20:12
The fear of God	3:14; 12:13	Proverbs 1:7	1 Peter 2:17; Revelation 14:7
God's gifts to be enjoyed	2:24; 9:7-9	Psalm 104:14-15	1 Timothy 4:4-5; 6:17

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Don't look for ultimate meaning in things under the sun** (1:2; 2:11).
- **Recognise the longing for eternity in your heart** (3:11).
- **Trust God's timing** (3:1, 11).
- **Value companionship; don't live alone** (4:9-12).
- **Be content with a handful and quietness** (4:6).
- **Listen more than you speak in worship** (5:1-2).
- **Keep your promises to God** (5:4-5).
- **Don't love money** (5:10).
- **Receive life's joys as gifts from God** (2:24; 5:18-19).
- **Let death teach you wisdom** (7:2).
- **Be patient, not proud or quick-tempered** (7:8-9).
- **Don't idealise the past** (7:10).
- **Remember that everyone sins, including you** (7:20-22).
- **Do what your hand finds to do with all your might** (9:10).
- **Guard your reputation from small follies** (10:1).
- **Sharpen your axe; work wisely** (10:10).
- **Be generous and don't wait for perfect conditions** (11:1-6).
- **Enjoy youth, remembering God will judge** (11:9).
- **Turn to your Creator while you are young** (12:1).
- **Fear God and keep His commandments** (12:13).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2	Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
3:1	To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven
3:11	He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart
4:9-10	Two are better than one... For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow
5:2	For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.
5:10	He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver
7:2	It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting
7:20	For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.
9:10	Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might
11:1	Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.
12:1	Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth
12:13	Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.
12:14	For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Conclusion

Ecclesiastes is the honest testimony of a man who had everything and found it empty. Solomon tested wisdom, pleasure, achievement and wealth, and pronounced them all "vanity," fleeting as breath, because death comes to all and nothing under the sun can fill a heart that God has made for eternity. Yet the book is not despair. It teaches us to receive life's simple joys as gifts from God's hand, to live wisely and generously in a broken world, to remember our Creator while we are young, and finally to fear God and keep His commandments, knowing that He will judge every work. In doing so, it points beyond itself to Jesus Christ, greater than Solomon, who came from above the sun to give abundant life, whose resurrection guarantees that labour in Him is never in vain, and who will one day make all things new.

> *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*
>
> **Ecclesiastes 12:13**

Song of Solomon

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Solomon • Date: c. 965 BC • Chapters: 8

> *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*
>
> **Song of Solomon 8:7**

Part One: Introduction to the Song of Solomon

The Name

The book opens: "The song of songs, which is Solomon's" (1:1). "Song of songs" is a Hebrew superlative, like "holy of holies" or "King of kings": it means the greatest or most excellent of songs. Solomon wrote 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:32), and this is called the best of them. It is also known as the Song of Songs, or Canticles (from the Latin title). In Jewish tradition it is read at Passover.

Author and Date

The title attributes it to Solomon, who is named several times (1:5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11-12). Its fresh, joyful tone and its many references to plants, animals and places throughout the land, from Lebanon and Hermon in the north to En-gedi in the south (1:14; 4:8), fit the early years of his reign, before his heart was turned away by many wives (1 Kings 11:1-4). A date around 965 BC is likely.

What Kind of Book Is It?

The Song of Solomon is a love poem, a series of songs between a bridegroom and his bride, with a chorus of "daughters of Jerusalem." It describes courtship, a royal wedding, a time of distance and reconciliation, and mature married love, using rich imagery drawn from nature: gardens, vineyards, spices, flowers, doves, gazelles and fountains. It is unusual in Scripture: God's name does not clearly appear (though some see a reference in 8:6, where "a most vehement flame" can be translated "the flame of the LORD"), and it is not quoted in the New Testament. Yet it is part of God's inspired Word.

The Characters

Character	Description
The bride, "the Shulamite" (6:13)	A young woman who worked in her family's vineyards, sunburned from the sun (1:5-6)
The bridegroom, "my beloved"	Identified with King Solomon (3:7-11), also pictured as a shepherd (1:7; 2:16)
The daughters of Jerusalem	A chorus of women who respond and ask questions (1:5; 5:9; 6:1)
Her brothers	Protective older brothers (1:6; 8:8-9)

Some interpreters see three main characters instead of two: the Shulamite remaining faithful to a humble shepherd lover in spite of King Solomon's attempts to win her. Most conservative interpreters read it as two lovers, with Solomon described in shepherd imagery.

How Should Christians Read the Song?

There have been three main approaches:

- **Literal:** The Song celebrates the God-given love between a husband and wife, honouring romance, beauty, desire and faithfulness within marriage. This is its plain meaning.
- **Allegorical:** Many ancient Jewish interpreters saw it as a picture of God's love for Israel; many early and medieval Christians saw it as Christ's love for the church or for the individual believer, sometimes treating every detail as a hidden symbol.
- **Typological:** Many Bible-believing Christians today hold that the Song is first of all a real portrait of godly married love, and that, because Scripture itself uses marriage as a picture of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:31-32), the Song also points beyond itself to the greater love of Christ for His people.

This study follows the third approach: the literal meaning first, then its typological application to Christ, without forcing a symbolic meaning onto every image.

Purpose and Theme

The Song shows that romantic and physical love within marriage is a good gift of God, part of His design from creation (Genesis 2:24-25). It honours purity before marriage, delight within marriage, and the strength and faithfulness of committed love. Its theme is captured in the bride's words:

> *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death... Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*
>
> **Song of Solomon 8:6-7**

The Refrains

Three refrains run through the book:

- **The charge to wait:** "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem... that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please" (2:7; 3:5; 8:4). Love and desire are not to be awakened before the right time, that is, before marriage.
- **Mutual belonging:** "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16); "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (6:3); "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me" (7:10). The progression moves from possessing, to belonging, to resting secure in his love.
- **The longing for his coming:** "Make haste, my beloved" (8:14; compare 2:17).

Outline of the Song of Solomon

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Courtship	1:1-3:5	Growing love
Longing and first meeting	1	"Draw me, we will run after thee"
Love in springtime	2	"His banner over me was love"

Section	Chapters	Theme
Searching and finding	3:1-5	"I held him, and would not let him go"
II. The Wedding	3:6-5:1	Union
The royal procession	3:6-11	Solomon's wedding day
The bridegroom's praise	4	"Thou art all fair, my love"
The marriage	5:1	"I am come into my garden"
III. Distance and Reconciliation	5:2-6:13	Struggle and restoration
The missed opportunity	5:2-8	"Open to me"
"Altogether lovely"	5:9-16	The bride describes her beloved
Restoration	6	"I am my beloved's"
IV. Mature Love	7-8	Deepening devotion
Delight and security	7	"His desire is toward me"
Love strong as death	8	"Set me as a seal upon thine heart"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Courtship (Chapters 1:1-3:5)

Chapter 1 — Longing and First Love

The bride begins with longing: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine" (1:2). His character is as appealing as his person: "thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee" (1:3). "Draw me, we will run after thee" (1:4). She feels self-conscious before the refined women of the court: "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem... Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept" (1:5-6). She had worked outdoors, and her own appearance had been neglected.

She asks where she can find him: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon" (1:7). She is told to follow "the footsteps of the flock" (1:8). He praises her beauty, comparing her to a fine horse in Pharaoh's chariots (1:9-11). She speaks of him as a fragrant bundle of myrrh and a cluster of henna blossoms (1:13-14). "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes" (1:15). They delight in their simple surroundings as if they were a palace of cedar (1:16-17). The chapter shows mutual admiration and growing affection.

Chapter 2 — Love in Springtime

The bride speaks modestly of herself: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys" (2:1), a common wildflower. He answers, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters" (2:2). She replies:

> *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 2:3-4**

His love was her protection, her refreshment and her public declaration, like a banner over an army. Overwhelmed, she gives the first charge: "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem... that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please" (2:7). Desire is good, but it must wait for its proper time.

Then comes the beloved, "leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills" like a young deer (2:8-9), and he calls her:

> *Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come*
>
> **Song of Solomon 2:10-12**

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock... let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (2:14). A wise warning follows: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (2:15). Small problems, if

neglected, can damage a growing relationship. The chapter ends with the first statement of belonging: "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies" (2:16).

Chapter 3:1-5 — Searching and Finding

"By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not" (3:1). Probably a dream or a longing in the night, she goes through the city searching, asks the watchmen, and finally finds him: "I held him, and would not let him go" (3:4). The section closes with the second charge to wait (3:5).

Section II: The Wedding (Chapters 3:6-5:1)

Chapter 3:6-11 — The Royal Procession

"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?" (3:6). It is Solomon's royal carriage, guarded by sixty valiant men of Israel (3:7-8), made of cedar of Lebanon with pillars of silver, a base of gold and a purple covering, "the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem" (3:9-10).

> *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 3:11**

The wedding day is the day of the bridegroom's greatest joy.

Chapter 4 — "Thou Art All Fair"

The bridegroom praises his bride in a poem of admiration, using images from the land: her eyes like doves, her hair like a flock of goats on Mount Gilead, her smile like newly washed sheep, her lips like a thread of scarlet, her neck like the tower of David (4:1-5). His words are tender, honouring and specific. Husbands are called to cherish their wives in the same way (Ephesians 5:28-29).

> *Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 4:7**

He invites her to come with him from the high mountains of Lebanon (4:8). "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse" (4:9); "sister" is a term of close affection. Then he praises her purity:

> *A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 4:12**

She had kept herself pure for her husband. She is a garden of choice fruits and spices (4:13-15). On their wedding night she invites him: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden... Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits" (4:16).

Chapter 5:1 — The Marriage Consummated

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse" (5:1). The garden once enclosed is now given to her husband alone. A voice, perhaps of the guests or even of God Himself, blesses their union: "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved" (5:1). Marital intimacy is honourable and blessed (Hebrews 13:4).

Section III: Distance and Reconciliation (Chapters 5:2-6:13)

Chapter 5:2-8 — The Missed Opportunity

Some time into the marriage, a problem arises. "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love" (5:2). He comes late at night, wet with dew. She makes excuses: "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" (5:3). When she finally gets up to open the door, "my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone" (5:6). She searches the city again, but this time the watchmen strike her (5:7). She asks the daughters of Jerusalem to tell him "that I am sick of love" (5:8). Even good marriages face moments of indifference, missed opportunities and hurt. Love must be renewed and pursued.

Chapter 5:9-16 — "Altogether Lovely"

The daughters ask, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?" (5:9). Her answer is a glowing portrait of her husband:

> *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 5:10**

She describes him from head to foot: his head like fine gold, his hair black as a raven, his eyes like doves by streams, his cheeks like beds of spices, his lips like lilies, his hands like gold rings set with jewels, his body like bright ivory, his legs like pillars of marble on sockets of fine gold, his appearance like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars (5:11-15).

> *His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 5:16**

Her husband is not only her lover but her friend. Speaking well of one's spouse to others renews love.

Chapter 6 — Restoration

"Whither is thy beloved gone... that we may seek him with thee" (6:1). She knows: "My beloved is gone down into his garden" (6:2), and declares, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (6:3). They are reconciled. He praises her again, assuring her that his love has not changed: "Thou art beautiful, O my love... comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners" (6:4). Among sixty queens and eighty concubines and countless virgins, "My dove, my undefiled is but one" (6:8-9). She is unique to him. Others praise her: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (6:10). The chapter ends with a call: "Return, return, O Shulamite;

return, return, that we may look upon thee" (6:13).

Section IV: Mature Love (Chapters 7-8)

Chapter 7 — Delight and Security

The husband again praises his wife's beauty from her feet upward: "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" (7:1). The farm girl who felt self-conscious in chapter 1 is now honoured as "a prince's daughter." "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" (7:6). His delight in her is open and joyful (7:7-9). She responds with complete security:

> *I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 7:10**

After the fall, God told Eve, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16), describing the distortion of relationships by sin. Here, in redeemed love, it is the husband's desire that is toward his wife, a picture of love restored to God's design. She invites him to go out together into the countryside, to the fields, villages and vineyards in springtime, where she will give him her love (7:11-13).

Chapter 8 — Love Strong as Death

She wishes she could show her affection as freely in public as a sister to a brother (8:1-2). The third charge to wait is repeated (8:4). The chorus asks, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" (8:5): she now leans on him with trust. Then comes the climax of the book:

> *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 8:6-7**

A seal was a mark of ownership and identity, worn on a cord over the heart or as a ring on the hand. She asks to belong to him permanently and visibly. True love is as strong and unstoppable as death; its "jealousy" is a right, protective zeal for an exclusive relationship. It is an unquenchable fire, which no flood can put out, and it cannot be bought with all the wealth in the world.

Her brothers speak of a little sister not yet of age: "If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar" (8:8-9). If she stands firm in purity like a wall, she will be honoured; if she is easily opened like a door, she must be protected. The bride testifies, "I am a wall... then was I in his eyes as one that found favour" (8:10). She kept herself pure, and found favour. Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, rented out for a thousand pieces of silver, but the bride's own "vineyard" (herself) is hers to give to her beloved alone (8:11-12). The book ends with a longing call:

> *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*
>
> **Song of Solomon 8:14**

Part Three: Christ in the Song of Solomon

The Bridegroom and His Bride

Throughout Scripture, God's relationship with His people is described as a marriage. In the Old Testament, God is Israel's husband (Isaiah 54:5; 62:5; Jeremiah 2:2; Hosea 2:19-20; Ezekiel 16:8). In the New Testament, Christ is the Bridegroom and the church is His bride (Matthew 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2, 9). Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 and says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32). In this light, the Song's portrait of devoted married love becomes a picture of the love between Christ and His people.

The Song	Reference	Christ and His People	New Testament
"Draw me, we will run after thee"	1:4	"No man can come to me, except the Father... draw him"	John 6:44; 12:32
"Thy name is as ointment poured forth"	1:3	The name above every name; His fragrance	Philippians 2:9; 2 Corinthians 2:14-15
"I sat down under his shadow with great delight"	2:3	Rest in Christ	Matthew 11:28-29; Psalm 91:1
"His banner over me was love"	2:4	The love of God shown in Christ	Romans 5:5, 8; 1 John 4:9-10
"The winter is past... Rise up, my love... and come away"	2:10-13	The call of Christ to His bride; the coming resurrection	1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice"	2:14	Christ desires fellowship and prayer	John 15:15; Revelation 3:20
"Take us the foxes, the little foxes"	2:15	Guard against small sins that spoil fruitfulness	Hebrews 12:1, 15
"My beloved is mine, and I am his"	2:16; 6:3	"I know my sheep, and am known of mine"	John 10:14; 17:10
The bridegroom crowned on the day of his espousals	3:11	Christ crowned with glory; the marriage of the Lamb	Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 19:7
"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee"	4:7	Christ presents His church "not having spot, or wrinkle"	Ephesians 5:27; Jude 24
"A garden inclosed... a fountain sealed"	4:12	The church set apart for Christ alone	2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:13
"Open to me"	5:2	"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock"	Revelation 3:20
"The chiefest among ten thousand... altogether lovely"	5:10, 16	The preeminence and beauty of Christ	Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 1:3
"This is my beloved, and this is my friend"	5:16	"I have called you friends"	John 15:13-15
"Leaning upon her beloved"	8:5	The believer leaning on Christ	John 13:23; 2 Corinthians 12:9

The Song	Reference	Christ and His People	New Testament
"Set me as a seal upon thine heart"	8:6	Sealed by the Spirit; carried on the High Priest's heart	Ephesians 1:13; Exodus 28:29; 2 Timothy 2:19
"Love is strong as death... Many waters cannot quench love"	8:6-7	Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ; love unto death	Romans 8:35-39; John 15:13
"Make haste, my beloved"	8:14	"Even so, come, Lord Jesus"	Revelation 22:17, 20

Many hymns have applied titles from the Song to Christ, such as "the Rose of Sharon," "the Lily of the Valley," and "the chiefest among ten thousand." In the text, the first two are spoken by the bride about herself (2:1), but believers have long sung them of Christ as an expression of His beauty.

Psalm 45: A Companion Song

Psalm 45 is another royal wedding song, which Hebrews applies directly to Christ: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever... therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:8-9). Together with the Song, it shows that the King's love for His bride is a picture of the Messiah and His people.

Part Four: God's Design for Marriage in the Song

Principle	The Song	Further Scripture
Married love is God's good gift	Throughout; 5:1	Genesis 2:24-25; Proverbs 5:18-19; Hebrews 13:4
Purity before marriage	2:7; 3:5; 4:12; 8:4, 8-10	1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5
Exclusive, one-flesh commitment	2:16; 6:3, 9; 8:6	Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6
Mutual delight and admiration	1:15-16; 4:1-7; 5:10-16	Proverbs 5:18-19; Ecclesiastes 9:9
Honouring words and praise	4:1-7; 6:4-9; 7:1-9	Ephesians 4:29; 5:28-29; 1 Peter 3:7
Friendship within marriage	5:16	Malachi 2:14 ("thy companion")
Guarding the relationship from small problems	2:15	Ephesians 4:26-27
Pursuing reconciliation after hurt	5:2-6:3	Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13
Mutual giving	4:16; 7:10-12	1 Corinthians 7:3-5
Security in each other's love	7:10; 8:5-6	1 John 4:18
The strength and permanence of love	8:6-7	1 Corinthians 13:7-8

Solomon himself later abandoned this ideal, multiplying wives and turning his heart from God (1 Kings 11:1-4). The Song stands as a reminder of God's original design, one man and one woman in faithful, joyful love, which Solomon's later life failed to keep (6:9: "My dove, my undefiled is but one").

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Song of Solomon 2:7 — Do Not Awaken Love Too Soon

The repeated charge (2:7; 3:5; 8:4) warns against stirring up romantic and physical desire before its proper time. Desire is a powerful fire; within marriage it warms, outside of marriage it burns. The bride's purity ("a garden inclosed," 4:12; "I am a wall," 8:10) brought honour and favour. This is a vital message for young people in every generation (2 Timothy 2:22).

Song of Solomon 2:15 — The Little Foxes

Foxes damaged vineyards by digging and eating the tender grapes. In relationships, it is often small things, neglected words, minor irritations, unresolved conflicts, that do the most damage over time. Christians must also guard against "little" sins that spoil spiritual fruitfulness (Galatians 5:9; Hebrews 12:1).

Song of Solomon 5:2-16 — Love Renewed After Failure

The bride's excuses cost her the presence of her beloved. Yet her response, seeking him and speaking of his beauty, led to restoration. Spiritually, believers can grow cold toward Christ, who still knocks (Revelation 3:20). The remedy is to "remember... and repent, and do the first works" (Revelation 2:4-5), and to dwell again on the loveliness of Christ.

Song of Solomon 8:6-7 — Love Strong as Death

This passage is the theme of the book. Love is a seal (permanent and exclusive), strong as death (unstoppable), a flame (passionate), unquenchable by floods (enduring through trials), and priceless (not for sale). Supremely, Christ's love for His church was stronger than death: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of the Song of Solomon

1. Human Love Is a Gift from God

God created man and woman for each other (Genesis 2:18-25). Romantic love and marital intimacy are good, honourable and blessed within marriage.

2. Purity and Patience

Love must not be awakened before its time; purity before marriage is honoured (2:7; 4:12; 8:8-10).

3. Faithful, Exclusive Love

"My beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16). Marriage is the exclusive union of one man and one woman (6:9; 8:6).

4. The Power of Words

Both lovers speak words of praise, admiration and affection. Words build up love.

5. Love Requires Care and Renewal

Small problems must be dealt with (2:15), and coldness must be overcome by renewed pursuit (5:2-6:3).

6. The Beauty of God's Creation

The Song is filled with images of nature: flowers, fruit, spices, animals, mountains and springs. God's world is good and beautiful.

7. A Picture of Christ and the Church

Marriage reflects the greater love of Christ for His bride, the church, and the devotion of believers to Him (Ephesians 5:32).

8. The Strength of True Love

Love is strong as death and cannot be quenched or bought (8:6-7). God's love in Christ is the supreme example.

Part Seven: Connections — How the Song of Solomon Links to the Rest of the Bible

The Song and the New Testament

The Song is not quoted directly in the New Testament, but its themes are developed there:

The Song	New Testament	Connection
The bridegroom and bride (throughout)	Matthew 9:15; 25:1-13; John 3:29	Christ the Bridegroom
2:7; 4:12; 8:10 (purity)	1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 2 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5	Sexual purity; presented as a chaste virgin
2:16; 6:3; 7:10 (mutual belonging)	1 Corinthians 7:3-4; John 10:14	Husband and wife belong to each other; Christ knows His own
4:7 (no spot)	Ephesians 5:27	The church without spot or wrinkle
5:1 (married love blessed)	Hebrews 13:4	Marriage honourable, the bed undefiled
5:2 (knocking at the door)	Revelation 3:20	Christ knocking
5:16 (my friend)	John 15:13-15	Christ's friends
6:9 (one bride)	Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:31	One flesh
8:6 (a seal)	Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; 2 Timothy 2:19	Sealed by the Spirit
8:6-7 (love strong as death)	John 15:13; Romans 8:35-39; 1 Corinthians 13:7-8	Love that never fails
8:14 (make haste)	Revelation 22:17, 20	"Come, Lord Jesus"
The royal wedding	Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2, 9	The marriage supper of the Lamb

The Song in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Marriage instituted: "they shall be one flesh... and were not ashamed" (2:24-25); the distorted "desire" after the fall (3:16), reversed in Song 7:10
Exodus	The high priest bearing the names of the tribes on his heart, like a seal (28:29; Song 8:6)
1 Kings	Solomon's 1,005 songs (4:32); his building and wealth (Song 3:7-10); his later many wives (11:1-4)
Psalms	Psalm 45, the royal wedding song applied to Christ (Hebrews 1:8-9)
Proverbs	"Rejoice with the wife of thy youth... be thou ravished always with her love" (5:18-19); "Who can find a virtuous woman?" (31:10)
Ecclesiastes	"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest" (9:9)

Book	Link
Isaiah	God as Israel's husband (54:5); "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (62:5); the garden imagery of restoration (58:11)
Jeremiah	"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals" (2:2)
Ezekiel	God's covenant love for Israel pictured as marriage (16:8-14)
Hosea	God's faithful love for an unfaithful bride (2:14-20; 3:1)
Malachi	"The wife of thy youth... thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant" (2:14-16)

Themes That Run from the Song Through Scripture

Theme	In the Song	Developed	Fulfilled
Marriage as God's design	Throughout	Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 5:18-19	Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4
The Bridegroom and His bride	3:11; 4-5	Psalm 45; Isaiah 62:5; Hosea 2:19-20	Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7-9
Purity	2:7; 4:12; 8:10	Proverbs 5-7	1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 2 Corinthians 11:2
Love stronger than death	8:6-7	Isaiah 49:15-16	John 15:13; Romans 8:35-39
The garden of delight	4:12-5:1	Genesis 2:8; Isaiah 51:3	Revelation 22:1-2
Longing for the beloved's coming	2:17; 8:14	Isaiah 64:1	Revelation 22:17, 20

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Thank God for love and marriage as His good gifts.**
- **Don't awaken love before its time** (2:7).
- **Keep yourself pure, like a garden enclosed** (4:12; 8:10).
- **Speak words of praise and appreciation to your spouse** (4:1-7; 5:10-16).
- **Be your spouse's friend** (5:16).
- **Catch the little foxes before they spoil the vines** (2:15).
- **Don't make excuses when love calls** (5:2-3).
- **When love grows cold, seek reconciliation quickly** (5:6-6:3).
- **Remember what you love about your spouse** (5:10-16).
- **Rest secure in faithful love** (7:10; 8:5).
- **Keep love exclusive and permanent** (6:9; 8:6).
- **Value love above all wealth** (8:7).
- **Delight in the beauty of God's creation.**
- **Love Christ, the chiefest among ten thousand** (5:10, 16).
- **Open the door when Christ knocks** (5:2; Revelation 3:20).
- **Long for Christ's return** (8:14).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:4	He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.
2:7	I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem... that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.
2:10	Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
2:15	Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines
2:16	My beloved is mine, and I am his
4:7	Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.
5:10	My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.
5:16	Yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend
7:10	I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.
8:6	Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death
8:7	Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it

Conclusion

The Song of Solomon is God's celebration of love between a husband and wife. In beautiful poetry, it follows a couple from longing and courtship, through a royal wedding, a time of distance and reconciliation, to a mature and secure love that is "strong as death." It honours purity before marriage, delight and faithfulness within it, and words that build up love. It reminds us that romance and marital intimacy are good gifts of the Creator. And because Scripture presents marriage as a picture of Christ and His church, the Song also points to a greater love: the Bridegroom who gave Himself for His bride, who knocks at the door of her heart, who sees her "all fair" and without spot, and whose love many waters cannot quench. The book ends with the bride's longing, "Make haste, my beloved," which the church still echoes: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

> *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death... Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*
>
> **Song of Solomon 8:6-7**

Isaiah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Isaiah son of Amoz • Date: c. 740-680 BC • Chapters: 66

> *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*
>
> **Isaiah 53:5**

Part One: Introduction to Isaiah

The Prophet

Isaiah (Hebrew Yesha'yahu) means "Jehovah is salvation" or "The LORD saves." The name is a summary of the whole book. The word "salvation" appears in Isaiah more than in all the other Old Testament prophets combined, and the name of Jesus (Yeshua, "Jehovah saves") comes from the same root.

Isaiah was the son of Amoz (1:1). Jewish tradition holds that Amoz was a brother of King Amaziah, which would make Isaiah a cousin to King Uzziah and explain his easy access to the royal court. He lived in Jerusalem, was married to a woman he calls "the prophetess" (8:3), and had at least two sons whose names were themselves prophecies: Shear-jashub, "a remnant shall return" (7:3), and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, "haste to the spoil, quick to the plunder" (8:1-4). He says plainly: "Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel" (8:18), a verse the New Testament applies to Christ (Hebrews 2:13).

Jewish tradition (the Talmud and the Ascension of Isaiah) records that Isaiah was martyred under wicked King Manasseh by being sawn in two inside a hollow log. Many believe Hebrews 11:37, "they were sawn asunder," alludes to him.

Date and Historical Setting

Isaiah prophesied "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1). His call came "in the year that king Uzziah died" (6:1), around 740 BC, and his ministry ran at least until Sennacherib's death in 681 BC (37:38). That is a ministry of roughly 60 years.

- **The Assyrian threat.** Assyria was the superpower of the age. It destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) in 722 BC and invaded Judah in 701 BC under Sennacherib.
- **The Syro-Ephraimite crisis (c. 734 BC).** Syria (Rezin) and Israel (Pekah) attacked Judah to force it into an anti-Assyrian alliance. Ahaz refused to trust God and hired Assyria instead. This is the setting of the virgin-birth prophecy in chapter 7.
- **Hezekiah's reign.** A godly king who trusted the LORD when Jerusalem was surrounded. God destroyed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (37:36).
- **The coming Babylonian exile.** Isaiah foretold that Judah would be carried to Babylon (39:5-7) more than a century before it happened (586 BC), and foretold the return under Cyrus (44:28; 45:1) about 150 years ahead.

Isaiah's contemporaries were Hosea and Micah. Micah 4:1-3 is nearly identical to Isaiah 2:2-4.

Isaiah's Place in Scripture

Isaiah is the first of the Major Prophets and is often called "the Prince of the Prophets" and "the Evangelical Prophet," because no Old Testament book presents the gospel so clearly. Jerome said Isaiah should be called an evangelist rather than a prophet. Isaiah is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more than any other prophet, with dozens of direct quotations (roughly sixty or more by common count) and hundreds of allusions. Jesus began His public ministry in Nazareth by reading Isaiah 61 (Luke

4:16-21).

The Unity and Authorship of Isaiah

Since the 18th century, critical scholars have divided Isaiah into two or three authors: "First Isaiah" (1-39), "Second Isaiah" (40-55), and "Third Isaiah" (56-66). The main reason is the assumption that a prophet cannot name Cyrus 150 years before his birth. That is an anti-supernatural assumption, not an argument from evidence. The Bible-believing position is that Isaiah son of Amoz wrote the entire book, for these reasons:

- **The New Testament attributes both halves to Isaiah.** John 12:38-41 quotes Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:10 together and says of both, "These things said Esaias." Jesus and the apostles cite "Esaias the prophet" for passages from chapters 40-66 (Matthew 3:3; 8:17; 12:17-21; Luke 3:4; 4:17; Romans 10:16, 20).
- **The Dead Sea Scrolls.** The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa-a), found at Qumran in 1947 and dated to the second century BC, contains all 66 chapters as one continuous book, with no indication of a new work beginning at chapter 40. It also agrees overwhelmingly with the Masoretic Text copied a thousand years later, a powerful witness to God's preservation of His Word.
- **Unifying vocabulary.** The title "the Holy One of Israel" appears about 25 times in Isaiah, split across both halves, and only a handful of times in the rest of the Old Testament.
- **Predictive prophecy is the point.** In chapters 40-48 God repeatedly challenges the idols to foretell the future and declares that He alone does so: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (46:10). Naming Cyrus in advance is God's proof of His deity (44:24-45:7). Removing the prediction removes the argument.
- **Jewish and Christian tradition** held to single authorship for over two thousand years.

The Structure: A "Miniature Bible"

Isaiah has 66 chapters; the Bible has 66 books. Isaiah divides into 39 chapters and 27 chapters; the Bible divides into 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books. The first 39 chapters focus heavily on law, sin and judgment, like the Old Testament. Chapter 40, the start of the second section, opens with the "voice of him that crieth in the wilderness" (40:3), the very ministry of John the Baptist that opens the New Testament gospels. The final chapters describe "new heavens and a new earth" (65:17; 66:22), just as Revelation 21-22 closes the Bible. This is not inspired chapter division (chapters were added much later), but the parallel is a striking pattern that many Bible teachers have noted.

Outline of Isaiah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Judgment (Book of Condemnation)	1-35	
Judah's sin and future glory	1-12	Rebellion, the Branch, Immanuel, the Messianic King
Oracles against the nations	13-23	Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Tyre
"The Little Apocalypse"	24-27	Worldwide judgment and kingdom blessing

Section	Chapters	Theme
Six woes	28-33	Against Ephraim, Jerusalem, and alliances with Egypt
Wrath and restoration	34-35	Judgment on the nations, the desert blossoming
II. History (Historical Bridge)	36-39	Hezekiah, Sennacherib, the coming exile to Babylon
III. Comfort (Book of Consolation)	40-66	
The Deliverance: God vs. idols, Cyrus	40-48	"There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (48:22)
The Deliverer: the Suffering Servant	49-57	"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (57:21)
The Glory: the coming kingdom	58-66	Ends with the fate of the wicked (66:24)

Notice that the three sections of the Book of Comfort each have nine chapters and each ends with a warning to the wicked. The middle chapter of the middle section is Isaiah 53, and the middle verse of that chapter group's central stanza is 53:5: "he was wounded for our transgressions." The cross stands at the heart of the book.

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Judah's Sin and the Coming King (Chapters 1-12)

Chapter 1 — God's Lawsuit Against Judah

The book opens like a courtroom. God calls heaven and earth as witnesses (1:2) against a nation that knows less than an ox or a donkey (1:3). Judah is "laden with iniquity," sick from head to foot (1:4-6). Their sacrifices, feasts and prayers are an abomination because their hands are full of blood (1:11-15). Religion without righteousness is rejected. Yet God offers grace:

> *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*
>
> **Isaiah 1:18**

The chapter sets the pattern of the whole book: sin, judgment, and a call to repent with a promise of cleansing. Verse 9, "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant," is quoted in Romans 9:29.

Chapter 2 — The Mountain of the LORD and the Day of the LORD

Verses 2-4 picture "the last days," when the house of the LORD is established above all mountains, all nations flow to it, the law goes forth from Zion, and "they shall beat their swords into plowshares." This is a kingdom promise not yet fulfilled; it awaits Christ's reign. The rest of the chapter describes "the day of the LORD" against human pride: "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled... and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day" (2:11, 17). Men will hide in the rocks "for fear of the LORD" (2:19, 21), language echoed in Revelation 6:15-16.

Chapter 3 — Collapse of Leadership

God removes the stay and staff of Judah: its judges, soldiers and prophets (3:1-3). "Children" and the immature will rule (3:4, 12). "The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom" (3:9). The haughty daughters of Zion, with their tinkling ornaments and finery (3:16-24), are a picture of a vain, worldly culture that will be stripped bare. Lesson: when a nation rejects God, its leadership decays.

Chapter 4 — The Branch of the LORD

After judgment comes cleansing. "In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious" (4:2). "The Branch" is a Messianic title (Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). The remnant is called holy, washed by "the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning" (4:4), and the glory-cloud of the Exodus returns over Zion (4:5-6).

Chapter 5 — The Song of the Vineyard and Six Woes

God planted a vineyard (Israel), did everything for it, and it produced wild grapes (5:1-7). Jesus built His parable of the wicked husbandmen on this song (Matthew 21:33-45). Six woes follow: against greed for land (5:8), drunkenness (5:11, 22), mocking God (5:18-19), moral inversion (5:20), self-wisdom (5:21), and bribery (5:23).

> *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*
>
> **Isaiah 5:20**

Chapter 6 — Isaiah's Vision and Commission

One of the greatest chapters in the Bible. In the year King Uzziah died, Isaiah "saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (6:1). Seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (6:3). Isaiah's response: "Woe is me! for I am undone" (6:5). A live coal from the altar touches his lips: "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (6:7). Then God asks, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and Isaiah answers, "Here am I; send me" (6:8).

Christian significance:

- **Christ is the Lord on the throne.** John 12:41 says Isaiah said these things "when he saw his glory, and spake of him," referring to Jesus. The Lord Isaiah saw was the pre-incarnate Son.
- **The Trinity.** The threefold "holy" and the plural "us" (6:8) point toward the triune God. Acts 28:25 attributes the words of 6:9-10 to the Holy Ghost.
- **The order of salvation and service:** vision of God, conviction of sin, cleansing by sacrifice (the altar), then commission.
- **Judicial hardening.** Isaiah's message would harden the hearers (6:9-10). This passage is quoted in all four Gospels and Acts (Matthew 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Acts 28:26-27) to explain Israel's rejection of Christ. A "holy seed" remnant remains (6:13).

Chapter 7 — The Sign of Immanuel

Syria and Israel threaten Jerusalem. Isaiah meets King Ahaz and tells him not to fear, adding, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (7:9). Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign, feigning piety. God gives one anyway, addressed to the whole "house of David" (the "you" in 7:13-14 is plural):

> *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*
>
> **Isaiah 7:14**

Matthew 1:22-23 declares this fulfilled in the virgin birth of Jesus, "God with us." See Part Four for a detailed discussion of the word "virgin." The chapter ends with Assyria, the very power Ahaz trusted, becoming the razor that shaves Judah (7:17-20).

Chapter 8 — The Stone of Stumbling

Isaiah's son Maher-shalal-hash-baz is a sign that Damascus and Samaria will be plundered by Assyria before the child can speak (8:4), fulfilled within about three years. Assyria will flood Judah "even to the neck" (8:8), but "God is with us" (Immanuel, 8:8, 10). The LORD Himself will be "a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel" (8:14), applied to Christ in Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:8. Verse 18 is applied to Christ in Hebrews 2:13. The chapter closes with the rule for testing every teaching:

> *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*
>
> **Isaiah 8:20**

Chapter 9 — Unto Us a Child Is Born

"Galilee of the nations," the despised northern region first crushed by Assyria, will see a great light (9:1-2). Matthew 4:13-16 says this was fulfilled when Jesus based His ministry in Capernaum. Then comes the great promise:

> *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David...*
>
> **Isaiah 9:6-7**

A child is **born** (His humanity); a Son is **given** (His eternal deity). "The mighty God" (El Gibbor) is the same title Isaiah uses of Jehovah Himself in 10:21. No mere human king could bear these names. The rest of the chapter (9:8-10:4) is a fourfold judgment on proud Israel, each stanza ending, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."

Chapter 10 — Assyria, the Rod of God's Anger

God uses Assyria as "the rod of mine anger" to punish Israel (10:5), but Assyria is proud and will itself be judged: "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?" (10:15). A remnant will return "unto the mighty God" (10:21). Paul quotes 10:22-23 in Romans 9:27-28. The chapter ends with the Assyrian march on Jerusalem halted, the forest cut down (10:28-34), leading straight into the shoot from the stump in chapter 11.

Chapter 11 — The Branch from Jesse and His Kingdom

> *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him...*
>
> **Isaiah 11:1-2**

The house of David, cut down to a stump, sprouts again in Christ. The sevenfold Spirit rests on Him (11:2; compare Revelation 1:4; Luke 3:22). He judges with perfect righteousness (11:3-5). Then comes

the picture of the kingdom: the wolf dwells with the lamb, the child plays by the serpent's den, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (11:6-9). Verse 10 says the Gentiles will seek the root of Jesse (quoted in Romans 15:12). Verses 11-16 promise a second worldwide regathering of Israel. Christ is both the "root" and the "offspring" of David (Revelation 22:16).

Chapter 12 — The Song of Salvation

A short hymn the redeemed will sing "in that day":

> *Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*
>
> **Isaiah 12:2-3**

The water imagery links to Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:37-38), where water-drawing ceremonies were tied to this very text.

Section II: Oracles Against the Nations (Chapters 13-23)

These "burdens" teach that the God of Israel is the Judge of the whole earth. No empire is beyond His reach. Many of these were fulfilled precisely in history.

Chapters 13-14 — The Burden of Babylon and the Fall of Lucifer

Babylon, not yet a world power in Isaiah's day, is singled out for destruction. God names the Medes as the attackers (13:17), fulfilled when the Medo-Persians took Babylon in 539 BC. Babylon would become "as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" and would eventually be left uninhabited (13:19-22); the city declined over the following centuries and lay in ruins. The "day of the LORD" language (13:9-13), with sun, moon and stars darkened, reaches beyond ancient Babylon to the end times (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12-13).

Chapter 14 opens with Israel's restoration (14:1-2), then a taunt-song over the king of Babylon that rises to a figure behind him:

> *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*
>
> **Isaiah 14:12**

His five "I will" statements (14:13-14) end in "I will be like the most High." Throughout church history, many expositors (with Ezekiel 28:12-19 as a parallel) have seen here the fall of Satan, the power behind the throne of Babylon, whose sin was pride (1 Timothy 3:6). Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Note that the KJV name "Lucifer" ("light-bearer") is distinct from Christ, "the bright and morning star" (Revelation 22:16), the true light whom Satan counterfeits. The chapter closes with oracles against Assyria (14:24-27), fulfilled in 701 BC, and Philistia (14:28-32).

Chapters 15-16 — The Burden of Moab

Moab, descended from Lot (Genesis 19:37), is mourned with genuine grief: "My heart shall cry out for Moab" (15:5). God's prophet weeps even over enemies. Moab's pride is its downfall (16:6). A specific time-prophecy: within three years Moab's glory would be brought low (16:14). In the middle stands a Messianic promise: "in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging" (16:5).

Chapter 17 — The Burden of Damascus

"Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap" (17:1). Assyria captured Damascus in 732 BC. Some teachers see a further, future fulfillment, since Damascus has been continuously inhabited. Israel (Ephraim), Damascus's ally, will be reduced to gleanings (17:4-6), and in that day man will look to his Maker rather than his idols (17:7-8).

Chapter 18 — Ethiopia (Cush)

A message to a tall, smooth-skinned people "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." God waits calmly, then cuts them down; afterward they bring a present to the LORD in Mount Zion (18:7), a picture of Gentile nations worshipping God.

Chapter 19 — The Burden of Egypt

The LORD "rideth upon a swift cloud" into Egypt; its idols tremble (19:1). Egypt will suffer civil war (19:2), a "cruel lord" (19:4), the drying of the Nile economy (19:5-10), and foolish counsellors (19:11-15). Then a remarkable turn: an altar to the LORD in Egypt (19:19), a Saviour sent to them (19:20), and a highway from Egypt to Assyria with Israel in the middle: "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (19:25). Israel's bitterest enemies will worship the true God, a foretaste of the gospel to the nations.

Chapter 20 — Isaiah's Sign Act

Isaiah walked "naked and barefoot" (stripped to a loincloth like a captive) for three years as a sign that Assyria would lead away Egyptian and Ethiopian captives (20:2-4). The lesson: do not trust Egypt; trust the LORD.

Chapter 21 — Babylon, Edom and Arabia

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground" (21:9). Elam and Media are named as the attackers (21:2). Revelation 14:8 and 18:2 repeat this cry over end-time Babylon. Dumah (Edom) asks, "Watchman, what of the night?" (21:11), and Arabia's glory will end within a year (21:16).

Chapter 22 — The Valley of Vision; Shebna and Eliakim

Jerusalem itself is listed among the nations, because it partied when it should have repented: "let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die" (22:13; quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:32). Proud steward Shebna is removed and godly Eliakim installed. Eliakim receives "the key of the house of David... so he shall open, and none shall shut" (22:22), language Jesus applies to Himself in Revelation 3:7. Eliakim is a type of Christ, the "nail in a sure place" (22:23).

Chapter 23 — The Burden of Tyre

Tyre, the great Phoenician trading city, is humbled. It would be "forgotten seventy years" (23:15) and afterward its wealth would become "holiness to the LORD" (23:18). Tyre was besieged by Assyria and later Nebuchadnezzar, and finally destroyed by Alexander the Great (compare Ezekiel 26).

Section III: "The Little Apocalypse" (Chapters 24-27)

These four chapters move from Isaiah's day to the end of the age: worldwide tribulation, the resurrection, the defeat of Satan and the kingdom of God.

Chapter 24 — Judgment on the Whole Earth

"Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste" (24:1). The cause: men "have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (24:5). The earth reels "like a drunkard" (24:20). God punishes "the host of the high ones that are on high" (fallen angels) and the kings of the earth, shutting them up "in the prison" (24:21-22; compare Revelation 20:1-3). Then "the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion" (24:23).

Chapter 25 — The Great Feast and Victory Over Death

God prepares a feast "unto all people" on Mount Zion (25:6), the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9).

> *He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces*
>
> **Isaiah 25:8**

Paul quotes this of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:54), and John of the new creation (Revelation 7:17; 21:4). Israel will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us" (25:9).

Chapter 26 — The Song of the Strong City and the Resurrection

> *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength*
>
> **Isaiah 26:3-4**

Verse 19 is one of the clearest Old Testament statements of bodily resurrection: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." Verses 20-21 call God's people to hide "for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast," which many premillennial teachers see as a picture of God's people kept from the wrath of the tribulation.

Chapter 27 — Leviathan Slain, Israel Gathered

"In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent" (27:1), a picture of Satan, "that old serpent" (Revelation 12:9; 20:2). Israel, God's vineyard, will "fill the face of the world with fruit" (27:6), and a great trumpet will gather the outcasts to worship in Jerusalem (27:13; compare Matthew 24:31).

Section IV: The Six Woes (Chapters 28-33)

Chapter 28 — Woe to Ephraim's Drunkards; The Cornerstone

Samaria's leaders are drunk with wine and pride (28:1-8). They mock Isaiah's teaching as baby talk: "precept upon precept... line upon line... here a little, and there a little" (28:10). God will therefore speak through foreigners with "stammering lips and another tongue" (28:11), a verse Paul applies to the sign of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:21). Jerusalem's rulers made "a covenant with death" (28:15), but God lays a better foundation:

> *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*
>
> **Isaiah 28:16**

Applied to Christ in Romans 9:33, 10:11 and 1 Peter 2:6.

Chapter 29 — Woe to Ariel (Jerusalem)

Jerusalem will be besieged, then her enemies suddenly vanish like a dream (29:1-8), fulfilled in 701 BC. The people are spiritually blind; the vision is a sealed book (29:11-12). Their worship is hypocritical:

> *Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me*
>
> **Isaiah 29:13**

Jesus quoted this against the Pharisees (Matthew 15:7-9; Mark 7:6-7). God will "destroy the wisdom of their wise men" (29:14; 1 Corinthians 1:19). Yet in the day of restoration the deaf will hear and the blind see (29:18).

Chapter 30 — Woe to Those Trusting Egypt

Judah sends ambassadors to Egypt for help, "that take counsel, but not of me" (30:1). The people tell the prophets, "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things" (30:10). God's answer:

> *In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.*
>
> **Isaiah 30:15**

Yet "the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you" (30:18), and His guidance will be clear: "This is the way, walk ye in it" (30:21). Tophet, the place of burning prepared for the Assyrian king, is a picture of hell (30:33).

Chapter 31 — Woe to Those Who Go Down to Egypt

"The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit" (31:3). God will defend Jerusalem "as birds flying" (31:5). Assyria will fall "with the sword, not of a mighty man" (31:8), fulfilled when the angel of the LORD struck the camp.

Chapter 32 — The Righteous King

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness" (32:1). He will be "as an hiding place from the wind... as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (32:2), a picture of Christ. The complacent women of Jerusalem are warned (32:9-14) "until the spirit be poured upon us from on high" (32:15), leading to peace and quietness for ever (32:17).

Chapter 33 — Woe to the Destroyer

Woe to the treacherous spoiler, Assyria (33:1). Sinners in Zion ask, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" (33:14). The answer is the one who walks righteously (33:15-16). "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty" (33:17).

> *For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us.*
>
> **Isaiah 33:22**

Many have noted that this verse corresponds to the judicial, legislative and executive branches of government.

Section V: Wrath and Restoration (Chapters 34-35)

Chapter 34 — Judgment on the Nations and Edom

"The indignation of the LORD is upon all nations" (34:2). "The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll" (34:4; Revelation 6:14). Edom (Bozrah, 34:6), the ancient enemy of Israel, represents the whole God-hating world. Edom later vanished from history. A striking command: "Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail" (34:16), Scripture's own claim to the accuracy of prophecy.

Chapter 35 — The Desert Shall Blossom

"The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (35:1). "Behold, your God will come with vengeance... he will come and save you" (35:4).

> *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing*
>
> **Isaiah 35:5-6**

When John the Baptist asked whether Jesus was the Christ, Jesus answered by pointing to exactly these miracles (Matthew 11:4-5). The chapter's full fulfillment is the kingdom: "an highway... The way of holiness" (35:8), and "the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (35:10).

Section VI: The Historical Bridge (Chapters 36-39)

These chapters, nearly identical to 2 Kings 18-20, are narrative history. They close the Assyrian era (36-37) and open the Babylonian era (38-39), linking the two halves of the book.

Chapter 36 — Sennacherib's Threat

In Hezekiah's fourteenth year (701 BC), Sennacherib had taken the fortified cities of Judah (36:1). His officer Rabshakeh stands at the wall and mocks Judah's faith: Egypt is a broken reed, and no god has delivered any nation from Assyria (36:6, 18-20). This is the world's challenge to faith in every age. Sennacherib's own records (the Taylor Prism) boast that he shut Hezekiah up in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage," but notably do not claim to have taken the city.

Chapter 37 — Hezekiah's Prayer and God's Deliverance

Hezekiah tears his clothes, goes into the house of the LORD and sends to Isaiah (37:1-2). When a threatening letter comes, he spreads it "before the LORD" (37:14) and prays: "save thou us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD, even thou only" (37:20). God answers through Isaiah that the king of Assyria "shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there" (37:33).

> *Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand*
>
> **Isaiah 37:36**

Sennacherib went home and was later murdered by his sons in the house of his god (37:37-38), exactly as prophesied (37:7). Lesson: prayer and faith in the face of impossible odds.

Chapter 38 — Hezekiah's Sickness and Healing

Hezekiah is told he will die. He weeps and prays, and God adds fifteen years to his life (38:5). As a sign, the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz goes back ten degrees (38:8). Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving includes, "thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (38:17). Note that during these added years Manasseh, Judah's most wicked king, was born; answered prayer still requires faithful living.

Chapter 39 — The Babylonian Envoys

Merodach-baladan of Babylon sends envoys, and Hezekiah proudly shows them all his treasures (39:2). Isaiah prophesies: "all that is in thine house... shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left" and his descendants would be eunuchs in Babylon's palace (39:6-7). This was fulfilled over a century later (2 Kings 24-25; Daniel 1:3). At the time, Babylon was a minor power struggling against Assyria. The prophecy sets the stage for chapters 40-66, which speak comfort to the exiles in Babylon.

Section VII: The Book of Comfort — The Deliverance (Chapters 40-48)

Isaiah now looks ahead to Judah in Babylonian captivity and speaks comfort. God will deliver them through Cyrus of Persia, and He proves Himself the only true God by foretelling it. Beyond the return from Babylon, the deliverance points to the greater redemption from sin through Christ.

Chapter 40 — Comfort Ye My People

> *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned*
>
> **Isaiah 40:1-2**

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD" (40:3). All four Gospels identify this voice as John the Baptist (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23). Since the voice prepares the way of "the LORD... our God," and John prepared the way for Jesus, Jesus is the LORD God.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (40:8; quoted in 1 Peter 1:24-25). God comes as a Shepherd who feeds His flock and carries the lambs (40:11; John 10:11). The rest of the chapter exalts God's incomparable greatness: He measures the waters in His hand (40:12), nations are a drop in a bucket (40:15), "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth" (40:22), and He names every star (40:26). The chapter ends with one of the most loved promises in Scripture:

> *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*
>
> **Isaiah 40:31**

Chapter 41 — God's Courtroom Challenge to the Idols

God raises up "the righteous man from the east" (41:2), Cyrus. He comforts Israel His servant, the seed of "Abraham my friend" (41:8; James 2:23):

> *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*
>
> **Isaiah 41:10**

Then God challenges the idols: "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (41:23). They cannot. "Behold, ye are of nothing" (41:24).

Chapter 42 — The First Servant Song

> *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*
>
> **Isaiah 42:1**

Matthew 12:17-21 quotes 42:1-4 directly of Jesus. The Father's words at Christ's baptism, "in whom I am well pleased," echo this verse (Matthew 3:17). The Servant is gentle: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench" (42:3). He is "a light of the Gentiles" (42:6) who opens blind eyes and frees prisoners (42:7). God declares, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another" (42:8). Yet Jesus shares that glory (John 17:5), which only makes sense if He is the LORD. By contrast, national Israel is a blind and deaf servant (42:18-25).

Chapter 43 — Israel's Redeemer

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee" (43:1-2). Israel is God's witness: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD... before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour" (43:10-11). Since Jesus is called "Saviour" throughout the New Testament (Luke 2:11; Titus 2:13), He must be the LORD. God will do "a new thing" (43:19), and He blots out sins freely: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (43:25).

Chapter 44 — The First and the Last; the Folly of Idols; Cyrus Named

God promises to pour out His Spirit (44:3). "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (44:6). In Revelation 1:17 and 22:13 Jesus takes this very title. Verses 9-20 are a devastating satire on idolatry: a man cuts down a tree, burns half to cook his meal and warm himself, and with the rest makes a god and prays to it, "Deliver me; for thou art my god" (44:17). "A deceived heart hath turned him aside" (44:20). Then, some 150 years before his birth, God names the deliverer:

> *That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.*
>
> **Isaiah 44:28**

Cyrus issued exactly that decree in 538 BC (Ezra 1:1-4). Josephus records that Cyrus was shown this prophecy and was moved to fulfil it (Antiquities 11.1.1-2).

Chapter 45 — Cyrus, God's Anointed; Every Knee Shall Bow

God calls Cyrus "his anointed" and promises to open "the two leaved gates" before him (45:1). Historically, Babylon fell when the Persians diverted the Euphrates and entered through gates left open during a feast (compare Daniel 5). God did this "though thou hast not known me" (45:4-5), proving His sovereignty over pagan rulers. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil" (45:7); "evil" here means calamity or disaster, the opposite of "peace," not moral wickedness. The gospel invitation rings out:

> *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*
>
> **Isaiah 45:22**

Charles Spurgeon was converted at age fifteen hearing a lay preacher on this verse. Verse 23, "unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," is applied to Jesus in Philippians 2:10-11 and Romans 14:11, another proof of His deity.

Chapter 46 — Idols Carried vs. the God Who Carries

Babylon's gods Bel and Nebo must be carried on animals into captivity (46:1-2). The true God carries His people: "even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you" (46:4).

> *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning... My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure*
>
> **Isaiah 46:9-10**

Chapter 47 — The Fall of Babylon

"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon" (47:1). Proud Babylon said, "I am, and none else beside me" (47:8, 10), claiming the language that belongs only to God. Her sorceries and astrologers cannot save her (47:12-13). Revelation 18:7-8 echoes this chapter in the judgment of end-time Babylon.

Chapter 48 — Refined in the Furnace

Israel is stubborn: "thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass" (48:4). God foretold events so they could not credit their idols (48:5). "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (48:10). Verse 16 is a clear Trinitarian text: the speaker, who was present from the beginning, says, "now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me." The Father and the Spirit send the Son. "Go ye forth of Babylon" (48:20). The section closes: "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (48:22).

Section VIII: The Book of Comfort — The Deliverer (Chapters 49-57)

The focus shifts from Cyrus, who delivers from Babylon, to the Servant, who delivers from sin.

Chapter 49 — The Second Servant Song

The Servant speaks: "The LORD hath called me from the womb" (49:1), and made His mouth "like a sharp sword" (49:2; Revelation 1:16). He is called "Israel" (49:3) as the true and perfect Israel, yet His mission is to restore national Israel (49:5), so He cannot simply be the nation. He is also sent beyond Israel:

> *I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*
>
> **Isaiah 49:6**

Paul and Barnabas quote this as their commission to preach to Gentiles (Acts 13:47); Simeon echoes it over the infant Jesus (Luke 2:32). He is "despised" and "abhorred" by the nation (49:7), yet kings will bow. God has not forgotten Zion: "Can a woman forget her sucking child...? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" (49:15-16).

Chapter 50 — The Third Servant Song: The Obedient Sufferer

Israel was sold for its own sins (50:1). The Servant has "the tongue of the learned" and is wakened morning by morning to hear the Father (50:4; John 8:28). He is fully obedient (50:5), and His suffering is described in detail:

> *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*
>
> **Isaiah 50:6**

Fulfilled in the scourging, beating and spitting at Christ's trial (Matthew 26:67; 27:26, 30). "Therefore have I set my face like a flint" (50:7) matches Luke 9:51, where Jesus "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem."

Chapter 51 — Awake, Awake

God calls the faithful remnant to look to "Abraham your father" (51:2). His salvation is eternal though the heavens vanish like smoke (51:6). "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD" (51:9). "The redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion" (51:11). Jerusalem has drunk the cup of God's fury, but He will take it away (51:17-23); Christ drank that cup for His people (Matthew 26:39).

Chapter 52 — Good Tidings

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion" (52:1).

> *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*
>
> **Isaiah 52:7**

Paul applies this to gospel preachers (Romans 10:15). "Depart ye... touch no unclean thing" (52:11) is quoted in 2 Corinthians 6:17 on separation. Verse 13 begins the fourth Servant Song: "my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Yet "his visage was so marred more than any man" (52:14), describing the brutal beating of Christ. "So shall he sprinkle many nations" (52:15), the priestly cleansing of the blood (Hebrews 12:24; 1 Peter 1:2).

Chapter 53 — The Suffering Servant

The summit of Old Testament prophecy. See Part Four for a verse-by-verse study. In summary: the Servant is rejected (53:1-3), suffers as a substitute for others' sins (53:4-6), goes silently to death (53:7-9), and is raised and rewarded (53:10-12). It describes the crucifixion with such precision that it reads like an eyewitness account, yet it was written some 700 years earlier, and the Great Isaiah Scroll proves the text existed before Jesus was born.

Chapter 54 — The Barren Woman Sings

Because of the Servant's work, the desolate wife (Zion) is told to sing (54:1; quoted in Galatians 4:27). "For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel" (54:5). "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee" (54:7). God swears a covenant of peace like His oath to Noah (54:9-10). "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper" (54:17).

Chapter 55 — The Free Invitation

> *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*
>
> **Isaiah 55:1**

Salvation by grace, freely offered (compare John 7:37; Revelation 22:17). God promises "the sure mercies of David" (55:3), which Paul links to the resurrection of Christ (Acts 13:34). "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (55:6). "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD" (55:8). God's Word never fails:

> *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please*
>
> **Isaiah 55:11**

Chapter 56 — Salvation for Outsiders

Foreigners and eunuchs, once excluded from the assembly (Deuteronomy 23:1-3), are welcomed if they keep God's covenant (56:3-7). "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (56:7), quoted by Jesus when He cleansed the temple (Mark 11:17). The Ethiopian eunuch reading Isaiah 53 in Acts 8 is a living fulfillment. Israel's watchmen, by contrast, are "blind... dumb dogs, they cannot bark" (56:10).

Chapter 57 — Idolatry Exposed; Peace to the Contrite

"The righteous perisheth... the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" (57:1). Israel's idolatry is likened to adultery (57:3-13). God dwells in two places:

> *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit*
>
> **Isaiah 57:15**

"Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near" (57:19; Ephesians 2:17). "But the wicked are like the troubled sea... There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (57:20-21).

Section IX: The Book of Comfort — The Glory (Chapters 58-66)

Chapter 58 — True and False Fasting

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet" (58:1). The people fast and complain that God ignores them, while oppressing their workers and quarrelling (58:3-4). True fasting is "to loose the bands of wickedness... to let the oppressed go free" and to feed the hungry (58:6-7). Then "thy light break forth as the morning" (58:8). Faithful Sabbath-keeping is called a delight (58:13-14). Lesson: God wants heart obedience and mercy, not empty ritual.

Chapter 59 — Sin Separates; the Redeemer Comes

> *Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you*
>
> **Isaiah 59:1-2**

Paul uses verses 7-8 in his indictment of all mankind (Romans 3:15-17). "Truth is fallen in the street" (59:14). God saw "that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation" (59:16). He puts on "righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head" (59:17; compare Ephesians 6:14-17). "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion" (59:20), quoted in Romans 11:26 of Israel's future salvation.

Chapter 60 — Zion's Glory

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee" (60:1). The Gentiles come to Zion's light (60:3), bringing gold and incense (60:6), echoed by the wise men (Matthew 2:11). Zion is called "The city of the LORD" (60:14). "The sun shall be no more thy light by day... but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light" (60:19), echoed in Revelation 21:23 and 22:5.

Chapter 61 — The Anointed One

> *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God*
>
> **Isaiah 61:1-2**

In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read this passage and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). Crucially, He stopped mid-sentence after "the acceptable year of the LORD" and closed the book. "The day of vengeance of our God" belongs to His second coming (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). One comma in Isaiah spans the whole church age: a clear demonstration of the two advents of Christ. Note the Trinity again: the Spirit, the Lord GOD, and the anointed Servant. "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (61:10), a picture of imputed righteousness.

Chapter 62 — Zion's New Name

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace" (62:1). Zion, once called Forsaken and Desolate, will be called "Hephzibah" (My delight is in her) and her land "Beulah" (Married) (62:4). Watchmen are set on the walls and told to give God no rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth (62:6-7). "Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him" (62:11; Revelation 22:12).

Chapter 63 — The Warrior from Edom

> *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?... I have trodden the winepress alone... and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments*
>
> **Isaiah 63:1-3**

This is Christ at His second coming in judgment. Revelation 19:13-15 describes Him "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood" who "treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The chapter then turns to a prayer recalling God's mercy at the Exodus: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them" (63:9). Israel "rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit" (63:10); the Holy Spirit is a person who can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30).

Chapter 64 — The Prayer of the Remnant

"Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down" (64:1). "Since the beginning of the world men have not heard... neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9). Then the great confession of human sinfulness:

> *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*
>
> **Isaiah 64:6**

Not just our sins, but our best works are unclean before God. Salvation cannot be earned. "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter" (64:8).

Chapter 65 — God's Answer: Judgment and New Creation

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not" (65:1). Paul applies this to the Gentiles' salvation and verse 2 to Israel's stubbornness (Romans 10:20-21). God will judge the rebels but preserve a remnant, "my servants" (65:8-15). Then:

> *For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*
>
> **Isaiah 65:17**

Verses 18-25 describe a world of long life ("the child shall die an hundred years old," 65:20), building and planting, and peace in nature ("The wolf and the lamb shall feed together," 65:25). Because death and sin still occur (65:20), premillennial interpreters see this as describing the millennial reign of Christ on earth, flowing into the eternal state of Revelation 21-22.

Chapter 66 — The Final Word

"The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me?" (66:1; quoted by Stephen in Acts 7:49-50). God looks to the one "that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (66:2). Zion gives birth in a day (66:7-8), often linked to Israel's sudden national restoration. God will gather all nations to see His glory and send messengers to declare it among the Gentiles (66:18-19). "As the new heavens and the new earth... shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain" (66:22). The book closes with a sobering final verse:

> *And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched*
>
> **Isaiah 66:24**

Jesus quoted this three times to describe hell (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). Isaiah ends, as the Bible ends, with eternal glory for the redeemed and eternal judgment for the rebel.

Part Three: Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfillment in Christ

Isaiah contains more prophecies of Christ than any other Old Testament book apart from the Psalms. They cover His birth, nature, ministry, rejection, suffering, death, burial, resurrection, exaltation and return. The table below lists the major ones with their New Testament fulfillment.

The First Coming

Isaiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment
7:14	Born of a virgin	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35
7:14; 8:8, 10	Called Immanuel, "God with us"	Matthew 1:23; John 1:14
9:1-2	Ministry begins in Galilee; a great light	Matthew 4:12-16
9:6	A child born, a Son given	Luke 2:11; John 3:16; Galatians 4:4
9:6	Called "The mighty God"	John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13
9:7	Heir to David's throne, eternal kingdom	Luke 1:32-33
11:1	Descendant of Jesse and David	Matthew 1:1-6; Romans 15:12
11:2	The Spirit rests upon Him	Matthew 3:16; John 3:34
11:10	The Gentiles will seek Him	Romans 15:9-12
40:3-5	Preceded by a forerunner in the wilderness	Matthew 3:1-3; John 1:23
40:9-11	God comes as a Shepherd	John 10:11, 14
42:1	The Father's chosen in whom He delights	Matthew 3:17; 12:17-21
42:2-3	Gentle, not loud or forceful	Matthew 12:15-21
42:6; 49:6	A light to the Gentiles	Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; John 8:12
28:16	The tried, precious cornerstone	1 Peter 2:6; Ephesians 2:20
8:14	A stone of stumbling to Israel	Romans 9:32-33; 1 Peter 2:8
6:9-10; 53:1	Rejected in unbelief	John 12:37-41
29:18; 35:5-6	Heals blind, deaf, lame and dumb	Matthew 11:4-6; 15:30-31
61:1-2	Anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel	Luke 4:16-21
22:22	Holds the key of David	Revelation 3:7
29:13	Exposes hypocritical worship	Matthew 15:7-9
56:7	Cleanses the temple, a house of prayer	Mark 11:15-17

The Passion and Resurrection

Isaiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment
50:6	Beaten, hair plucked, spat upon	Matthew 26:67; 27:26-30
50:7	Sets His face like a flint	Luke 9:51
52:14	Disfigured beyond human likeness	Matthew 27:27-31; John 19:1-5
53:1	His report not believed	John 12:37-38; Romans 10:16
53:2	No outward majesty; humble origins	Mark 6:3; John 1:46
53:3	Despised and rejected	John 1:11; Matthew 27:21-23
53:4	Bears our sicknesses and sorrows	Matthew 8:16-17
53:5	Wounded for our sins; healed by His stripes	1 Peter 2:24; Romans 4:25
53:6	God laid our iniquity on Him	2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18
53:7	Silent before His accusers	Matthew 26:62-63; 27:12-14; Acts 8:32-35
53:7	The Lamb led to slaughter	John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19
53:8	Cut off by an unjust trial	Matthew 26:59-66; Daniel 9:26
53:9	Grave with the wicked and the rich	Matthew 27:38, 57-60
53:9	Sinless, no deceit	1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15
53:10	An offering for sin; prolongs His days	Hebrews 10:10-14; Romans 6:9
53:11	Justifies many by bearing their iniquities	Romans 5:18-19
53:12	Numbered with the transgressors	Mark 15:27-28; Luke 22:37
53:12	Intercedes for transgressors	Luke 23:34; Hebrews 7:25
53:12	Divides the spoil with the strong	Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 2:15
55:3	The sure mercies of David (resurrection)	Acts 13:34

The Second Coming and Kingdom

Isaiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment / Expectation
2:2-4	Reigns from Zion; universal peace	Micah 4:1-4; Revelation 20:4-6
9:7	Endless reign on David's throne	Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 11:15
11:3-5	Judges the earth in righteousness	Acts 17:31; Revelation 19:11
11:4	Slays the wicked with the breath of His lips	2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:15
11:6-9	Peace restored in creation	Romans 8:19-22
11:11-12	Israel regathered from all nations	Matthew 24:31; Romans 11:25-27
25:8	Death swallowed up in victory	1 Corinthians 15:54; Revelation 21:4
32:1	A King reigns in righteousness	Revelation 19:16
45:23	Every knee bows, every tongue swears	Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 14:11

Isaiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment / Expectation
59:20	The Redeemer comes to Zion	Romans 11:26
61:2	The day of vengeance of our God	2 Thessalonians 1:7-9
63:1-6	Treads the winepress of wrath	Revelation 14:19-20; 19:13-15
65:17; 66:22	New heavens and new earth	2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1

The Two Advents in a Single Book

Old Testament prophets often saw the two comings of Christ like two mountain peaks viewed from a distance, without the valley between them. Isaiah shows the "suffering Messiah" (chapters 50, 53) and the "reigning Messiah" (chapters 9, 11, 63) side by side. Many Jews of Jesus' day expected only the conquering King. Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61 in Luke 4, stopping before "the day of vengeance," shows that the two are separated by the present age of grace. The Servant must first suffer, then reign (Luke 24:26; 1 Peter 1:11).

Part Four: Key Passages in Depth

Isaiah 7:14 — "A Virgin Shall Conceive"

The Hebrew word is almah. Critics argue it simply means "young woman" and that Isaiah would have used bethulah for "virgin." The Christian answer:

- **Usage.** Almah is used seven times in the Old Testament (Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Psalm 68:25; Proverbs 30:19; Song of Solomon 1:3; 6:8; Isaiah 7:14). In none of them does it clearly refer to a married or sexually experienced woman. Rebekah is called both almah (Genesis 24:43) and bethulah (24:16).
- **The Septuagint.** Jewish scholars translating Isaiah into Greek some two centuries before Christ rendered almah as parthenos, the specific Greek word for "virgin." The Jews themselves understood the verse this way before there was any Christian debate.
- **It is a sign.** God promised a sign "deep" as the depths or "high" as the heights (7:11). A young woman conceiving in the ordinary way is no sign at all.
- **"The Lord himself."** The sign comes from God Himself to the whole "house of David" (plural "you"), guaranteeing that David's line would not be destroyed by Syria and Israel, and pointing to its ultimate Heir.
- **Immanuel is divine.** The child is called "God with us" (7:14), the land is called "thy land, O Immanuel" (8:8), and the same child is "The mighty God" (9:6). This is no ordinary baby in Ahaz's day.
- **Matthew's inspired verdict.** "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet" (Matthew 1:22-23).

Some conservative teachers see a near sign as well (a child of Isaiah's time marking the timing of 7:15-16), with the ultimate fulfillment in Christ. Either way, the virgin birth is the true and full meaning, and it is essential doctrine: Christ had to be fully man yet without inherited sin.

Isaiah 9:6-7 — The Names of the Messiah

- **Wonderful** (pele). The same root the Angel of the LORD uses of His own name, "seeing it is secret [wonderful]" (Judges 13:18). Supernatural, beyond comprehension.
- **Counsellor.** He needs no counsel (40:13-14); He is wisdom itself (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3).
- **The mighty God** (El Gibbor). Used of Jehovah in 10:21. A direct statement of Christ's deity.
- **The everlasting Father.** Not a confusion of the Father and Son in the Trinity, but "Father of eternity": the Author and Possessor of eternity, and the One who cares for His people as a father (compare John 14:9; Hebrews 2:13).
- **The Prince of Peace.** He makes peace with God through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:1) and will bring peace on earth (Isaiah 2:4).

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 — The Suffering Servant, Verse by Verse

The passage has five stanzas of three verses each. The central stanza (53:4-6) is the heart: substitution.

Stanza 1 (52:13-15): Exaltation After Humiliation

The song begins with the end: the Servant will be "exalted and extolled, and be very high" (52:13; compare Philippians 2:9). His face was marred more than any man's (52:14). He will "sprinkle many nations" (52:15), a priestly act of cleansing with blood. Kings will be silenced before Him.

Stanza 2 (53:1-3): Rejected by His Own

"Who hath believed our report?" (53:1). He grew up as "a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground" (53:2), born into a spiritually barren nation, from humble Nazareth, with no royal splendour. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (53:3). The tense is prophetic perfect: the future described as already done because God has decreed it.

Stanza 3 (53:4-6): Substitution — the Heart of the Gospel

> *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
>
> **Isaiah 53:4-6**

Count the pronouns: "he... our... we... him... our... our... we... him... us." Every line contrasts Him and us. This is penal substitutionary atonement: the innocent Servant bearing the penalty of the guilty. Observers thought God was punishing Him for His own sin; in truth it was for ours. Verse 6 begins with "all" gone astray and ends with "all" laid on Him. Peter quotes these verses (1 Peter 2:24-25).

Stanza 4 (53:7-9): Silent Submission and Burial

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (53:7). Jesus stood silent before Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod (Matthew 26:63; 27:14; Luke 23:9). It was this verse the Ethiopian eunuch was reading when Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:32-35). "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken" (53:8): a violent death for others' sins. "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death" (53:9): crucified between thieves, intended for a criminal's grave, but buried in the tomb of rich Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60). And this "because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth": His sinlessness.

Stanza 5 (53:10-12): Resurrection and Reward

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him" (53:10). The cross was not an accident but the Father's plan (Acts 2:23; 4:28). God made "his soul an offering for sin" (the guilt offering, Leviticus 5). Then, after death, "he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days" (53:10). A dead man who sees his descendants and lives on: this is resurrection. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (53:11): justification by faith. Finally, "he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (53:12), fulfilled when He prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34).

Who Is the Servant?

Modern Jewish interpretation usually says the Servant is the nation of Israel. But the text rules this out:

- The Servant suffers for "my people" (53:8), meaning Israel. He cannot be Israel suffering for Israel.
- The Servant is sinless (53:9). Isaiah repeatedly describes Israel as deeply sinful (1:4; 42:24-25; 64:6).
- The Servant suffers silently and willingly (53:7). Israel is not described this way.
- The Servant restores Israel (49:5-6), so He is distinct from the nation.
- Ancient Jewish sources, including the Targum Jonathan on Isaiah, identified the Servant of 52:13 as the Messiah.

The only person in history who fits every detail is Jesus of Nazareth.

Isaiah 6 — The Holiness of God

Isaiah's vision is the lens for the entire book. "Holy, holy, holy" is the only attribute of God repeated three times in Scripture (also Revelation 4:8). Holiness means God is utterly separate, morally pure, and set apart from all creation and sin. A true sight of God's holiness produces three things: a true sight of self ("Woe is me"), a need for atonement (the coal from the altar of sacrifice), and a readiness to serve ("Here am I; send me"). Isaiah's characteristic title for God, "the Holy One of Israel," flows from this chapter.

Part Five: Fulfilled Historical Prophecies

Isaiah's near-term prophecies were fulfilled in history, giving confidence that his far-reaching ones about Christ and the end times are equally reliable (compare Deuteronomy 18:21-22).

Isaiah	Prophecy	Historical Fulfillment
7:8	Ephraim broken within 65 years	Israel destroyed and resettled by foreigners (722 BC and after)
7:16; 8:4	Syria and Israel plundered before the child grows	Assyria took Damascus (732 BC) and Samaria (722 BC)
8:7-8	Assyria floods Judah to the neck	Sennacherib's invasion of 701 BC
10:12-19; 37:33-36	Assyria judged; Jerusalem untouched	185,000 struck; Sennacherib withdraws (2 Kings 19:35)
37:7, 38	Sennacherib slain in his own land	Killed by his sons (c. 681 BC)
38:5	Fifteen years added to Hezekiah's life	2 Kings 20:6
39:6-7	Treasures and royal sons taken to Babylon	605-586 BC (2 Kings 24-25; Daniel 1:3)
13:17; 21:2	Medes (and Elam/Persia) conquer Babylon	Fall of Babylon to Medo-Persia, 539 BC (Daniel 5:28-31)
13:19-22	Babylon to become desolate	Babylon declined and was abandoned to ruins
44:28; 45:1	Cyrus named; decrees Jerusalem rebuilt	Edict of Cyrus, 538 BC (Ezra 1:1-4)
45:1	Gates opened before Cyrus	Babylon entered with little resistance
46:1-2	Babylon's gods carried away	Babylon's idols humiliated under Persian rule
15-16	Moab humbled within three years	Assyrian campaigns against Moab
17:1	Damascus a ruinous heap	Assyrian conquest, 732 BC
20:3-4	Egyptians and Ethiopians led captive by Assyria	Assyrian campaigns into Egypt (7th century BC)
23	Tyre humbled and forgotten seventy years	Assyrian and Babylonian sieges; later Alexander, 332 BC
34:5-15	Edom made desolate	Edom disappeared as a nation

Part Six: Prophecies Yet to Be Fulfilled

Bible-believing Christians hold that many of Isaiah's prophecies await the return of Christ. Taken literally, as the fulfilled prophecies were, they describe:

- **The Day of the LORD and the Tribulation** (2:10-21; 13:6-13; 24:1-23; 34:1-4). A time of worldwide judgment on sin and pride, with cosmic signs.
- **The return of Christ in glory and judgment** (40:10; 59:20; 63:1-6; 66:15-16). He comes from Edom with garments stained, treading the winepress of wrath (Revelation 19).
- **The resurrection of the dead** (25:8; 26:19).
- **The binding of Satan** (24:21-22; 27:1; compare Revelation 20:1-3).
- **The national repentance and regathering of Israel** (11:11-12; 27:12-13; 43:5-7; 59:20-21; 66:8). "So all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26 quoting 59:20).
- **The millennial kingdom** (2:2-4; 11:1-16; 32:1; 35:1-10; 65:18-25). Christ reigning from Jerusalem, worldwide peace, nations learning God's ways, long life, and creation renewed.
- **The salvation and worship of the nations** (2:3; 19:23-25; 60:3; 66:23).
- **The new heavens and new earth** (65:17; 66:22; compare 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).
- **Eternal punishment of the wicked** (66:24; Mark 9:43-48).

Note on interpretation: premillennial Christians (common among Baptists) read the kingdom passages as a literal future reign of Christ on earth. Amillennial and postmillennial Christians generally apply many of them spiritually to the church age and the eternal state. All agree that Christ will return, raise the dead, judge the world and make all things new.

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Isaiah

1. The Holiness of God

"The Holy One of Israel" is Isaiah's signature title for God (1:4; 5:19, 24; 12:6; 30:11-15; 41:14; 43:3; 47:4; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14). God's holiness is the root of His judgment on sin and the reason sinners need a Saviour. "God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness" (5:16).

2. The Sovereignty of God

God controls history: He calls Assyria His rod (10:5), names Cyrus before his birth (44:28), raises and humbles empires (40:15-17, 23), and declares the end from the beginning (46:10). Nothing takes Him by surprise. "The LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?" (14:27).

3. There Is Only One God

Isaiah is the Old Testament's strongest witness to monotheism: "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (45:5; also 43:10-11; 44:6, 8; 45:21-22; 46:9). Yet within this one God, Isaiah reveals plurality:

- "Who will go for us?" (6:8)
- "The Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me" (48:16)
- "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me" (61:1)
- "They rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit" (63:10)

The New Testament reveals the full doctrine of the Trinity, and Isaiah lays its foundation.

4. The Deity of Christ

Isaiah's titles for the LORD are given to Jesus in the New Testament:

Isaiah	Title of Jehovah	Applied to Jesus
6:1-5	The King, the LORD of hosts	John 12:41
8:13-14	Stone of stumbling	1 Peter 2:8
9:6	The mighty God	John 20:28
40:3	The LORD whose way is prepared	Matthew 3:3
43:11	The only Saviour	Titus 2:13; Acts 4:12
44:6; 48:12	The First and the Last	Revelation 1:17; 22:13
45:23	To Him every knee shall bow	Philippians 2:10-11

5. The Utter Folly of Idolatry

Isaiah mocks idols that must be carried, nailed down, and cannot speak, hear, save or predict (40:18-20; 41:7, 21-24; 44:9-20; 46:1-7). Idolatry is not only bowing to statues; it is trusting anything other than God: Egypt's horses (31:1), wealth, military alliances, human wisdom (29:14) or self.

6. Sin and Human Depravity

Isaiah gives a sobering diagnosis: the whole nation is sick from head to foot (1:5-6); "All we like sheep have gone astray" (53:6); "your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (59:2); "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (64:6). Sin is rebellion (1:2), pride (2:11-17; 14:13-14), injustice (1:23; 5:7), hypocrisy (29:13; 58:2-5), and moral confusion (5:20). Man cannot save himself.

7. Salvation by Grace Through Faith

Salvation is God's work: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake" (43:25). It is free: "without money and without price" (55:1). It is by looking in faith: "Look unto me, and be ye saved" (45:22). It is through the substitute: "the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (53:6). It clothes the sinner in God's righteousness: "he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (61:10). Faith is central: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (7:9); "he that believeth shall not make haste" (28:16).

8. Judgment and Mercy Together

Isaiah alternates between woe and comfort. God's judgment is real, total and just (1:24-28; 66:24), but its goal toward His people is purification, not destruction (1:25-27; 48:10). "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee" (54:7).

9. The Remnant

Even when the nation is judged, God preserves a faithful remnant (1:9; 6:13; 10:20-22; 37:31-32). Isaiah's son's name, Shear-jashub, means "a remnant shall return." Paul applies this to the believing Jews of his day: "a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5; 9:27).

10. God's Salvation for the Nations

Isaiah's vision is global. The Servant is a light to the Gentiles (42:6; 49:6). All the ends of the earth are invited (45:22). Foreigners and eunuchs are welcomed (56:3-8). Egypt and Assyria will worship (19:23-25). God's messengers will declare His glory among the Gentiles (66:19). This is the missionary heart of God, fulfilled in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

11. The Word of God

"The word of our God shall stand for ever" (40:8). It will not return void (55:11). It is the test of all teaching (8:20). God esteems the one who "trembleth at my word" (66:2). The perfect fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies is itself proof of divine inspiration.

12. Trust Instead of Fear

Repeatedly God tells His people, "Fear not" (7:4; 35:4; 41:10, 13-14; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8; 54:4). The kings of Isaiah's day show both responses: Ahaz trusted man and brought disaster (ch. 7); Hezekiah trusted God and saw deliverance (ch. 37). "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (26:3).

13. True vs. False Religion

God hates ritual without righteousness: sacrifices (1:11-15), lip-worship (29:13), and showy fasting (58:3-5). He wants justice, mercy, humility and a contrite heart (1:16-17; 57:15; 58:6-7; 66:2).

14. The Future Hope

Isaiah ends with hope: a coming King, a renewed creation, death swallowed up, tears wiped away, and God's people dwelling with Him forever (25:8; 35:10; 65:17-19).

Part Eight: Names and Titles in Isaiah

Titles of God

Title	Reference	Meaning
The Holy One of Israel	1:4; 41:14; 54:5	God's absolute holiness and covenant bond with Israel
The LORD of hosts	1:9; 6:3; 54:5	Commander of heaven's armies
The Mighty One of Jacob	49:26; 60:16	Protector of His people
The first and the last	41:4; 44:6; 48:12	Eternal, self-existent
The everlasting God, Creator	40:28	Never faints or tires
Redeemer	41:14; 43:14; 44:24	The kinsman who buys back His people
Saviour	43:3, 11; 45:15, 21	The only one who saves
The high and lofty One	57:15	Transcendent, inhabiting eternity
Our Father; our Potter	63:16; 64:8	Personal care and sovereign shaping

Titles of the Messiah

Title	Reference
Immanuel	7:14; 8:8
Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace	9:6
The Branch of the LORD	4:2
A rod out of the stem of Jesse; a Branch	11:1
The root of Jesse; an ensign of the people	11:10
A precious corner stone, a sure foundation	28:16
A king that reigns in righteousness	32:1
My servant, mine elect	42:1; 52:13
A light of the Gentiles; a covenant of the people	42:6; 49:6
A man of sorrows	53:3

Title	Reference
My righteous servant	53:11
The Redeemer that comes to Zion	59:20
The Anointed One (Messiah)	61:1

Part Nine: Connections — How Isaiah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Isaiah in the New Testament

Isaiah is quoted by Jesus, John the Baptist, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter and in Revelation. A selection of direct quotations:

Isaiah	Quoted In	Context
1:9	Romans 9:29	The surviving remnant
6:9-10	Matthew 13:14-15; John 12:40; Acts 28:26-27	Judicial blindness of unbelief
7:14	Matthew 1:23	The virgin birth
8:14	Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:8	Christ the stumbling stone
9:1-2	Matthew 4:15-16	Light in Galilee
10:22-23	Romans 9:27-28	The remnant saved
11:10	Romans 15:12	Gentiles trust in Christ
22:13	1 Corinthians 15:32	Without resurrection, eat and drink
25:8	1 Corinthians 15:54	Death swallowed up
28:11-12	1 Corinthians 14:21	Tongues as a sign
28:16	Romans 9:33; 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6	The cornerstone
29:13	Matthew 15:8-9; Mark 7:6-7	Lip-service worship
29:14	1 Corinthians 1:19	God confounds worldly wisdom
40:3-5	Matthew 3:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23	John the Baptist
40:6-8	1 Peter 1:24-25	The enduring Word
40:13	Romans 11:34; 1 Corinthians 2:16	Who knows the mind of the Lord?
42:1-4	Matthew 12:18-21	Jesus the gentle Servant
45:23	Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10-11	Every knee shall bow
49:6	Acts 13:47	Light to the Gentiles
52:5	Romans 2:24	God's name blasphemed among Gentiles
52:7	Romans 10:15	Beautiful feet of preachers
52:11	2 Corinthians 6:17	Be separate
52:15	Romans 15:21	Preaching where Christ is not named
53:1	John 12:38; Romans 10:16	Unbelief toward the gospel
53:4	Matthew 8:17	Christ's healing ministry
53:7-8	Acts 8:32-33	The Ethiopian eunuch
53:9	1 Peter 2:22	Christ's sinlessness

Isaiah	Quoted In	Context
53:12	Luke 22:37; Mark 15:28	Numbered with transgressors
54:1	Galatians 4:27	The heavenly Jerusalem
55:3	Acts 13:34	The resurrection of Christ
56:7	Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17	House of prayer
59:7-8	Romans 3:15-17	Universal sinfulness
59:20-21	Romans 11:26-27	Israel's future salvation
61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19	Jesus' ministry manifesto
64:4	1 Corinthians 2:9	Things God has prepared
65:1-2	Romans 10:20-21	Gentiles find God; Israel resists
66:1-2	Acts 7:49-50	God does not dwell in temples made with hands
66:24	Mark 9:44, 46, 48	The unending fire of hell

Isaiah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Sodom and Gomorrah as the pattern of judgment (1:9-10; 13:19); "Look unto Abraham your father" (51:2); Eden restored (51:3); the waters of Noah (54:9); new heavens and earth reversing the curse (65:17-25)
Exodus	The "new exodus" theme: a highway through the sea, water from the rock, the cloud and fire (4:5; 11:15-16; 43:16-19; 48:21; 63:11-14)
Deuteronomy	"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth" (1:2; Deuteronomy 32:1); the covenant lawsuit and its curses
2 Samuel	David's eternal throne (9:7; 16:5; 55:3; 2 Samuel 7:16)
2 Kings	The historical setting; Isaiah 36-39 parallels 2 Kings 18-20
2 Chronicles	Uzziah, Ahaz and Hezekiah's reigns; "the vision of Isaiah the prophet" cited (2 Chronicles 26:22; 32:20, 32)
Ezra	Cyrus fulfils Isaiah 44:28-45:1 (Ezra 1:1-4)
Psalms	The LORD reigns; the holiness and kingship of God; Zion the city of God (Psalms 46-48; 93-99)
Jeremiah	The Branch of David (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5); the fall of Babylon (Isaiah 13-14; 47; Jeremiah 50-51)
Ezekiel	The Spirit poured out and the new heart (Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:26-27); the shepherd-king (Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34)
Daniel	The fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians (Isaiah 13:17; 21:2; Daniel 5:28-31); the everlasting kingdom
Joel	The Spirit poured out (Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Joel 2:28); the Day of the LORD
Micah	Contemporary; Micah 4:1-3 matches Isaiah 2:2-4; the ruler from Bethlehem complements Immanuel

Book	Link
Nahum	Assyria's fall (Isaiah 10; 37; Nahum 1-3)
Obadiah	Judgment on Edom (Isaiah 34; 63:1-6; Obadiah)
Zechariah	The Branch (Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12); the coming King (Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 9:9)
Malachi	The messenger preparing the way (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1)

Part Ten: Practical Lessons for the Christian

- **See God as He is.** Worship, holiness and service begin with a true view of God's majesty (ch. 6). A low view of God produces a careless life.
- **Deal honestly with sin.** "Woe is me" must come before "Here am I." Confession precedes cleansing (1:18; 6:5-7).
- **Trust God, not man.** Ahaz trusted Assyria and Judah trusted Egypt, and both failed. Hezekiah prayed and God delivered (chs. 7, 30-31, 37). In crisis, spread the problem "before the LORD" (37:14).
- **Wait on the LORD.** Strength is renewed by waiting on Him, not by striving (40:31; 30:15).
- **Reject empty religion.** God is not impressed by ritual, attendance or appearances; He looks for a humble, contrite heart and a life of justice and mercy (1:11-17; 29:13; 58; 66:2).
- **Do not call evil good.** Isaiah's warning in 5:20 speaks directly to a culture that redefines morality.
- **Rest in the finished work of Christ.** Our righteousness is filthy rags (64:6); His substitution is complete (53:5-6). Salvation is free (55:1).
- **Value the Word of God.** It stands forever and never returns void (40:8; 55:11). Test all teaching by it (8:20).
- **Be a witness.** Israel was called to be God's witness (43:10); the church is sent with beautiful feet to bring good tidings (52:7) to the ends of the earth (49:6).
- **Live with hope.** History is moving toward the reign of Christ and the new creation. Present suffering is "a small moment" (54:7).
- **Remember the warning.** The book ends with the undying worm and unquenched fire (66:24). The invitation stands open now: "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found" (55:6).

Part Eleven: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:18	Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow
6:8	Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.
7:14	Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
9:6	For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder
26:3	Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.
40:8	The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.
40:31	But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles
41:10	Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God
45:22	Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.
53:5	But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities... and with his stripes we are healed.
53:6	All we like sheep have gone astray... and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.
55:8	For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.
55:11	So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void
59:2	But your iniquities have separated between you and your God
64:6	But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags

Conclusion

Isaiah is the gospel in the Old Testament. It begins with a rebellious nation under God's judgment and ends with new heavens and a new earth. At its centre stands the Servant of the LORD, born of a virgin, anointed by the Spirit, rejected by His people, wounded for their transgressions, buried with the rich, raised to see His seed, and coming again as King to reign in righteousness. Isaiah's name says it all: "The LORD is salvation." Seven centuries before Bethlehem, the prophet saw the glory of Christ and spoke of Him (John 12:41). The fulfilled prophecies prove the Book divine; the unfulfilled ones guarantee the future. The response Isaiah calls for is the same today:

> *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*
>
> **Isaiah 45:22**

Jeremiah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Jeremiah (with Baruch) • Date: c. 627-580 BC • Chapters: 52

> *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah*
>
> **Jeremiah 31:31**

Part One: Introduction to Jeremiah

The Prophet

Jeremiah, "the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin" (1:1), was called as a young man in the thirteenth year of King Josiah (627 BC) and prophesied for over forty years, through the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC, and beyond, ending his ministry in Egypt (1:2-3; 43-44). His name probably means "the LORD exalts" or "the LORD establishes."

Jeremiah is called "the weeping prophet": "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (9:1). No prophet's inner life is revealed more fully. He was forbidden to marry (16:2), rejected by his own family and townsmen (11:21; 12:6), beaten and put in stocks (20:2), threatened with death (26:8), imprisoned (37:15), thrown into a muddy cistern (38:6), and finally taken against his will to Egypt (43:6-7). Yet he remained faithful, and his book records some of the most tender promises in the Old Testament, including the New Covenant (31:31-34).

Author and Composition

Jeremiah dictated his messages to his faithful scribe Baruch son of Neriah (36:4, 32; 45:1). When King Jehoiakim burned the first scroll, Jeremiah dictated it again "and there were added besides unto them many like words" (36:32). The book is not arranged in strict chronological order; it is grouped partly by theme. The Greek Septuagint version is shorter by about an eighth and places the oracles against the nations (chapters 46-51) in the middle of the book. The final chapter (52), an appendix almost identical to 2 Kings 24:18-25:30, was evidently added by a later hand, since 51:64 says, "Thus far are the words of Jeremiah." By word count, Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible.

Historical Setting

King of Judah	Reign	Events in Jeremiah
Josiah	640-609 BC	Jeremiah's call (627 BC, 1:2); Josiah's reforms (622 BC); Josiah killed at Megiddo (609 BC)
Jehoahaz (Shallum)	609 BC (3 months)	Taken to Egypt; never to return (22:10-12)
Jehoiakim	609-598 BC	Temple sermon (7; 26); Babylon defeats Egypt at Carchemish (605 BC, 46:2); first deportation, with Daniel (605 BC); the scroll burned (36)
Jehoiachin (Coniah)	598-597 BC (3 months)	Taken to Babylon with Ezekiel and 10,000 captives (597 BC, 22:24-30; 24:1)
Zedekiah	597-586 BC	Siege of Jerusalem; Jeremiah imprisoned (32-38); Jerusalem and the temple destroyed (586 BC, 39; 52)
Gedaliah, governor	586 BC	Murdered by Ishmael (40-41); the remnant flees to Egypt (42-44)

Jeremiah's contemporaries included Zephaniah, Habakkuk and the prophetess Huldah in Judah, and Daniel and Ezekiel in Babylon. The world was changing: Assyria fell (Nineveh destroyed 612 BC), Egypt tried to dominate the region, and Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar became the superpower that God used as His instrument of judgment.

Confirmation from Archaeology

- **Seal impressions (bullae)** have been found bearing the names of people mentioned in Jeremiah, including Gemariah son of Shaphan (36:10), Jehucal son of Shelemiah and Gedaliah son of Pashur (38:1). A bulla reading "Berekyahu son of Neriyahu the scribe" (Baruch son of Neriah) has been published, though its authenticity is debated.
- **A Babylonian tablet** names "Nabu-sharrussu-ukin, the chief eunuch," identified by many scholars with "Sarsechim, Rab-saris" (chief officer), who was present at Jerusalem's fall (39:3).
- **The Lachish Letters**, written on pottery shortly before the fall of Jerusalem, describe the Babylonian advance; one says the signals of Azekah can no longer be seen. Jeremiah 34:7 notes that Lachish and Azekah were the last fortified cities left.
- **The Babylonian Chronicle** records Nebuchadnezzar's victory at Carchemish (605 BC; 46:2) and his capture of Jerusalem in 597 BC.

Purpose and Theme

Jeremiah called Judah to repent of idolatry and covenant unfaithfulness before it was too late, warned that Babylon would destroy Jerusalem and carry the people into exile for seventy years, and promised that God would afterward restore His people, raise up a righteous King from David's line, and make a New Covenant written on their hearts. His ministry combined the hardest message of judgment with the most beautiful promises of hope: "to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (1:10).

> *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*
>
> **Jeremiah 31:31, 33**

Jeremiah's Symbolic Acts

Sign	Jeremiah	Meaning
The almond rod and the boiling pot	1:11-15	God watches over His word; disaster from the north
The ruined linen girdle	13:1-11	Judah's pride ruined, like a spoiled garment
The filled wine bottles	13:12-14	The people filled with drunkenness and smashed
Forbidden to marry	16:1-9	Coming disaster would make family life a sorrow
The potter's house	18:1-10	God's sovereignty to reshape or destroy a nation
The broken earthen bottle	19:1-13	Jerusalem broken beyond repair

Sign	Jeremiah	Meaning
The two baskets of figs	24	The exiles preserved; those who stayed destroyed
The yoke of wood	27-28	Submit to Babylon's yoke
Buying a field at Anathoth	32:6-15	Land will be bought and sold again after the exile
The Rechabites' obedience	35	A lesson in faithfulness to Judah
Stones hidden at Tahpanhes	43:8-13	Nebuchadnezzar will set his throne in Egypt
The scroll sunk in the Euphrates	51:59-64	Babylon will sink and not rise

Jeremiah's Confessions

Several passages record Jeremiah's personal laments, sometimes called his "confessions": 11:18-12:6; 15:10-21; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18. In them he pours out his pain, loneliness, anger at his persecutors and even complaint against God, yet always returns to trust. They show that faithful servants of God can feel deep anguish, and that God meets them in it.

Outline of Jeremiah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Prophet's Call	1	"I have put my words in thy mouth"
II. Warnings and Appeals to Judah	2-25	Sin, judgment and the call to repent
Israel's unfaithfulness	2-6	Broken cisterns; return, backsliding children
The temple sermon and false religion	7-10	"The temple of the LORD"; idols
The broken covenant and Jeremiah's laments	11-20	Signs, the potter, persecution
Messages to kings and false prophets	21-25	The Righteous Branch; seventy years
III. Conflict with Leaders and False Prophets	26-29	Trial, Hananiah, the letter to the exiles
IV. The Book of Consolation	30-33	Restoration and the New Covenant
V. The Last Days of Jerusalem	34-39	Siege, imprisonment and the fall
VI. After the Fall	40-45	Gedaliah, the flight to Egypt, Baruch
VII. Oracles Against the Nations	46-51	Egypt to Babylon
VIII. Historical Appendix	52	The fall of Jerusalem recounted

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Prophet's Call (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1 — "Before I Formed Thee"

> *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*
>
> **Jeremiah 1:5**

God knew Jeremiah and set him apart before birth (compare Psalm 139:13-16; Galatians 1:15). This verse is a strong witness to the personhood and value of the unborn. Jeremiah protested, "Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child" (1:6). God answered, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee" (1:7-8). Then the LORD touched his mouth: "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (1:9; compare Deuteronomy 18:18). His commission had two sides: "to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (1:10).

Two visions confirmed his call. An almond branch (Hebrew shaqed, "the waking tree," the first to blossom in spring) meant "I will hasten [watch over] my word to perform it" (1:11-12; the Hebrew for "watch" is shoqed). A boiling pot tilted from the north meant disaster would come from the north, from Babylon (1:13-16). God promised, "I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land... And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee" (1:18-19).

Section II: Warnings and Appeals to Judah (Chapters 2-25)

Chapter 2 — Forsaking the Fountain

God remembered Israel's early devotion: "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness" (2:2). But they had turned away. "Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit" (2:11).

> *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*
>
> **Jeremiah 2:13**

They abandoned the true source of life and laboured to make their own, which failed. Jesus offered "living water" to all who come to Him (John 4:10-14; 7:37-38). Israel's sin was deep and stubborn: "though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me" (2:22). They were like a wild donkey in heat chasing other gods (2:23-25), turning to wood and stone, "Thou art my father" (2:27).

Chapter 3 — Return, Backsliding Children

Judah had seen the northern kingdom sent away for spiritual adultery, yet "her treacherous sister Judah feared not" (3:8), and her return to God under Josiah was "not with her whole heart, but feignedly" (3:10). Yet God pleaded: "Return, thou backsliding Israel... and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful" (3:12). "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you" (3:14). He promised, "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (3:15), and foretold a day when the ark would no longer be remembered, because Jerusalem itself would be called "the throne of the LORD" and all nations would gather to it (3:16-17). "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God" (3:22).

Chapter 4 — Break Up Your Fallow Ground

"Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart" (4:3-4; Romans 2:29). The invader is coming from the north (4:6-7). Jeremiah felt the agony personally: "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart" (4:19). "My people is foolish... they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (4:22). He saw a vision of the land reversed to chaos: "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light" (4:23), the language of Genesis 1:2.

Chapter 5 — Not One Righteous Man

"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem... if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it" (5:1; compare Genesis 18:23-32). Both poor and great had broken the yoke (5:4-5). "They are waxed fat... they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless" (5:28). The deepest tragedy: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (5:30-31).

Chapter 6 — Peace, Peace, When There Is No Peace

The siege is pictured (6:1-8). The false prophets "have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (6:14; repeated in 8:11). "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (6:15).

> *Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*
>
> **Jeremiah 6:16**

Jesus echoed this: "ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29). God rejected empty sacrifices from a disobedient people (6:20).

Chapter 7 — The Temple Sermon

At the gate of the temple, Jeremiah confronted the people's false confidence: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these" (7:4). They thought the temple guaranteed their safety while they stole, murdered, committed adultery, swore falsely and worshipped Baal (7:8-10). "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" (7:11). Jesus quoted this when He cleansed the temple (Matthew 21:13). "But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh... and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel" (7:12; 1 Samuel 4). God told Jeremiah not to pray for them (7:16), as they made cakes for "the queen of heaven" (7:18). God had always wanted obedience more than sacrifice: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God" (7:23). They burned their children in Topheth in the valley of Hinnom, which would become "the valley of slaughter" (7:31-32). The consequences of this sermon are told in chapter 26.

Chapter 8 — The Harvest Is Past

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times... but my people know not the judgment of the LORD" (8:7). "The wise men are ashamed... they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" (8:9). The false comfort of "Peace, peace" is repeated (8:11). A cry of despair: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (8:20). Jeremiah grieved: "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt... Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (8:21-22). Christ is the Great Physician (Matthew 9:12).

Chapter 9 — Glory in Knowing God

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears" (9:1). Jeremiah wished he could escape to a lodge in the wilderness from a nation of liars (9:2-6). "Their tongue is as an arrow shot out" (9:8). Then a great word on true glory:

> *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

Paul quotes this: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17).

Chapter 10 — The Living God and Lifeless Idols

Idols are cut from the forest, decked with silver and gold, and fastened with nails; "They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go" (10:3-5). "But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king" (10:10). Verse 11 is written in Aramaic, the international language, as a message for the nations: "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish." God "hath made the earth by his power" (10:12). Jeremiah prays, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (10:23).

Chapter 11 — The Broken Covenant; a Plot Against Jeremiah

Judah had broken the covenant made at Sinai (11:1-10), so judgment would come and their idols would not save them (11:11-13). Then Jeremiah discovered that the men of his own hometown, Anathoth, were plotting to kill him: "I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me" (11:19; compare Isaiah 53:7). They said, "Prophesy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand" (11:21). Jesus too was rejected and threatened by the people of His hometown (Luke 4:24-30).

Chapter 12 — Why Do the Wicked Prosper?

Jeremiah asked God: "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" (12:1). God's answer was not an explanation but a challenge: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" (12:5). Worse trials were coming, even from his own family (12:6). Yet God grieved over His heritage (12:7-13) and promised compassion even to the nations around Israel if they would learn His ways (12:14-17).

Chapter 13 — The Ruined Girdle

God told Jeremiah to buy a linen girdle (waistcloth), wear it, then hide it in a cleft of the rock by the Euphrates. When he retrieved it, "the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing" (13:1-7). So God would ruin "the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem" (13:9). Israel had been meant to cling to God like a girdle, "that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear" (13:11). Wine bottles would be filled and smashed (13:12-14). "Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness" (13:16). Their sin had become their nature:

> *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*
>
> **Jeremiah 13:23**

Human beings cannot change their own hearts; only God can (Ezekiel 36:26; John 3:3).

Chapter 14 — Drought and False Prophets

A severe drought struck: nobles sent servants for water and found none; even the hind abandoned her calf (14:1-6). Jeremiah interceded: "O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake" (14:7). God said, "Pray not for this people for their good" (14:11). The false prophets promised peace; God said, "I sent them not... they prophesy unto you a false vision" (14:14-15).

Chapter 15 — Even Moses and Samuel

"Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people" (15:1), even the greatest intercessors could not turn back judgment now, because of the sins of Manasseh (15:4; 2 Kings 21:10-15). Jeremiah lamented his birth: "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife" (15:10). Yet he also testified:

> *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.*

> **Jeremiah 15:16**

When he complained that God was like "a liar, and as waters that fail" (15:18), God called him to repent of his self-pity: "If thou return, then will I bring thee again... and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth" (15:19), and renewed His promise to make him a bronze wall (15:20).

Chapter 16 — No Wife, No Mourning, No Feasting

God told Jeremiah not to marry or have children (16:2), not to attend funerals (16:5) or feasts (16:8), as signs of the coming disaster. Yet hope breaks in: a future regathering would be so great that people would no longer speak of the Exodus from Egypt, but of God bringing Israel back "from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them" (16:14-15). God would send "many fishers" and "many hunters" to gather them (16:16). Even the Gentiles would come from the ends of the earth and confess, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (16:19).

Chapter 17 — The Deceitful Heart

"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart" (17:1).

> *Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD... Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters*
>
> **Jeremiah 17:5-8**

Compare Psalm 1. Then the diagnosis of the human condition:

> *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways*
>
> **Jeremiah 17:9-10**

God is "the fountain of living waters" (17:13). Jeremiah prayed, "Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise" (17:14). The chapter ends with a call to keep the Sabbath and not carry burdens through Jerusalem's gates (17:19-27), a word Nehemiah later enforced (Nehemiah 13:15-22).

Chapter 18 — The Potter's House

God sent Jeremiah to watch a potter at work. When the vessel was marred in his hand, "he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it" (18:4).

> *O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.*
>
> **Jeremiah 18:6**

God is sovereign over nations. If a nation He has threatened repents, He relents; if a nation He has promised to bless turns to evil, He withholds the good (18:7-10). Prophecies of judgment and blessing are often conditional on the response. Judah answered, "There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices" (18:12). They plotted against Jeremiah: "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah" (18:18). Paul uses the potter to teach God's sovereignty (Romans 9:20-21).

Chapter 19 — The Broken Bottle

Jeremiah bought an earthen bottle, took elders and priests to the valley of Hinnom near the potsherd gate, and announced judgment for their child sacrifice and idolatry (19:1-9). Then he smashed the bottle: "Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again" (19:11). Topheth would become a burial ground (19:11-13). Matthew connects the purchase of the potter's field with Judas' betrayal money to a prophecy he attributes to Jeremiah, drawing on this chapter, the field Jeremiah bought (32:6-9) and Zechariah 11:12-13 (Matthew 27:9-10).

Chapter 20 — Fire in the Bones

Pashur the priest, chief governor in the temple, had Jeremiah beaten and put in the stocks (20:1-2). Released, Jeremiah renamed him Magor-missabib, "Fear round about," and foretold his captivity (20:3-6). Then came Jeremiah's most intense lament: "O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily" (20:7). He tried to stop speaking God's word, but could not:

> *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*
>
> **Jeremiah 20:9**

"But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble" (20:11). He praised God (20:13), and then, in a sudden plunge, cursed the day he was born (20:14-18; compare Job 3). The chapter shows the real emotional cost of faithful ministry.

Chapter 21 — The Way of Life and the Way of Death

During Nebuchadnezzar's siege, King Zedekiah sent to ask Jeremiah whether the LORD would perform a miracle as in former times (21:1-2). The answer: God Himself would fight against Jerusalem (21:3-7). "Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die... but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live" (21:8-9). Surrender to Babylon was God's way of escape. The king's house was called to "Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor" (21:12).

Chapter 22 — Messages to the Kings

Jeremiah went to the king's palace with a call to justice (22:1-9). Then he addressed recent kings:

- **Shallum (Jehoahaz):** "Weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more" (22:10-12). He died in Egypt (2 Kings 23:34).
- **Jehoiakim:** "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness... that useth his neighbour's service without wages" (22:13). His father Josiah "did judgment and justice... He judged the cause of the poor and needy... was not this to know me? saith the LORD" (22:15-16). Knowing God shows in justice. Jehoiakim would die unmourned: "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (22:18-19).
- **Coniah (Jehoiachin):** "Though Coniah... were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence" (22:24). "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (22:29-30).

Jehoiachin had sons (1 Chronicles 3:17-18), but none of them reigned on David's throne. This curse shows the wisdom of God's plan for Christ's birth: Matthew traces Jesus' legal right to the throne through Joseph, a descendant of Jeconiah (Matthew 1:11-12), but Jesus was not Joseph's physical son. Luke traces His physical descent through Mary back to David's son Nathan, not Solomon's line (Luke 3:31). Christ inherited the throne legally without being under Jeconiah's curse by blood.

Chapter 23 — The Righteous Branch and the False Prophets

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" (23:1). God would gather the remnant of His flock Himself and set up faithful shepherds over them (23:3-4). Then one of the great Messianic prophecies:

> *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*
>
> **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

The Messiah is called by the divine name (Jehovah-tsidkenu). He is not only righteous; He is our righteousness. "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness" (1 Corinthians 1:30); "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Ironically, the last king of Judah was named Zedekiah, "the LORD is my righteousness," but he did not live up to his name. A greater exodus is promised again (23:7-8).

The rest of the chapter condemns the false prophets: they "walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers" (23:14), "speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD" (23:16), and say to those who despise God, "Ye shall have peace" (23:17). "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran" (23:21). "Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?... Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (23:23-24).

> *The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*
>
> **Jeremiah 23:28-29**

Chapter 24 — Two Baskets of Figs

After Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon, God showed Jeremiah two baskets of figs: one very good, one very bad (24:1-3). The good figs were the exiles in Babylon, whom God would watch over and bring back: "I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (24:7). The bad figs were Zedekiah and those who remained in Jerusalem or fled to Egypt, who would be destroyed (24:8-10). Those who appeared to be suffering most were actually under God's care.

Chapter 25 — Seventy Years

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 BC), Jeremiah reminded the people that he had preached for 23 years, "rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened" (25:3). Therefore Nebuchadnezzar, "my servant," would come against them (25:9).

> *And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation... and will make it perpetual desolations.*
>
> **Jeremiah 25:11-12**

Daniel read this prophecy as the seventy years drew to a close (Daniel 9:2), and Cyrus' decree fulfilled it (2 Chronicles 36:21-23; Ezra 1:1). Jeremiah was then told to make the nations drink "the wine cup of this fury," from Jerusalem to Egypt, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Tyre, Elam and finally Babylon (Sheshach), for God was bringing judgment on all the earth (25:15-29). "The LORD shall roar from on high" (25:30).

Section III: Conflict with Leaders and False Prophets (Chapters 26-29)

Chapter 26 — Jeremiah on Trial

At the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah preached the temple sermon (compare chapter 7): if the people did not repent, the temple would become like Shiloh (26:1-6). The priests, prophets and people seized him: "Thou shalt surely die" (26:8). The princes held a trial. Jeremiah answered, "As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves" (26:14-15). The princes declared, "This man is not worthy to die" (26:16). Some elders recalled that Micah had prophesied, "Zion shall be plowed like a field" in Hezekiah's day, and Hezekiah repented rather than killing him (26:17-19; Micah 3:12). But another prophet, Urijah, had been hunted down in Egypt and killed by Jehoiakim (26:20-23). Ahikam son of Shaphan protected Jeremiah (26:24). The trial resembles Christ's: accused by religious leaders of speaking against the temple, declared worthy of death (Matthew

26:59-66).

Chapter 27 — The Yoke of Babylon

God told Jeremiah to make bonds and yokes and wear one, and send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon, whose ambassadors were in Jerusalem plotting rebellion (27:1-3). God, the Creator, had given these lands to "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant" (27:5-6). Nations that submitted would remain in their land; those that refused would be destroyed (27:8-11). Jeremiah urged Zedekiah and the priests not to listen to prophets who said the temple vessels would soon be returned from Babylon (27:12-16). Instead, the remaining vessels would also go to Babylon, "and there shall they be until the day that I visit them... then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place" (27:21-22; fulfilled in 52:17-23 and Ezra 1:7-11).

Chapter 28 — Hananiah, the False Prophet

In the same year, the prophet Hananiah declared in the temple that within two years God would break Babylon's yoke and return the vessels and the exiles (28:1-4). Jeremiah replied, "Amen: the LORD do so," but reminded him that a prophet of peace is proven only when his word comes to pass (28:6-9; Deuteronomy 18:22). Hananiah took the wooden yoke from Jeremiah's neck and broke it (28:10-11). God's answer through Jeremiah: "Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron" (28:13). And to Hananiah: "The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore... this year thou shalt die" (28:15-16). "So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month" (28:17), two months later.

Chapter 29 — The Letter to the Exiles

Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles in Babylon, who were being told by false prophets that they would soon return:

> *Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters... And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.*
>
> **Jeremiah 29:5-7**

God's people were to live faithfully and do good where they were, praying for the welfare of a pagan city (compare 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 1 Peter 2:11-12). The exile would last seventy years (29:10). Then:

> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*
>
> **Jeremiah 29:11-13**

This promise was given to the exiles about their return, but it reveals God's heart toward His people in every age (Romans 8:28). The letter condemned two false prophets in Babylon, Ahab and Zedekiah, who would be roasted in the fire by Nebuchadnezzar (29:21-23), and Shemaiah, who opposed Jeremiah

(29:24-32).

Section IV: The Book of Consolation (Chapters 30-33)

These chapters, written down at God's command (30:2), contain the most hopeful promises in Jeremiah.

Chapter 30 — The Time of Jacob's Trouble and Restoration

"For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah... and I will cause them to return to the land" (30:3).

> *Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.*
>
> **Jeremiah 30:7**

This had a near fulfillment in the Babylonian crisis, and many Bible teachers see its ultimate fulfillment in the great tribulation before Christ's return, "such as was not since the beginning of the world" (Matthew 24:21; Daniel 12:1). "But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (30:9), the Messiah, the Son of David (Ezekiel 34:23-24; Hosea 3:5). "Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob... for I am with thee... though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee" (30:10-11). Israel's wound seemed incurable (30:12-15), "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds" (30:17). "And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (30:22).

Chapter 31 — The New Covenant

> *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*
>
> **Jeremiah 31:3**

God promises joyful return: virgins dancing, vineyards planted, watchmen calling, "Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God" (31:4-6). "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (31:10). Sorrow will turn to joy (31:13).

"A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not" (31:15). Rachel, buried near Bethlehem (Genesis 35:19), is pictured weeping as the exiles were gathered at Ramah (40:1). Matthew applies this to Herod's slaughter of the children of Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16-18). Yet God says, "Refrain thy voice from weeping... they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end" (31:16-17). Ephraim repents (31:18-20). "The LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man" (31:22), a puzzling verse that some have understood as a hint of the virgin birth, though its meaning is debated. People will no longer say, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge," for each will die for his own iniquity (31:29-30; Ezekiel 18).

Then the heart of the book:

> *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*
>
> **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

The New Covenant promises an inward change (the law written on the heart), a personal relationship ("I will be their God"), direct knowledge of God for all, and full forgiveness. At the Last Supper Jesus said, "This cup is the new testament [covenant] in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). Hebrews quotes this passage in full as fulfilled in Christ, the Mediator of a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6-13; 10:15-18). Paul calls himself a minister "of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

God guarantees Israel's future as surely as the sun, moon and stars: "If those ordinances depart from before me... then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever" (31:35-37). Jerusalem will be rebuilt and "shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever" (31:38-40).

Chapter 32 — Buying a Field During the Siege

In the tenth year of Zedekiah, with Jerusalem under siege and Jeremiah confined in the court of the prison (32:1-2), God told him that his cousin Hanameel would come and ask him to buy the family field at Anathoth by the right of redemption (32:6-8; Leviticus 25:25). Jeremiah bought it for seventeen shekels of silver, signed and sealed the deed before witnesses, and gave it to Baruch to put in an earthen jar to last many days (32:9-14). "For thus saith the LORD of hosts... Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land" (32:15). It was an act of faith in God's promise at the darkest moment.

Then Jeremiah prayed: "Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee" (32:17). God answered: "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" (32:27). The city would fall (32:28-35), but God would gather His people, "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever... And I will make an everlasting covenant with them... but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (32:37-41).

Chapter 33 — Call unto Me

While Jeremiah was still in prison:

> *Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

> **Jeremiah 33:3**

God promised health, cure, cleansing and forgiveness (33:6-8). Again there would be "The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness... the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever" (33:11), words sung when the temple foundation was laid after the exile (Ezra 3:11). "I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David" (33:15), and Jerusalem "shall be called, The LORD our righteousness" (33:16): the city shares the name of its King. "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" (33:17). God's covenant with David is as certain as His covenant with day and night (33:20-26). Christ, the Son of David, fulfils it (Luke 1:32-33).

Section V: The Last Days of Jerusalem (Chapters 34-39)

Chapter 34 — Zedekiah and the Broken Covenant of Release

Jeremiah told Zedekiah he would be taken to Babylon and see Nebuchadnezzar face to face, but would die in peace (34:1-5). Only Lachish and Azekah remained among the fortified cities (34:7). During the siege, the king and people made a covenant to free their Hebrew slaves, as the law required (34:8-10; Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:12), but when the siege lifted for a time they took them back (34:11). God's answer: "Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty... behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine" (34:17). They had made the covenant by cutting a calf in two and walking between the pieces (34:18; compare Genesis 15:9-17); now they would suffer the fate of the calf.

Chapter 35 — The Faithful Rechabites

In Jehoiakim's day, God told Jeremiah to bring the Rechabites into the temple and offer them wine (35:1-5). They refused: their ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab had commanded them never to drink wine, build houses or plant vineyards, but to live in tents, and they had obeyed for over two centuries (35:6-10; 2 Kings 10:15). God used them as an object lesson: they obeyed a human ancestor, but Judah would not obey the living God, who had spoken to them "rising early and speaking" (35:12-17). God promised, "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever" (35:19).

Chapter 36 — The Scroll Burned

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, God told Jeremiah to write all His words in a scroll, "It may be that the house of Judah will hear... that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin" (36:2-3). Jeremiah dictated to Baruch, who read it in the temple on a fast day (36:4-10), in the chamber of Gemariah son of Shaphan. The princes heard it, were afraid, told Baruch and Jeremiah to hide, and took the scroll to the king (36:11-20). In his winter house, with a fire burning on the hearth, Jehoiakim had it read; after every few columns he cut it with a penknife and threw it into the fire until it was consumed (36:21-23). "Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments" (36:24), in sharp contrast to his father Josiah, who tore his clothes when he heard the law read (2 Kings 22:11). Some princes pleaded with him not to burn it (36:25). God hid Jeremiah and Baruch (36:26). God told Jeremiah to write it all again, adding judgment on Jehoiakim: "he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out" (36:28-31). "And there were added besides unto them many like words" (36:32). Man can burn the Word of God, but cannot destroy it (Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter

1:25).

Chapter 37 — Arrested as a Traitor

Zedekiah, made king by Nebuchadnezzar, did not listen to God's word (37:1-2), yet asked Jeremiah to pray (37:3). When Pharaoh's army approached and the Babylonians temporarily withdrew, Jeremiah warned that they would return and burn the city (37:5-10). Leaving the city to visit his land in Benjamin, he was arrested at the gate and accused of deserting to the Chaldeans (37:11-14). The princes beat him and threw him into a dungeon cell in the house of Jonathan the scribe, where he stayed many days (37:15-16). Zedekiah secretly brought him out and asked, "Is there any word from the LORD?" "And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon" (37:17). Jeremiah asked not to be returned to the dungeon, and he was kept in the court of the prison with a daily piece of bread "until all the bread in the city were spent" (37:20-21).

Chapter 38 — In the Miry Pit

The princes demanded Jeremiah's death because his words were weakening the soldiers' morale (38:1-4). Zedekiah said, "Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you" (38:5). They let Jeremiah down by cords into the cistern of Malchiah, where there was no water but mire, "so Jeremiah sunk in the mire" (38:6). Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch in the king's house, pleaded for him (38:7-9). With the king's permission he took thirty men, let down old rags and worn-out clothes for padding under Jeremiah's arms, and drew him up out of the pit (38:10-13). A foreigner showed more compassion than Judah's leaders. Zedekiah met Jeremiah secretly again, and Jeremiah urged him once more to surrender: "if thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned" (38:17). "Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD" (38:20). But Zedekiah feared the people (38:19) and would not act. Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison until Jerusalem was taken (38:28).

Chapter 39 — The Fall of Jerusalem

In the ninth year of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; in the eleventh year, on the ninth day of the fourth month, the city was broken up (39:1-2). Babylonian officials, including Nergal-sharezer and Sarsechim the Rab-saris, sat in the middle gate (39:3). Zedekiah fled by night but was captured near Jericho and brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where his sons were killed before his eyes; then his eyes were put out, and he was bound and taken to Babylon (39:4-7). The city and the temple were burned and the walls broken down (39:8). The poor were left to tend vineyards and fields (39:10). Nebuchadnezzar ordered that Jeremiah be treated well (39:11-14). And God remembered Ebed-melech: "I will surely deliver thee... because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD" (39:15-18).

Section VI: After the Fall (Chapters 40-45)

Chapter 40 — Freed and Choosing to Stay

Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, found Jeremiah bound in chains among the captives at Ramah and released him, acknowledging, "The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place" (40:1-3). He offered Jeremiah a good life in Babylon or freedom to stay (40:4). Jeremiah chose to stay with the poor remnant under Gedaliah, the new governor at Mizpah (40:5-6). Scattered Jews gathered to Gedaliah, who urged them to serve Babylon and harvest the land (40:7-12). Johanan warned Gedaliah that Ishmael was plotting to kill him, but Gedaliah did not believe it (40:13-16).

Chapter 41 — Gedaliah Murdered

Ishmael, of the royal family, murdered Gedaliah, the Jews with him and the Babylonian soldiers at Mizpah (41:1-3). The next day he killed seventy of eighty pilgrims coming with offerings, sparing ten who promised him hidden food stores, and threw the bodies into a pit (41:4-9). He took the rest of the people captive toward Ammon, but Johanan rescued them, and Ishmael escaped (41:10-15). Fearing Babylonian revenge, Johanan led the people toward Egypt (41:16-18).

Chapter 42 — "Whether It Be Good, or Whether It Be Evil"

The remnant asked Jeremiah to pray for guidance and promised, "Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God" (42:1-6). After ten days, God's answer came: stay in the land, and God would build them up and give them mercy before the king of Babylon; but if they went to Egypt for safety, the sword and famine they feared would follow them there (42:7-22). They had already made up their minds.

Chapter 43 — Taken to Egypt

Johanan and the proud men said, "Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt" (43:2), blaming Baruch for turning Jeremiah against them (43:3). They took the whole remnant, including Jeremiah and Baruch, to Tahpanhes in Egypt (43:4-7). There God told Jeremiah to hide large stones in the brickwork at the entrance of Pharaoh's house and announce that Nebuchadnezzar would set his throne over them and strike Egypt (43:8-13). Babylonian records indicate that Nebuchadnezzar did campaign against Egypt around 568 BC.

Chapter 44 — The Queen of Heaven

Jeremiah's last recorded message rebuked the Jews in Egypt for burning incense to other gods (44:1-14). The men and women answered defiantly: "As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven" (44:16-17). They claimed they had prospered when they worshipped her and suffered when they stopped (44:17-18). Jeremiah answered that their idolatry was the very reason for their suffering (44:20-23). God would watch over them "for evil, and not for good," and only a small number would escape back to Judah (44:27-28). As a sign, Pharaoh-hophra would be handed over to his enemies (44:29-30). The book's prophetic history ends in tragedy: the people who had experienced God's judgment still refused to repent.

Chapter 45 — A Word to Baruch

Dated to Jehoiakim's fourth year, this short chapter records God's personal word to Jeremiah's faithful scribe. Baruch had complained, "Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow" (45:3). God answered that He was breaking down what He had built, "And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest" (45:5). In a time of national collapse, Baruch was to lay aside personal ambition and be content with God's preservation of his life.

Section VII: Oracles Against the Nations (Chapters 46-51)

Jeremiah was called "a prophet unto the nations" (1:5). These chapters show that the God of Israel is the Judge of the whole earth.

Chapter 46 — Egypt

The first oracle describes Egypt's defeat by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish on the Euphrates "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (605 BC; 46:2), the battle that made Babylon master of the region. "Egypt riseth up like a flood... But this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance" (46:8-10). "In vain shalt thou use many medicines" (46:11). A second oracle announces Nebuchadnezzar's coming to strike Egypt itself (46:13-26), though Egypt would later be inhabited again (46:26). The chapter ends with comfort for Israel: "But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob... for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee" (46:27-28).

Chapter 47 — The Philistines

"Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood" (47:2): Babylon would sweep over Gaza, Ashkelon and the Philistine cities. "O thou sword of the LORD, how long will it be ere thou be quiet?" (47:6).

Chapter 48 — Moab

A long lament over Moab, the proud neighbour descended from Lot. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully" (48:10). "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him" (48:11): like wine left too long undisturbed, Moab's complacency would be shaken. "We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud)" (48:29). Yet God grieved over Moab (48:31-36) and promised, "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days" (48:47).

Chapter 49 — Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor and Elam

- **Ammon (49:1-6):** judged for seizing Israel's land, yet promised restoration (49:6).
- **Edom (49:7-22):** "Is wisdom no more in Teman?" (49:7). Its pride would be brought down from its rocky heights: "though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence" (49:16). This section closely parallels Obadiah 1-9. Edom would become a desolation like Sodom (49:17-18).
- **Damascus (49:23-27), Kedar and Hazor (49:28-33),** Arab tribes, struck by Nebuchadnezzar.

- **Elam (49:34-39),** in the east, scattered, yet "in the latter days... I will bring again the captivity of Elam" (49:39).

God's judgments on the nations are real, but several end with hope of restoration, a glimpse of His purpose to bless all nations (Genesis 12:3; Acts 2:9, where Elamites heard the gospel at Pentecost).

Chapters 50-51 — The Fall of Babylon

The longest oracle is against Babylon, the very nation God used to judge Judah. "Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded" (50:2). A nation from the north would destroy her (50:3, 9), identified as the Medes: "the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it" (51:11, 28). Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 BC (Daniel 5:28-31).

Woven through the judgment are promises for Israel: "the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God... saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten" (50:4-5). "My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray" (50:6). "Israel is a scattered sheep... I will bring Israel again to his habitation" (50:17-19). "In those days... the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none... for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (50:20). "Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name" (50:34).

Babylon would be judged for her pride (50:29-32), and become perpetually desolate, "no man shall abide there" (50:39-40; 51:37). "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, that made all the earth drunken" (51:7). "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her" (51:8). God would dry up her waters (51:36) and make her princes drunk "that they may... sleep a perpetual sleep" (51:39, 57), fulfilled when Babylon fell during Belshazzar's feast (Daniel 5). "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD" (51:45).

Jeremiah wrote all these words in a book and gave it to Seraiah, who went to Babylon with Zedekiah. After reading it, Seraiah was to tie a stone to it and throw it into the Euphrates, saying, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her" (51:59-64). "Thus far are the words of Jeremiah" (51:64). Revelation uses this imagery for the fall of end-time Babylon: the golden cup (Revelation 17:4), "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen" (18:2), "Come out of her, my people" (18:4), and an angel casting a great millstone into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (18:21).

Section VIII: Historical Appendix (Chapter 52)

Chapter 52 — The Fall of Jerusalem Recounted

This chapter, almost identical to 2 Kings 24:18-25:30, confirms that Jeremiah's prophecies came true. Zedekiah rebelled; Jerusalem was besieged and fell; Zedekiah's sons were killed and he was blinded and taken to Babylon, where he remained "till the day of his death" (52:1-11). The temple, palace and city were burned (52:12-14), and the bronze pillars, the sea and the vessels were carried away (52:17-23), as Jeremiah had foretold (27:19-22). The chief priest and officials were executed (52:24-27). Three deportations are numbered: 3,023 people in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, 832 in his eighteenth, and 745 in his twenty-third, "all the persons were four thousand and six hundred" (52:28-30), probably counting adult men. The book ends with a ray of hope: in the 37th year of his captivity, Jehoiachin was

released from prison, given new garments, and ate at the king of Babylon's table "all the days of his life" (52:31-34). The house of David survived.

Part Three: Christ in Jeremiah

Prophecies of the Messiah

Jeremiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
23:5; 33:15	A righteous Branch raised up to David	Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 1:3
23:5	A King who shall reign and execute judgment	John 1:49; Revelation 19:11-16
23:6; 33:16	His name: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS	1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9
30:9	"David their king, whom I will raise up"	Acts 13:22-23, 34
30:21	A ruler from among them who draws near to God	Hebrews 7:25-26; 10:19-22
31:15	Rachel weeping for her children	Matthew 2:16-18
31:31-34	The New Covenant	Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:6-13; 10:15-18
33:17	David shall never lack a man on the throne	Luke 1:32-33
23:1-4; 31:10	The shepherd who gathers the flock	John 10:11-16

Jeremiah as a Picture of Christ

Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Christ	New Testament
Known and set apart before birth	1:5	Called from the womb; announced before birth	Isaiah 49:1; Luke 1:31-35
A prophet to the nations	1:5	A light to the Gentiles	Luke 2:32
Wept over Jerusalem	9:1; 13:17	Wept over Jerusalem	Luke 19:41-44
Rejected by his own townspeople	11:21; 12:6	Rejected at Nazareth	Luke 4:24-29
"Like a lamb... brought to the slaughter"	11:19	"Brought as a lamb to the slaughter"	Isaiah 53:7; Acts 8:32
Condemned the temple as a den of robbers	7:11	Cleansed the temple, quoting Jeremiah	Matthew 21:13
Accused by priests and prophets; declared worthy of death	26:8-11	Condemned by the chief priests: "He is guilty of death"	Matthew 26:65-66
Falsely accused of treason	37:13-14	Falsely accused of perverting the nation	Luke 23:2
Beaten and imprisoned	20:2; 37:15	Beaten and bound	Matthew 26:67; 27:2

Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Christ	New Testament
Interceded for a sinful people	14:7-9, 19-22	Interceded for transgressors	Isaiah 53:12; Luke 23:34
Unmarried, alone, suffering for his message	16:2; 15:17	Forsaken by all	Matthew 26:56
Let down into a pit and raised out of it	38:6-13	Died, buried and raised	1 Corinthians 15:3-4
Some thought Jesus was Jeremiah		"Others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets"	Matthew 16:14

Other Pictures of Christ

- **The fountain of living waters (2:13; 17:13).** "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37-38; 4:14).
- **The balm of Gilead and the physician (8:22).** "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12).
- **The potter (18:1-6).** God's sovereign power to remake marred vessels; in Christ we are made new (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 9:21).
- **The strong Redeemer (50:34).** "Their Redeemer is strong" (Galatians 3:13; Titus 2:14).
- **The kinsman's redemption of the field (32:6-15).** The right of redemption exercised in hope (Ruth 4; Ephesians 1:14).
- **The word like fire and a hammer (23:29).** "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword" (Hebrews 4:12).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Jeremiah	Fulfillment
Disaster from the north	1:13-15; 4:6; 6:22	Babylon invaded Judah (2 Kings 24-25)
Seventy years of Babylonian rule	25:11-12; 29:10	605-536 BC; Daniel 9:2; 2 Chronicles 36:21-23; Ezra 1:1
Shallum (Jehoahaz) will never return	22:10-12	He died in Egypt (2 Kings 23:34)
No descendant of Coniah will reign on David's throne	22:30	None of Jehoiachin's sons reigned; Zedekiah, his uncle, was the last king
The temple will become like Shiloh	7:12-14; 26:6	The temple destroyed (52:13)
The temple vessels taken to Babylon, then returned	27:19-22	52:17-23; Ezra 1:7-11
Hananiah will die within the year	28:16	He died two months later (28:17)
The false prophets Ahab and Zedekiah will be burned	29:21-22	Judgment by Nebuchadnezzar
Zedekiah will see the king of Babylon and be taken to Babylon	32:4; 34:3	39:5-7; 52:9-11
Ebed-melech will be spared	39:15-18	Delivered in the fall of the city
The Babylonians will return after withdrawing	37:8	39:1-2
Nebuchadnezzar will strike Egypt	43:10-13; 46:13	Babylonian campaign against Egypt (around 568 BC)
Babylon will fall to the Medes	51:11, 28	539 BC (Daniel 5:28-31)
Babylon will become desolate	50:39-40; 51:37	Babylon declined into ruins
The exiles will return and rebuild	29:10; 30:18; 31:38	Ezra 1-6; Nehemiah
The New Covenant	31:31-34	Established in Christ's blood (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8)
The righteous Branch	23:5-6; 33:15	Jesus Christ, Son of David

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Jeremiah 1:4-10 — The Call of God

God's call was personal ("I knew thee"), sovereign ("I sanctified thee... I ordained thee"), not based on ability ("I am a child"), and backed by His presence ("I am with thee") and His words ("I have put my words in thy mouth"). Every believer's service rests on the same foundations (2 Corinthians 3:5-6).

Jeremiah 2:13 — Broken Cisterns

Every sin is a double evil: forsaking God, the fountain of life, and trying to find life elsewhere. People still dig broken cisterns in money, pleasure, success, relationships and false religion. Only Christ satisfies the thirst of the soul (John 4:13-14).

Jeremiah 17:9 — The Deceitful Heart

The human heart is not basically good; it is deceitful and desperately sick. We cannot fully know our own hearts, but God searches them. This is why we need the new heart promised in the New Covenant (31:33; Ezekiel 36:26) and why salvation must be by grace, not self-improvement (Romans 3:10-18; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Jeremiah 18:1-10 — The Potter and the Clay

God has absolute authority over nations and individuals, as a potter over clay. Yet He responds to repentance: a nation that turns from evil can be spared, and a marred vessel can be remade. God's sovereignty and human responsibility stand together.

Jeremiah 20:7-18 — Fire in the Bones

Jeremiah's honesty about his pain encourages every struggling servant of God. He was mocked, discouraged and tempted to quit, but God's word burned in him so that he could not keep silent. Faithfulness is not the absence of struggle but perseverance through it (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Jeremiah 29:4-14 — Seeking the Peace of the City

God's people in exile were to settle down, live productively, raise families, pray for their pagan city, and trust God's plan for their future. This models the Christian's life as a "stranger and pilgrim" in this world (1 Peter 2:11-12; Hebrews 11:13-16).

Jeremiah 31:31-34 — The New Covenant

The longest Old Testament passage quoted in the New Testament (Hebrews 8:8-12). The Old Covenant was broken by Israel; the New Covenant is better because it is based on God's work, not human promises. It provides an inward transformation, a personal relationship, universal knowledge of God among His people, and complete forgiveness. Jesus inaugurated it with His blood, and every believer shares in its blessings (2 Corinthians 3:6). Its full national fulfillment for Israel is foretold for the future

(Romans 11:26-27).

Jeremiah 36 — The Indestructible Word

Jehoiakim burned the scroll, but God simply had it rewritten, with more added. Throughout history people have tried to destroy the Bible, and it has endured. "The word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Jeremiah

1. The Sovereignty of God over Nations

God raises and judges nations: He calls Nebuchadnezzar "my servant" (25:9; 27:6), and also judges Babylon (50-51). He is the potter (18:6).

2. The Seriousness of Sin and Judgment

Idolatry, injustice, false worship and refusal to listen to God's word bring certain judgment (7; 25). God's patience is long but not endless (7:13, 16; 15:1).

3. True versus False Religion

Trusting in the temple, rituals or religious slogans without obedience is worthless (7:4-11). God desires obedience, justice and a heart that knows Him (7:23; 9:24; 22:16).

4. The Corruption of the Human Heart

"The heart is deceitful above all things" (17:9). Judah's sin was ingrained like the leopard's spots (13:23).

5. False Prophets

Jeremiah's ministry was a constant battle against prophets who said "Peace, peace" (6:14; 23; 28). A true prophet speaks God's word faithfully, even when it is unpopular (23:28).

6. The Call to Repentance

"Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings" (3:22). God's warnings were always meant to lead to repentance (18:8; 26:3; 36:3).

7. The Faithfulness of God's Servant in Suffering

Jeremiah's life shows the cost of faithfulness: loneliness, rejection, persecution and grief, and God's sustaining presence through it all (1:19; 15:20; 20:11).

8. Hope Beyond Judgment

Judgment is not God's final word. He promises return from exile, restoration, rebuilding and joy (29-33).

9. The New Covenant

God's ultimate solution is not a better law but a new heart (31:31-34; 32:39-40), fulfilled in Christ.

10. The Messianic King

The righteous Branch of David, called "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," will reign in justice (23:5-6; 33:15-17).

11. Living Faithfully in Exile

God's people can serve Him and seek the good of the city where He has placed them (29:4-7).

12. The Power and Endurance of God's Word

God's word is like fire and a hammer (23:29), cannot be silenced (20:9), and cannot be destroyed (36).

Part Seven: Connections — How Jeremiah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Jeremiah in the New Testament

Jeremiah	New Testament	Use
1:5	Galatians 1:15	Set apart from the womb
2:13; 17:13	John 4:10-14; 7:37-38	Living water
6:16	Matthew 11:29	Rest for your souls
7:11	Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46	A den of thieves
9:24	1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17	Glory in the Lord
10:7	Revelation 15:4	"Who shall not fear thee, O Lord"
11:19	Acts 8:32	A lamb brought to the slaughter (with Isaiah 53:7)
17:10	Revelation 2:23	"I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts"
18:6	Romans 9:20-21	The potter and the clay
19; 32:6-9	Matthew 27:9-10	The potter's field
22:24-30	Matthew 1:11-12; Luke 3:31	The royal line and Jesus' genealogies
23:5-6; 33:15-16	1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21	Christ our righteousness
25:11-12	Revelation 18 (with 51)	The fall of Babylon
29:7	1 Timothy 2:1-2	Pray for those in authority
31:15	Matthew 2:17-18	Rachel weeping
31:31-34	Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8-12; 10:16-17	The New Covenant
31:33	Romans 2:15; 2 Corinthians 3:3	The law written in hearts
50:6	Matthew 10:6; 15:24	The lost sheep of the house of Israel
51:7	Revelation 17:2, 4; 18:3	Babylon's golden cup
51:8	Revelation 14:8; 18:2	Babylon is fallen
51:45	Revelation 18:4	Come out of her, my people
51:63-64	Revelation 18:21	Babylon cast down like a stone
Jeremiah himself	Matthew 16:14	"Others, Jeremias"

Jeremiah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Creation undone (1:2; Jeremiah 4:23); Rachel near Bethlehem (35:19; Jeremiah 31:15); covenant cutting between pieces (15:9-17; Jeremiah 34:18)
Exodus	The Exodus as the pattern of a greater regathering (Jeremiah 16:14-15; 23:7-8); release of Hebrew slaves (21:2; Jeremiah 34)
Leviticus	The covenant curses (26); the land's sabbaths (26:34-35; 2 Chronicles 36:21); redemption of land (25:25; Jeremiah 32)
Deuteronomy	"I will put my words in his mouth" (18:18; Jeremiah 1:9); the test of a prophet (18:22; Jeremiah 28:9); circumcision of the heart (10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4); the covenant curses (28)
Joshua	Anathoth, a Levitical city of Benjamin (21:18)
1 Samuel	Shiloh destroyed (4; Jeremiah 7:12-14; 26:6); Samuel as intercessor (Jeremiah 15:1)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David (7; Jeremiah 33:17-26)
2 Kings	The reigns of Josiah to Zedekiah (22-25); Jeremiah 52 parallels 2 Kings 24:18-25:30; Jonadab son of Rechab (10:15; Jeremiah 35)
2 Chronicles	Jeremiah laments Josiah (35:25); Zedekiah would not humble himself before Jeremiah (36:12); the seventy years fulfilled (36:21-23)
Ezra	The return "that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled" (1:1); "for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever" (3:11; Jeremiah 33:11)
Psalms	The blessed man like a tree by the waters (1:3; Jeremiah 17:8); the exile in Babylon (137)
Isaiah	Babylon's fall (13-14; 47); the new exodus; Micah's contemporary
Lamentations	Jeremiah's lament over the fall of Jerusalem
Ezekiel	The new heart and spirit (36:26; Jeremiah 31:33); the shepherds of Israel (34; Jeremiah 23); individual responsibility (18; Jeremiah 31:29-30)
Daniel	Daniel reads Jeremiah's seventy years (9:2); Babylon's fall (5)
Hosea	God as Israel's husband; spiritual adultery (2; Jeremiah 2-3)
Obadiah	The judgment on Edom (Obadiah 1-9; Jeremiah 49:7-22)
Micah	"Zion shall be plowed like a field" (3:12; Jeremiah 26:18)
Habakkuk	God raising up the Chaldeans (1:6)
Zephaniah	Contemporary prophet of the Day of the LORD under Josiah
Zechariah	The former prophets not heeded (1:4; 7:7); thirty pieces of silver and the potter (11:12-13; Matthew 27:9)

Themes That Run from Jeremiah Through Scripture

Theme	In Jeremiah	Developed	Fulfilled
The New Covenant	31:31-34; 32:40	Ezekiel 36:26-27	Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8-10
The righteous Branch	23:5-6; 33:15	Isaiah 11:1; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12	Matthew 1:1; Romans 1:3
The deceitful heart	17:9	Psalm 51:5	Romans 3:10-18; Mark 7:21-23
The fountain of living waters	2:13; 17:13	Isaiah 55:1; Zechariah 14:8	John 4:14; Revelation 22:1, 17
True and false prophets	23; 28	Ezekiel 13	Matthew 7:15-20; 1 John 4:1
The weeping servant	9:1; 13:17	Lamentations	Luke 19:41
Babylon's fall	50-51	Isaiah 13-14; Daniel 5	Revelation 17-18
Exile and return	25:11; 29:10	Ezra; Nehemiah	Luke 4:18; 1 Peter 1:1
God's sovereignty as potter	18	Isaiah 64:8	Romans 9:20-21

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **God knows you and has a purpose for you** (1:5).
- **Don't let youth or inadequacy stop you from obeying** (1:6-8).
- **Stop digging broken cisterns; come to the fountain** (2:13).
- **Return to the Lord; He heals backsliding** (3:22).
- **Break up the hard ground of your heart** (4:3).
- **Ask for the old paths** (6:16).
- **Don't trust in religious places or slogans** (7:4).
- **Glory only in knowing God** (9:23-24).
- **Trust in the LORD, not in man** (17:5-8).
- **Don't trust your own heart; ask God to search it** (17:9-10).
- **Let God reshape you like a potter** (18:6).
- **Speak God's word even when it costs you** (20:9).
- **Know God by doing justice to the poor** (22:15-16).
- **Test every message by God's Word** (23:28-29).
- **Bloom where God has planted you; pray for your city** (29:7).
- **Seek God with your whole heart** (29:13).
- **Nothing is too hard for the Lord** (32:17, 27).
- **Call to God, and He will answer** (33:3).
- **Keep your promises to God and people** (34).
- **Obey God more faithfully than the Rechabites obeyed their father** (35).
- **Treat God's Word with trembling, not a penknife** (36).
- **Show compassion like Ebed-melech** (38:7-13).
- **Don't ask for guidance if you've already decided** (42-43).
- **Don't seek great things for yourself** (45:5).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:5	Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee
2:13	They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.
6:16	Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
9:23-24	Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD
15:16	Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart
17:7	Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.
17:9	The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?
18:6	As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand
20:9	His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones
23:6	This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
23:29	Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?
29:11	For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
29:13	And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.
31:3	Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.
31:33	I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts
32:17	There is nothing too hard for thee
33:3	Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Conclusion

Jeremiah is the book of the weeping prophet, called before birth to speak God's word to a nation that would not listen. For more than forty years he warned Judah to turn from broken cisterns to the fountain of living waters, confronted false prophets who cried "Peace, peace," and announced that Babylon would destroy Jerusalem. He suffered rejection, beatings, imprisonment and the mire of a cistern, and he watched his warnings come true. Yet his book also contains some of the brightest promises in Scripture: seventy years of exile and then return, a righteous Branch from David called "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," and a New Covenant in which God would write His law on His people's hearts and remember their sin no more. That covenant was sealed in the blood of Jesus Christ, the true Son of David, the greater Weeping Prophet who wept over Jerusalem, was rejected by His own, was put to death and was raised from the pit of death, so that all who trust Him may know God and be forgiven.

> *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*
>
> **Jeremiah 31:33-34**

Lamentations

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Jeremiah • Date: c. 586 BC • Chapters: 5

> *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:22-23**

Part One: Introduction to Lamentations

The Name

The Hebrew title is Eikhah, "How!", the cry of grief that opens chapters 1, 2 and 4: "How doth the city sit solitary" (1:1). The rabbis also called it Qinot, "Lamentations" or "dirges," from which the Greek (Threnoi) and English titles come. The book is a collection of five funeral poems mourning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Babylon in 586 BC.

Author and Date

The book does not name its author, but Jewish and Christian tradition has long attributed it to Jeremiah. The Greek Septuagint introduces it: "And it came to pass, after Israel was taken captive... that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem." Jeremiah was an eyewitness of the siege and fall (Jeremiah 39), was known for his tears (Jeremiah 9:1; 13:17), and composed laments (2 Chronicles 35:25). Many phrases in Lamentations echo his prophecy, and 3:53-55 recalls his own experience in the cistern (Jeremiah 38:6). The poems were written soon after the fall of Jerusalem, while the scenes of famine and ruin were still fresh, around 586-580 BC.

The Structure of the Poems

Lamentations is carefully crafted poetry. Four of its five chapters are acrostics, built on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet:

Poem	Verses	Form	Focus
1	22	Acrostic: each verse begins with the next letter	Jerusalem as a weeping widow with no comforter
2	22	Acrostic	The LORD's anger against His city
3	66	Triple acrostic: three verses for each letter	The suffering man; hope in God's faithfulness
4	22	Acrostic (shorter verses)	Then and now: the horrors of the siege
5	22	Not acrostic, but 22 verses	A community prayer for restoration

The acrostic form may express the completeness of grief, from A to Z, and impose order on overwhelming sorrow. Much of the book uses the qinah or "limping" rhythm of Hebrew funeral songs, in which a longer line is followed by a shorter one. Chapter 3, the longest and central chapter, contains the book's great message of hope at its very centre (3:21-33).

Historical Setting

In 588 BC Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. After about eighteen months of famine, the walls were breached; King Zedekiah fled, was captured, blinded and taken to Babylon; and in the fifth month of 586 BC the temple, palace and city were burned and the walls broken down (2 Kings 25:1-21; Jeremiah 39; 52). Lamentations describes the aftermath: an empty city, starving children, mothers driven to unthinkable acts, priests and prophets killed, the young taken captive, and the surrounding nations

mocking. Jews still read Lamentations each year on the Ninth of Av (Tisha B'Av), the day of mourning for the destruction of both the first temple (586 BC) and the second (AD 70).

Purpose and Theme

Lamentations gives voice to grief, confesses that the judgment was deserved, and holds on to hope in God's mercy. It teaches God's people how to suffer under His discipline without despair. Its themes are:

- **Honest grief:** pain and loss expressed fully before God.
- **Sin and judgment:** "The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment" (1:18). The destruction was God's just judgment, foretold long before (2:17).
- **Hope in God's character:** in the middle of the ruins, "his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (3:22-23).
- **Prayer for restoration:** "Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old" (5:21).

> *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:22-23**

Outline of Lamentations

Chapter	Title	Theme
1	The Desolate City	Jerusalem weeps alone; she confesses her sin
2	The Anger of the LORD	God has done what He warned; the people should cry out
3	The Man of Affliction and the Mercies of God	Suffering, hope, repentance and prayer
4	The Tarnished Gold	The horrors of the siege; the cup passes to Edom
5	The Prayer of the Remnant	"Remember, O LORD"; "Turn thou us unto thee"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — The Desolate City

> *How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!*
>
> **Lamentations 1:1**

Jerusalem is personified as a widow weeping through the night with tears on her cheeks, "among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her" (1:2). The nations she trusted, her "lovers," had abandoned her. The refrain "none to comfort" echoes through the chapter (1:2, 9, 16, 17, 21). Judah has gone into captivity (1:3). The roads to Zion mourn because no one comes to the feasts (1:4). "Her adversaries are the chief... for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions" (1:5). The poet is clear about the cause: "Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed" (1:8). "She remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully" (1:9). The enemy entered the sanctuary, where Gentiles were forbidden (1:10). The people traded their treasures for bread (1:11).

Then the city herself speaks to passers-by:

> *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.*
>
> **Lamentations 1:12**

She describes God's judgment as fire in her bones, a net for her feet, and a yoke of transgressions bound on her neck (1:13-14). "For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me" (1:16). Then comes the confession that runs through the book:

> *The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment*
>
> **Lamentations 1:18**

"I called for my lovers, but they deceived me" (1:19). "Behold, O LORD; for I am in distress... for I have grievously rebelled" (1:20). She asks God to judge her enemies as He has judged her (1:21-22).

Chapter 2 — The Anger of the LORD

This chapter focuses on God as the One who brought the judgment. "How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel" (2:1). He swallowed up the dwellings of Jacob, threw down the strongholds, and cut off the horn (strength) of Israel (2:2-3). "The Lord was as an enemy" (2:5). He destroyed His own tabernacle and its feasts, despised king and priest, cast off His altar and abhorred His sanctuary (2:6-7). The walls and gates fell (2:8-9). "The law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD" (2:9). The

elders sit silent in sackcloth; the young women bow their heads to the ground (2:10).

The poet breaks down at the sight of the children: "Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled... because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?" as they die in their mothers' arms (2:11-12). The false prophets were to blame: "Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity" (2:14; compare Jeremiah 6:14; 23:16-17). Passers-by clap their hands, hiss and wag their heads: "Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?" (2:15; compare Psalm 48:2). Enemies gloat (2:16).

> *The LORD hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old*
>
> **Lamentations 2:17**

What happened was exactly what God had warned in the law of Moses (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). The poet urges the city to pray: "Arise, cry out in the night... pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger" (2:19). The chapter ends with a terrible description: mothers eating their children, priests and prophets slain in the sanctuary, the young and old lying dead in the streets (2:20-22), the curse foretold in Deuteronomy 28:53-57.

Chapter 3 — The Man of Affliction and the Mercies of God

The central and longest chapter shifts from the city to a single sufferer, speaking in the first person, perhaps Jeremiah himself, representing the nation.

> *I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:1-2**

He describes his suffering in a series of vivid images: aged flesh and broken bones (3:4), walled in with no escape (3:7), heavy chains (3:7), prayers shut out ("when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer," 3:8), crooked paths (3:9), attacked like prey by a bear and a lion (3:10-11), a target for God's arrows (3:12-13), mocked by his own people all day (3:14), filled "with bitterness... drunken with wormwood" (3:15), teeth broken with gravel (3:16), far from peace (3:17). "And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD" (3:18). "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall" (3:19).

Then, at the lowest point, he deliberately turns his mind:

> *This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:21-24**

Nothing outward had changed: the city still lay in ruins. But he remembered who God is. God's mercies (His covenant love) are the reason any survived at all; His compassions never run out; they are renewed every morning; His faithfulness is great. "The LORD is my portion" (compare Psalm 16:5; 73:26): when everything else is gone, God Himself remains. The hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" is based on these verses.

> *The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:25-27**

The sufferer is to sit alone in silence, put his mouth in the dust, and "give his cheek to him that smiteth him" (3:28-30). Then comes the theology of suffering:

> *For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:31-33**

God's discipline is real, but temporary; it is not His delight but His loving purpose (Hebrews 12:10-11). God sees all injustice (3:34-36). He is sovereign over all events: "Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?" (3:37-38), "evil" here meaning calamity. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" (3:39): we have no right to complain of punishment we deserve, especially when we are still alive.

The response is repentance:

> *Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens. We have transgressed and have rebelled*
>
> **Lamentations 3:40-42**

The poet confesses that God has not yet pardoned and that He has covered Himself with a cloud so prayer cannot pass through (3:42-44). "Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people" (3:45; compare 1 Corinthians 4:13). His eyes run down with tears without ceasing "till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven" (3:48-50). His enemies chased him like a bird and "cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me. Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off" (3:52-54), a memory that matches Jeremiah's time in the muddy cistern (Jeremiah 38:6).

> *I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice... Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:55-58**

The chapter ends with a request for God to judge his persecutors (3:59-66), leaving vengeance in God's hands (Romans 12:19).

Chapter 4 — The Tarnished Gold

> *How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street.*
>
> **Lamentations 4:1**

This poem contrasts Jerusalem's former glory with its present horror. "The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers" (4:2). Even jackals nurse their young, but the mothers of Jerusalem had become cruel like the ostrich in the desert (4:3). Babies' tongues stuck to their mouths for thirst; children begged for bread and no one gave it (4:4). Those raised in luxury now clung to rubbish heaps (4:5). The punishment was greater than Sodom's, which at least was quick (4:6). The nobles, once purer than snow, were now unrecognisable, their skin shrivelled on their bones (4:7-8). "They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger" (4:9). "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people" (4:10). Even the kings of the earth would not have believed that an enemy could enter Jerusalem (4:12).

The leaders were to blame: "For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her" (4:13). The people looked in vain for help from a nation that could not save, Egypt (4:17; Jeremiah 37:5-10). The enemy pursued them "swifter than the eagles of the heaven" (4:19; Deuteronomy 28:49). "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen" (4:20), referring to King Zedekiah, captured as he fled (2 Kings 25:4-7). The chapter ends with a word to Edom, which rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall: "the cup also shall pass through unto thee" (4:21; compare Obadiah 10-16; Psalm 137:7), and a word of hope to Zion:

> *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity*
>
> **Lamentations 4:22**

Chapter 5 — The Prayer of the Remnant

The final chapter is a prayer of the whole community.

> *Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold our reproach.*
>
> **Lamentations 5:1**

They list their sufferings: their inheritance given to strangers (5:2); orphans and widows (5:3); having to pay for their own water and wood (5:4); persecution and weariness (5:5); dependence on Egypt and Assyria for bread (5:6). "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities" (5:7). "Servants have ruled over us" (5:8). They risk their lives for bread (5:9); women are violated (5:11); princes are hanged and elders dishonoured (5:12); young men grind at the mill and children stumble under loads of wood (5:13).

> *The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!*
>
> **Lamentations 5:15-16**

Mount Zion is so desolate that foxes walk on it (5:18). Then their faith rises to God's eternal throne:

> *Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation. Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time? Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.*
>
> **Lamentations 5:19-21**

Jerusalem's throne had fallen, but God's throne remains for ever. They ask God to turn them, knowing that even repentance is His gift. The book ends with an unresolved cry: "But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us" (5:22), which can also be read, "unless thou hast utterly rejected us." When Jews read Lamentations publicly, they repeat verse 21 after verse 22 so the reading ends on a note of hope. The answer to their prayer came seventy years later with the return from exile, and supremely in Christ.

Part Three: Christ in Lamentations

The Suffering One

Christians have long seen in Lamentations, especially in chapters 1 and 3, a picture of the sufferings of Christ, who bore the judgment of God for His people's sins, as Jerusalem bore it for her own.

Lamentations	Reference	Christ's Sufferings	New Testament
"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?... any sorrow like unto my sorrow"	1:12	The unique sorrow of the cross	Matthew 26:38; Isaiah 53:3-4
Passers-by clap, hiss and wag their heads	2:15	"They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads"	Matthew 27:39
"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath"	3:1	He bore the wrath of God for sin	Isaiah 53:4-5, 10; 2 Corinthians 5:21
"He shutteth out my prayer"	3:8, 44	"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Matthew 27:46
"I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day"	3:14	Mocked by the people and rulers	Luke 23:35-37
Filled with bitterness and wormwood; "the wormwood and the gall"	3:15, 19	Offered vinegar mingled with gall	Matthew 27:34
"He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him"	3:30	Struck on the face	Matthew 26:67; Isaiah 50:6
Made "the offscouring and refuse"	3:45	Despised and rejected	Isaiah 53:3; Hebrews 13:12-13
"Cut off my life in the dungeon"; "I am cut off"	3:53-54	"He was cut off out of the land of the living"	Isaiah 53:8
"Thou hast redeemed my life"	3:58	Raised from the dead	Acts 2:24
"The anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits"	4:20	The Anointed (Christ) was taken, crucified and buried	Matthew 26:57; 27:59-60

The great difference: Jerusalem suffered for her own sin, "The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled" (1:18). Christ suffered as the sinless One for the sins of others (1 Peter 2:22-24).

Christ Weeping over Jerusalem

Jesus, like Jeremiah, wept over Jerusalem as He foresaw another destruction: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee" (Luke 19:41-44). "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together... and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37-38). On the way to the cross He told the weeping women, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children" (Luke 23:28). The temple was destroyed again in AD 70, which is also remembered on the Ninth of Av.

The Comforter for a City with None

Lamentations repeats that Jerusalem had "none to comfort" (1:2, 9, 16, 17, 21). God's answer came through Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people... her warfare is accomplished... her iniquity is pardoned" (Isaiah 40:1-2), and finally through Christ, who promised, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4), and who sent "another Comforter" (John 14:16). God is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4), and one day "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying" (Revelation 21:4).

New Mercies Every Morning

The faithfulness and fresh mercies of God (3:22-23) are seen most fully in Christ: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared... according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:4-5). "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us" (Ephesians 2:4).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Lamentations itself declares that the destruction fulfilled God's ancient word (2:17).

Prophecy	Source	Fulfillment in Lamentations
Siege and famine so severe that parents eat their children	Leviticus 26:29; Deuteronomy 28:53-57; Jeremiah 19:9	2:20; 4:10
A swift nation from afar, "as swift as the eagle flieth"	Deuteronomy 28:49-50	4:19
Sanctuaries desolate; the land laid waste	Leviticus 26:31-33	1:4, 10; 2:6-7; 5:18
Scattered among the nations; no rest	Deuteronomy 28:64-65	1:3
Those who pass by will hiss at the ruined temple	1 Kings 9:8; Jeremiah 19:8	2:15
The temple will become like Shiloh	Jeremiah 7:14; 26:6	2:6-7
"Zion shall be plowed like a field"	Micah 3:12	5:18
The king captured	Jeremiah 34:3; Ezekiel 12:12-13	4:20
Edom will drink the cup of judgment	Jeremiah 25:15-21; 49:12; Obadiah	4:21
The captivity of Zion will end	Jeremiah 29:10	4:22 (fulfilled in Ezra 1)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Lamentations 1:12 — Is It Nothing to You?

The city appeals to those who pass by without caring. It challenges indifference to suffering and to God's judgment on sin. Applied to Christ, it asks every person who passes by the cross: does His sorrow mean anything to you?

Lamentations 2:17 — God Keeps His Word

The destruction was not an accident or a sign that God had failed. It was exactly what He had warned about centuries earlier. God's faithfulness to His warnings is as certain as His faithfulness to His promises. This is both a warning and a comfort: the same God who kept His word in judgment will keep His word in restoration.

Lamentations 3:21-26 — Hope in the Ruins

The turning point of the book is a decision of the mind: "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." Hope did not come from changed circumstances but from remembering God's character: His mercies, compassions and faithfulness. The believer is called to "hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." This is faith that holds on in the dark (Habakkuk 3:17-18; Romans 8:24-25).

Lamentations 3:31-33 — Why God Afflicts

God's discipline is temporary ("not cast off for ever"), mixed with compassion ("according to the multitude of his mercies"), and not His delight ("he doth not afflict willingly"). It is the discipline of a Father for the good of His children (Hebrews 12:5-11; Psalm 119:67, 71, 75).

Lamentations 3:40-41 — Search, Try and Turn

In suffering, the right response is self-examination and repentance: "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD." True repentance involves the heart, not just outward gestures: "lift up our heart with our hands unto God."

Lamentations 5:19-21 — The Throne That Remains

Jerusalem's king was gone, its temple burned, its walls broken, but "Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation." When every earthly support falls, God's reign stands. The prayer "Turn thou us unto thee... and we shall be turned" recognises that restoration must be God's work (Jeremiah 31:18; John 6:44).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Lamentations

1. Grief Is Real and May Be Expressed to God

Lamentations gives God's people permission and words to grieve deeply and honestly (2:11, 18-19; 3:48-51). Christians do not grieve as those without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13), but they do grieve.

2. Sin Brings Suffering

The destruction came because "Jerusalem hath grievously sinned" (1:8; 1:18; 4:13; 5:16). Sin is serious, and God's holiness requires judgment.

3. God Is Righteous in His Judgments

"The LORD is righteous" (1:18). The book never accuses God of injustice; it confesses that the punishment was deserved (3:39, 42).

4. God Is Sovereign over Calamity

God brought the judgment (2:1-8, 17; 3:37-38). Even the worst events are under His control.

5. False Prophets Bear Great Guilt

They "have not discovered thine iniquity" (2:14), leading the people to destruction with false comfort (4:13).

6. God's Mercies Never Fail

In the darkest place, His compassions are new every morning and His faithfulness is great (3:22-23).

7. The LORD Is Our Portion

When all else is lost, God Himself is enough (3:24; Psalm 73:26).

8. Waiting Quietly on God

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD" (3:26).

9. Repentance and Prayer

Suffering should lead to self-examination, confession and prayer (3:40-42; 5:1, 21).

10. God's Eternal Throne and Future Restoration

"Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever" (5:19). The punishment will end (4:22), and God can renew His people's days (5:21).

Part Seven: Connections — How Lamentations Links to the Rest of the Bible

Lamentations and the New Testament

Lamentations	New Testament	Connection
1:12	Matthew 26:38	"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death"
1:2, 9, 16, 21 (no comforter)	Matthew 5:4; John 14:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4	Christ comforts those who mourn
2:15 (passers-by mock)	Matthew 27:39; Mark 15:29	Wagging their heads at the cross
3:8 (prayer shut out)	Matthew 27:46	"Why hast thou forsaken me?"
3:15, 19 (wormwood and gall)	Matthew 27:34	Vinegar mingled with gall
3:22-23 (new mercies)	Ephesians 2:4; Titus 3:5; 2 Timothy 2:13	Rich in mercy; faithful
3:24 (the LORD my portion)	Philippians 3:8	Christ worth more than all
3:26 (wait quietly)	Romans 8:25; James 5:7-8	Patient hope
3:30 (giving the cheek)	Matthew 5:39; 26:67	Turning the other cheek; Christ struck
3:31-33 (God's discipline)	Hebrews 12:5-11	The Father's loving chastening
3:40 (search our ways)	1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5	Examine yourselves
3:45 (offscouring)	1 Corinthians 4:13	Made as the filth of the world
5:16 (the crown fallen)	2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 2:10	The crown that does not fade
5:21 (turn us)	John 6:44; Acts 3:19, 26	God turns sinners to Himself
The fall of Jerusalem	Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-24; 23:28	Jesus weeps over Jerusalem and foretells AD 70
The end of sorrow	Revelation 21:4	No more death, sorrow or crying

Lamentations in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Leviticus	The covenant curses: famine, cannibalism, desolate sanctuaries (26:14-39)
Deuteronomy	The curses fulfilled: the eagle-swift nation, the siege, scattering (28:49-68); God's warnings "of old" (Lamentations 2:17)
1 Kings	The temple a heap, at which passers-by will hiss (9:6-9)
2 Kings	The historical account of the siege and fall (25:1-21)
2 Chronicles	Jeremiah's laments (35:25); God sent prophets "till there was no remedy" (36:15-21)
Job	The suffering man, mocked and struck on the cheek (16:10; 30:9-10)
Psalms	Laments over Jerusalem's fall (74; 79; 137); the LORD as portion (16:5; 73:26); "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (30:5); "in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me" (119:75); "the perfection of beauty" (48:2; 50:2)
Isaiah	"Comfort ye my people... her warfare is accomplished" (40:1-2); the suffering Servant (53); giving the back to smiters and cheeks to those who pluck the hair (50:6)
Jeremiah	The prophecies of judgment fulfilled; the weeping prophet (9:1; 13:17); the cistern (38:6; Lamentations 3:53-55); the fall (39; 52)
Ezekiel	The glory departing from the temple (10-11); the fall announced to the exiles (33:21)
Daniel	Confession of the sins that brought desolation (9:4-19)
Obadiah	Edom's gloating and judgment (10-16; Lamentations 4:21-22)
Micah	"When I fall, I shall arise... I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him" (7:8-9); Zion plowed (3:12)
Habakkuk	Faith when all is lost: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom... Yet I will rejoice in the LORD" (3:17-18)
Zechariah	The fasts remembering the siege and the fall (7:3-5; 8:19)

Themes That Run from Lamentations Through Scripture

Theme	In Lamentations	Developed	Fulfilled
Lament and honest grief	1-5	Psalms 42; 88	Matthew 26:38; John 11:35; Hebrews 5:7
Judgment for covenant unfaithfulness	1:8, 18; 2:17	Deuteronomy 28; Jeremiah	Luke 21:20-24
God's unfailing mercy	3:22-23	Psalm 136; Micah 7:18	Ephesians 2:4-5; 1 Peter 1:3
Hope while waiting	3:21-26	Psalm 130:5-6; Isaiah 40:31	Romans 8:24-25; Titus 2:13
The suffering righteous one	3:1-30	Isaiah 53	Matthew 26-27

Theme	In Lamentations	Developed	Fulfilled
No comforter / the Comforter	1:2, 9	Isaiah 40:1; 61:2	John 14:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4
God's eternal throne	5:19	Psalm 45:6; Daniel 7:14	Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 4-5
Restoration after judgment	4:22; 5:21	Jeremiah 29:10-14; Ezra 1	Revelation 21:1-5

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Bring your grief honestly to God** (2:19).
- **Don't be indifferent to the suffering of others** (1:12).
- **Acknowledge sin when God disciplines** (1:18; 3:39).
- **Don't trust false friends and false comfort** (1:2, 19; 2:14).
- **Remember that God keeps His word, both warnings and promises** (2:17).
- **In the darkest moment, recall God's character** (3:21).
- **His mercies are new every morning** (3:22-23).
- **Make the LORD your portion** (3:24).
- **Wait quietly and hopefully** (3:25-26).
- **Learn to bear the yoke while young** (3:27).
- **God does not afflict willingly** (3:33).
- **Search your ways and turn to the LORD** (3:40).
- **Lift up your heart, not just your hands** (3:41).
- **Call on God from the pit; He draws near** (3:55-57).
- **Leave vengeance to God** (3:59-66).
- **Remember that God's throne remains when everything else falls** (5:19).
- **Ask God to turn you and renew you** (5:21).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:12	Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow
1:18	The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment
2:19	Pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord
3:21	This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.
3:22-23	It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.
3:24	The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.
3:25-26	The LORD is good unto them that wait for him... It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.
3:31-33	For the Lord will not cast off for ever... For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.
3:40	Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.
5:19	Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation.
5:21	Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

Conclusion

Lamentations is a book of tears written in the ashes of Jerusalem. In five carefully crafted poems, the weeping prophet mourns a city left as a widow, a temple burned, children starving, and a people carried away, all because they had rebelled against the LORD who warned them for centuries. The book does not hide the horror or excuse the sin. But at its very centre, in the darkest place, hope shines: "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." The God who judged is the God who remains on His throne for ever and who can turn His people back and renew their days. That hope found its answer in the return from exile, and supremely in Jesus Christ, who wept over Jerusalem, bore the wrath of God as "the man that hath seen affliction," and rose again, so that those who mourn may be comforted and every tear one day wiped away.

> *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:22-23**

Ezekiel

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Ezekiel the priest • Date: c. 593-570 BC • Chapters: 48

> *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*
>
> **Ezekiel 36:26**

Part One: Introduction to Ezekiel

The Prophet

Ezekiel, whose name means "God strengthens," was "the priest, the son of Buzi" (1:3). He was taken to Babylon in 597 BC with King Jehoiachin and about 10,000 of Jerusalem's leading citizens (2 Kings 24:14-16), and lived among the exiles at Tel-abib by the river (canal) Chebar (1:1; 3:15). He was called to be a prophet "in the thirtieth year" (1:1), probably his own age, the age at which priests began their service (Numbers 4:3), in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, 593 BC (1:2). He was married, and his wife's death became one of his prophetic signs (24:15-18). His ministry lasted at least 22 years; his last dated prophecy was in 571 BC (29:17).

Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah, who was preaching in Jerusalem, and of Daniel, who served in the Babylonian court and whom Ezekiel names as an example of righteousness and wisdom (14:14, 20; 28:3). Jeremiah warned those still in Jerusalem; Ezekiel warned the exiles, who hoped the city would never fall.

Author and Date

Ezekiel wrote the book himself, mostly in the first person. It is the most precisely dated of the prophetic books, with about thirteen dated messages, giving year, month and day, counted from Jehoiachin's captivity (for example 1:1-2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 33:21; 40:1). The messages span from 593 to 571 BC.

Key Phrases

- **"Son of man"** (about 93 times): God's usual name for Ezekiel, stressing his humanity before the glory of God. Jesus took this title for Himself (Daniel 7:13; Mark 2:10; 14:62).
- **"They shall know that I am the LORD"** (over 60 times): the purpose of both God's judgments and His restorations is that people will know Him.
- **"The glory of the LORD"**: Ezekiel sees God's glory, watches it leave the temple, and sees it return.
- **"The hand of the LORD was upon me"** and **"the spirit entered into me"**: the source of his visions and power.
- **"For mine holy name's sake"**: God acts to vindicate His holy name (20:9; 36:22).

Purpose and Theme

Ezekiel's message to the exiles had two halves, divided by the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC:

- **Before the fall (chapters 1-24):** Jerusalem will be destroyed because of its idolatry and wickedness; God's glory will depart from the defiled temple. False hopes must be abandoned.
- **After the fall (chapters 33-48):** God will restore His people, gather them from the nations, give them a new heart and His Spirit, raise up one Shepherd from David's line, defeat their final enemies, and dwell among them again in a renewed temple. Between the halves stand oracles against the nations (25-32).

The book begins with a vision of God's glory by a river in Babylon and ends with the name of the restored city: "The LORD is there" (48:35).

> *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you*
>
> **Ezekiel 36:26-27**

The Departure and Return of God's Glory

Glory Stage	Ezekiel	Description
The glory appears by the river Chebar	1:28; 3:23	God is present even in exile
The glory in the temple	8:4	Seen in the vision of Jerusalem's idolatry
Moves to the threshold of the temple	9:3; 10:4	God begins to leave
Moves to the east gate	10:18-19	Lingering at the door
Departs to the mountain east of the city	11:22-23	Leaves Jerusalem (the Mount of Olives)
Returns from the east	43:1-5	Fills the new temple
The east gate shut, because the LORD entered by it	44:1-2	God's permanent dwelling
"The LORD is there"	48:35	The final name of the city

Ezekiel's Sign-Acts

Ezekiel acted out many of his messages:

Sign	Ezekiel	Meaning
Bound and silent, speaking only when God opened his mouth	3:24-27; 24:27; 33:22	The people would not listen
Siege model drawn on a tile	4:1-3	The coming siege of Jerusalem
Lying on his left side 390 days and right side 40 days	4:4-8	Bearing the years of Israel's and Judah's iniquity
Rationed bread cooked over dung	4:9-17	Famine and defilement in exile
Hair shaved, divided into thirds	5:1-4	Death by fire, sword and scattering; a small remnant
Packing baggage and digging through a wall at night	12:1-16	The king's flight and the people's exile
Eating bread with trembling	12:17-20	Fear and desolation
The sharpened sword	21:9-17	Babylon's sword against Jerusalem
The boiling pot	24:1-14	Jerusalem's judgment beginning that very day
No mourning for his wife	24:15-24	No time to mourn when the temple falls

Sign	Ezekiel	Meaning
Two sticks joined into one	37:15-28	Israel and Judah reunited under one King

Outline of Ezekiel

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Ezekiel's Call	1-3	The glory of God and the watchman
II. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem	4-24	Before the fall
Signs of the siege	4-7	The end has come
The temple vision: glory departs	8-11	Idolatry in God's house
False hopes and false prophets	12-19	Individual responsibility; parables
Israel's history of rebellion	20-24	The sword; the boiling pot; the death of Ezekiel's wife
III. Judgment on the Nations	25-32	Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt
IV. The Restoration of Israel	33-48	After the fall
The watchman and the fall reported	33	Turn and live
The Good Shepherd	34	"My servant David"
Edom judged; Israel restored	35-36	A new heart and a new spirit
The valley of dry bones; the two sticks	37	National and spiritual resurrection
Gog and Magog	38-39	The final enemy defeated
The new temple, land and city	40-48	The glory returns; the river; "The LORD is there"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Ezekiel's Call (Chapters 1-3)

Chapter 1 — The Vision of God's Glory

"Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God" (1:1). In a foreign land, far from the temple, God revealed Himself. A whirlwind came from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing and brightness like amber (1:4). Out of it came four living creatures, each with four faces (a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle), four wings, straight legs with feet like a calf's, and human hands (1:5-11). They moved straight ahead wherever the spirit went, and "ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning" (1:12-14). Beside them were wheels, "as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel," with rims full of eyes, moving in any direction without turning, "for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels" (1:15-21). God's throne is mobile; He is not confined to Jerusalem.

Above them was a firmament like terrible crystal (1:22), and the sound of their wings was "like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty" (1:24). Above the firmament was a throne like sapphire, "and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (1:26), surrounded by fire and brightness like a rainbow (1:27-28).

> *This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.*
>
> **Ezekiel 1:28**

Notice the careful wording: "the appearance of the likeness of the glory." Ezekiel saw only reflections of God's glory. The figure "as the appearance of a man" on the throne points forward to the incarnation of the Son of God. John's visions in Revelation echo this chapter: the four living creatures with faces of lion, calf, man and eagle, the rainbow around the throne, the sea of glass like crystal (Revelation 4:2-8), and the Son of man whose voice was "as the sound of many waters" (Revelation 1:13-15).

Chapter 2 — Sent to a Rebellious House

"Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee" (2:1). The Spirit entered him and set him on his feet (2:2). God sent him to "a rebellious nation... impudent children and stiffhearted" (2:3-4). "And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them" (2:5). Success would be measured by faithfulness, not results. "Be not afraid of them... though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions" (2:6). God held out a scroll written on both sides with "lamentations, and mourning, and woe" (2:9-10).

Chapter 3 — The Watchman

"Son of man... eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel" (3:1). "Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness" (3:3; compare Jeremiah 15:16; Psalm 119:103; Revelation 10:9-10). God's Word must be taken in before it is given out. He was not sent to foreigners, who would have listened, but to Israel, who would not (3:5-7). God made his forehead "as an adamant harder than flint" (3:8-9). Carried by the Spirit, "I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me" (3:14). He sat stunned among the exiles at Tel-abib for seven days (3:15). Then came his commission:

> *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning... the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness... he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*
>
> **Ezekiel 3:17-19**

The watchman's duty is to warn faithfully; the hearer is responsible for his response. Paul said, "I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27). God then bound Ezekiel's tongue so that he would be silent except when God opened his mouth to speak His word (3:24-27).

Section II: Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (Chapters 4-24)

Chapter 4 — The Siege Acted Out

Ezekiel drew Jerusalem on a clay tile and set up a model siege against it, with an iron pan as a wall between him and the city (4:1-3). He lay on his left side 390 days, bearing the iniquity of Israel, and on his right side 40 days for Judah, "each day for a year" (4:4-6). He ate rationed bread made from mixed grains, measured by weight, and water by measure (4:9-11, 16-17), a picture of the famine to come. God told him to bake it over human dung, signifying the defiled food of exile; when Ezekiel protested that he had never eaten anything unclean, God allowed cow dung instead (4:12-15).

Chapter 5 — The Shaved Hair

Ezekiel shaved his head and beard with a sharp sword and divided the hair into thirds: one third burned in the city, one third struck with the sword around it, and one third scattered to the wind (5:1-2). A few hairs were bound in the edge of his garment, and even some of those were burned (5:3-4): a small remnant, still tested. "This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations" (5:5), yet she had been more wicked than the nations around her (5:6-7). Because she defiled the sanctuary, God would not spare her (5:11). Famine would be so severe that parents would eat their children (5:10; Leviticus 26:29).

Chapter 6 — Against the Mountains of Israel

God would destroy the high places where idols were worshipped on every hill (6:1-7). A remnant would remember Him among the nations: "I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me" (6:9), revealing God's grief over His people's unfaithfulness. They would loathe themselves for their evils, "and they shall know that I am the LORD" (6:9-10).

Chapter 7 — The End Has Come

"An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land" (7:2). "Behold, the day, behold, it is come" (7:10). Wealth would be useless: "they shall cast their silver in the streets... their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD" (7:19). "Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none" (7:25). "They shall seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest" (7:26).

Chapter 8 — Abominations in the Temple

In the sixth year (592 BC), as the elders of Judah sat before him, Ezekiel was lifted by a lock of his hair and carried in visions to Jerusalem (8:1-3). There he saw the glory of God, and four increasing abominations in the temple:

- **The image of jealousy** at the north gate of the altar (8:3-6).
- **Seventy elders**, led by Jaazaniah son of Shaphan, secretly burning incense to images of creeping things and beasts painted on the walls of a hidden room, saying, "The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth" (8:7-12).
- **Women weeping for Tammuz**, a Babylonian fertility god, at the north gate (8:13-14).
- **Twenty-five men** with their backs to the temple, worshipping the sun toward the east (8:15-16).

"Have ye seen this, O son of man?... they have filled the land with violence" (8:17). God's people had brought pagan worship into His very house. Secret sin was exposed (Luke 12:2-3).

Chapter 9 — The Mark on the Foreheads

Six executioners came, and with them a man clothed in linen with a writer's inkhorn (9:2). "And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house" (9:3): the first stage of God's departure. God commanded the man in linen:

> *Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.*
>
> **Ezekiel 9:4**

The executioners were to spare those with the mark and slay the rest, "and begin at my sanctuary" (9:5-6). Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). God knows and protects those who grieve over sin, as He seals His servants in Revelation (Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1). Ezekiel cried, "Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel?" (9:8).

Chapter 10 — The Glory Leaves the Temple

The man in linen took burning coals from between the cherubim and scattered them over the city (10:2, 6-7). "Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory" (10:4). Ezekiel recognised the cherubim as the living creatures he had seen by the river Chebar (10:15, 20-22). "Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims," and they rose and stood at the east gate (10:18-19).

Chapter 11 — A New Heart Promised; the Glory Departs

At the east gate, Ezekiel saw twenty-five leaders giving wicked counsel and saying, "This city is the caldron, and we be the flesh" (11:1-3), believing themselves safe inside the city. As Ezekiel prophesied their judgment, one of them, Pelatiah, fell dead (11:13). Ezekiel cried out for the remnant. God answered with a promise for the exiles, whom the people in Jerusalem despised: "yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (11:16). God Himself would be their sanctuary in exile. He would gather them and give them the land again (11:17), and:

> *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes... and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*
>
> **Ezekiel 11:19-20**

"And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city" (11:23), the Mount of Olives. God's glory had left Jerusalem. Centuries later, the glory of God came in Jesus Christ (John 1:14), who wept over Jerusalem, said "your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38), and ascended from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9-12), and will return there (Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11).

Chapter 12 — Signs of Exile

The people had "eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not" (12:2). Ezekiel packed his belongings by day, dug through the wall at evening, and went out with his face covered (12:3-7), a sign that the prince in Jerusalem would flee by night through a hole in the wall and be captured: "I will bring him to Babylon... yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (12:12-13). This was fulfilled when King Zedekiah fled, was captured, had his eyes put out, and was taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:4-7). Ezekiel ate his bread with trembling as a sign of coming fear (12:17-20). God rejected the people's proverbs that visions never come true or are for the distant future: "none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done" (12:21-28; 2 Peter 3:3-9).

Chapter 13 — False Prophets and Prophetesses

"Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!" (13:3). They were like foxes in the ruins (13:4). "Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle" (13:5). They "seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace" (13:10). They covered the people's flimsy wall with whitewash ("untempered morter"), and God's storm would bring it down (13:10-16). False prophetesses sold magic charms to hunt souls for handfuls of barley and pieces of bread (13:17-19). "Ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I

have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked" (13:22). False teaching discourages the righteous and comforts the wicked.

Chapter 14 — Idols in the Heart

Elders came to inquire of God, but "these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face" (14:3). God would answer them Himself in judgment (14:4-8). "Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols" (14:6). Judgment on Jerusalem was certain: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness" (14:14, 20). God's "four sore judgments," sword, famine, wild beasts and pestilence (14:21), would come, though a remnant would survive to show the justice of His acts (14:22-23).

Chapter 15 — The Useless Vine

A vine is good only for fruit; its wood cannot even make a peg (15:2-3). Once burned, it is useless (15:4-5). Jerusalem, a fruitless vine, would be given to the fire (15:6-8). Jesus used similar imagery: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire" (John 15:6).

Chapter 16 — The Unfaithful Bride

In the longest chapter of the book, God describes Jerusalem's history as a story of grace and betrayal. She began as an abandoned baby girl of Canaanite origin, unwashed and cast out in the open field, unwanted (16:3-5). "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live" (16:6). When she grew up, "thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee... yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine" (16:8; compare Ruth 3:9). God washed her, anointed her, clothed her in fine garments and jewels, and made her famous for her beauty, "for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee" (16:9-14).

> *But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown*
>
> **Ezekiel 16:15**

She used God's gifts to make idols, sacrificed her children (16:20-21), and pursued Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, even paying her lovers instead of being paid (16:26-34). God would bring judgment by the very nations she courted (16:35-43). She was worse than her "sisters" Samaria and Sodom (16:46-52):

> *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me*
>
> **Ezekiel 16:49-50**

Yet the chapter ends with grace: "Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant" (16:60). She would be ashamed and silent "when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD" (16:63). This is a picture of salvation by grace: God finds us helpless, gives us life, makes us His own, adorns us with His beauty, and forgives our betrayal through an everlasting covenant (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Chapter 17 — Two Eagles and a Cedar

A riddle: a great eagle (Nebuchadnezzar) took the top of a cedar (King Jehoiachin) to a land of merchants (Babylon) and planted a seed (Zedekiah) that grew into a low, spreading vine (17:3-6). The vine turned toward another great eagle (Pharaoh of Egypt) (17:7-8). Zedekiah broke his oath to Babylon, sworn in God's name, and would die in Babylon (17:11-21). Then a Messianic promise:

> *I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high and eminent mountain... and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing*
>
> **Ezekiel 17:22-23**

God would raise a tender shoot from David's royal line and make it a great tree sheltering all nations. Christ is the "Branch" (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5), and Jesus' parable of the mustard seed that becomes a tree where birds lodge echoes this image (Matthew 13:31-32). "And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree" (17:24).

Chapter 18 — The Soul That Sinneth, It Shall Die

The exiles quoted a proverb blaming their suffering on their ancestors: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (18:2; Jeremiah 31:29). God rejected it:

> *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*
>
> **Ezekiel 18:4**

Three generations illustrate the principle: a righteous man lives (18:5-9); his violent son dies for his own sins (18:10-13); and that son's righteous son lives, not punished for his father's sins (18:14-18). "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (18:20; Deuteronomy 24:16). A wicked man who turns from his sins will live, and his past sins will not be remembered against him (18:21-22). A righteous man who turns to wickedness will die (18:24).

> *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?*
>
> **Ezekiel 18:23**

"Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin... make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (18:30-32). God does not want anyone to perish (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4). Each person is accountable to God for his own response (Romans 14:12).

Chapter 19 — A Lament for the Princes

A lioness (Judah) raised cubs who became young lions (kings): one (Jehoahaz) was taken in chains to Egypt (19:1-4; 2 Kings 23:33-34); another (Jehoiachin) was caged and brought to Babylon (19:5-9). Judah was a fruitful vine plucked up in fury, now planted in the wilderness, with no strong branch left to be a sceptre (19:10-14).

Chapter 20 — A History of Rebellion

In the seventh year (591 BC), elders came to inquire, and God reviewed Israel's history of rebellion: in Egypt they clung to idols (20:5-9); in the wilderness they rejected His statutes and profaned His sabbaths, which He gave "to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them" (20:10-26); in the land they worshipped on every high hill (20:27-32). A refrain explains God's mercy: "But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen" (20:9, 14, 22, 44). God promised to bring them out of the nations into "the wilderness of the people," and there "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will purge out from among you the rebels" (20:35-38). Then all Israel would serve Him on His holy mountain, and they would loathe themselves for their sins (20:40-44).

Chapter 21 — The Sword of the LORD

(In the English Bible, 20:45-49 introduces this message.) God would kindle a fire in the forest of the south (20:45-49). "A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished" (21:9). The king of Babylon stood at a fork in the road, using divination, shaking arrows, consulting idols and examining a liver, and the lot fell on Jerusalem (21:19-22). To Zedekiah, "thou, profane wicked prince of Israel":

> *Remove the diadem, and take off the crown... I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.*
>
> **Ezekiel 21:26-27**

The throne of David would be overturned and left empty until the coming of the One to whom it rightfully belongs, echoing Genesis 49:10, "until Shiloh come." No descendant of David has reigned in Jerusalem since Zedekiah. The rightful King is Jesus Christ, to whom God will give "the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32-33). The chapter ends with judgment on Ammon (21:28-32).

Chapter 22 — No One to Stand in the Gap

Jerusalem is "the bloody city" (22:2). Its sins are listed: bloodshed, idolatry, contempt for parents, oppression of strangers, orphans and widows, profaning the sabbath, slander, sexual immorality, bribery, usury and forgetting God (22:6-12). God would melt them like dross in a furnace (22:17-22). Every class had failed: the prophets conspired like roaring lions (22:25); the priests "put no difference between the holy and profane" (22:26); the princes were like wolves (22:27); the prophets whitewashed sin (22:28); the people oppressed the poor (22:29).

> *And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*
>
> **Ezekiel 22:30**

God looked for an intercessor and found none (compare Isaiah 59:16). Only Christ perfectly stands in the gap between a holy God and sinful humanity (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25).

Chapter 23 — Two Sisters: Aholah and Aholibah

Two sisters, Aholah ("her tent," Samaria) and Aholibah ("my tent is in her," Jerusalem), played the harlot in Egypt in their youth (23:1-4). Aholah lusted after the Assyrians and was destroyed by them (23:5-10). Aholibah saw this but became even more corrupt, pursuing Assyria, then Babylon, then Egypt again (23:11-21). God would bring her former lovers against her (23:22-35). Political alliances and idolatry were spiritual adultery against her divine Husband.

Chapter 24 — The Boiling Pot and the Death of Ezekiel's Wife

"In the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month," God told Ezekiel, "write thee the name of the day... the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day" (24:1-2). Hundreds of miles away, Ezekiel was told the exact day the siege began (2 Kings 25:1). He gave a parable of a rusty pot filled with meat and set on the fire until even the pot was consumed, a picture of Jerusalem's judgment (24:3-14).

Then God said, "Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep" (24:16). "So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded" (24:18). When the people asked why he did not mourn, he explained that God would profane His sanctuary, "the desire of your eyes," and their children would fall, yet they would be too stunned to mourn (24:20-24). On the day a fugitive arrived with the news of Jerusalem's fall, Ezekiel's mouth would be opened (24:25-27). His personal grief became a message; few servants of God have paid a higher price.

Section III: Judgment on the Nations (Chapters 25-32)

Chapter 25 — Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia

God judged Judah's neighbours for their attitudes when Jerusalem fell: Ammon, which rejoiced and clapped its hands (25:1-7); Moab, which said Judah was like all the other nations (25:8-11); Edom, which took vengeance on Judah, "And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel" (25:12-14); and Philistia, with its perpetual hatred (25:15-17). God holds nations accountable for how they treat His people (Genesis 12:3).

Chapters 26-28 — Tyre and Sidon

Tyre's destruction (26). Tyre, the great Phoenician trading city, rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall, expecting to profit (26:2). God declared, "I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up" (26:3). Note "many nations," like successive waves. Nebuchadnezzar would besiege it (26:7-11); he besieged mainland Tyre for thirteen years (around 586-573 BC). "And they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water" (26:12). In 332 BC, Alexander the Great built a causeway to the island city using the ruins of old mainland Tyre, scraping its rubble into the sea. "I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more" (26:14). The site of old Tyre has often been cited as a place where fishermen dried their nets.

The lament over Tyre (27). Tyre is pictured as a magnificent merchant ship, built with the finest materials and trading with the whole world (27:1-25), which sinks in the heart of the seas while merchants and sailors mourn (27:26-36), much like the lament over Babylon in Revelation 18.

The prince and king of Tyre (28). The prince of Tyre said in his pride, "I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas" (28:2). "Thou art wiser than Daniel" (28:3), yet he would die like a man (28:6-10). Then a lament for "the king of Tyrus" uses language that goes far beyond any human king:

> *Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God... Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee... Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground*
>
> **Ezekiel 28:12-17**

Many Bible teachers, alongside Isaiah 14:12-15, see here a description of the power behind the king of Tyre: Satan, a created cherub, perfect until pride corrupted him, cast down from God's mountain (1 Timothy 3:6; Luke 10:18; Revelation 12:9). Sidon would also be judged (28:20-24). The section ends with a promise that Israel will be gathered and "dwell safely therein" (28:25-26).

Chapters 29-32 — Egypt

Egypt, the "broken reed" Judah trusted (29:6-7; Isaiah 36:6), receives seven oracles.

- **Pharaoh the great dragon (29:1-16).** Pharaoh boasted, "My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself" (29:3). God would drag him out like a crocodile with hooks (29:4-5). Egypt would be desolate forty years and then restored, but "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations" (29:15). Egypt never again became a world-ruling empire; it was ruled by Persians, Greeks, Romans and others for many centuries.
- **Egypt given to Nebuchadnezzar (29:17-21).** In the 27th year (571 BC), God said that because Nebuchadnezzar's army had laboured hard against Tyre without spoil, He would give him Egypt as wages, "because they wrought for me" (29:18-20). "In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth" (29:21).
- **The day of the LORD on Egypt (30:1-19)** and **Pharaoh's broken arms (30:20-26).**
- **The fallen cedar (31).** Assyria had been like a magnificent cedar of Lebanon, greater than any tree in Eden, yet God cut it down for its pride (31:1-14). "This is Pharaoh and all his multitude" (31:18).
- **Laments for Pharaoh (32).** Egypt would go down to the pit to join Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom and Sidon, the mighty nations who "caused their terror in the land of the living" (32:17-32).

Section IV: The Restoration of Israel (Chapters 33-48)

Chapter 33 — The Watchman and the Fall of Jerusalem

God renewed Ezekiel's commission as watchman (33:1-9; compare 3:17-21). The people said, "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" (33:10). God answered:

> *Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*
>
> **Ezekiel 33:11**

A righteous man's past righteousness will not save him if he turns to sin, and a wicked man's past sins will not condemn him if he turns to righteousness (33:12-20). "In the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month," a fugitive arrived: "The city is smitten" (33:21). That evening God opened Ezekiel's mouth, and he was no longer silent (33:22). The survivors in Judah still claimed the land like Abraham while living in sin (33:24-29). The exiles enjoyed Ezekiel's preaching as entertainment: "thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice... for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (33:32; James 1:22). "And when this cometh to pass... then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them" (33:33).

Chapter 34 — The Good Shepherd

"Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" (34:2). Israel's leaders had exploited the sheep: "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost" (34:4). The sheep were scattered (34:5-6). So God Himself would shepherd them:

> *Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out... I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick*
>
> **Ezekiel 34:11, 15-16**

He would judge between sheep and sheep, and between the rams and the goats (34:17-22; compare Matthew 25:31-33).

> *And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them*
>
> **Ezekiel 34:23-24**

Written centuries after David died, this promises the Messiah, the Son of David. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11-16), and "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"

(Luke 19:10). He is "that great shepherd of the sheep" (Hebrews 13:20) and "the chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4). God would make with them "a covenant of peace," send "showers of blessing" (34:25-26), and raise up "a plant of renown" (34:29). "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD" (34:31).

Chapter 35 — Mount Seir (Edom)

Edom had "a perpetual hatred" and shed Israel's blood in her calamity (35:5), and claimed Israel's land, saying, "These two nations... shall be mine" (35:10). God would make Mount Seir perpetually desolate (35:9, 15).

Chapter 36 — A New Heart and a New Spirit

God spoke to the mountains of Israel, promising they would again bear fruit for His people, be tilled and resettled, and no longer bear the shame of the nations (36:1-15). Israel had defiled the land and profaned God's name among the nations (36:16-21).

> *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen*
>
> **Ezekiel 36:22**

God would gather them from all countries (36:24) and transform them:

> *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*
>
> **Ezekiel 36:25-27**

This is the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 described from another angle: cleansing, a new heart, and the indwelling Spirit who enables obedience. Jesus told Nicodemus, a teacher of Israel who should have known these things, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5, 10). Salvation is "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). The restored people would remember their sins and loathe themselves (36:31), and the desolate land would become "like the garden of Eden" (36:35).

Chapter 37 — The Valley of Dry Bones

> *The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones... and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.*
>
> **Ezekiel 37:1-3**

God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones: "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD" (37:4). As he spoke, there was a noise and a shaking; the bones came together, sinews and flesh came on

them, and skin covered them, "but there was no breath in them" (37:7-8). Then God commanded him, "Prophesy unto the wind... Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live" (37:9). "And the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" (37:10). The Hebrew word ruach means breath, wind and Spirit, all at once.

God explained: "these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost" (37:11). "I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel... And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live" (37:12-14). The vision promises the national resurrection of Israel from the "grave" of exile, in two stages: first the physical regathering (bones and flesh), then spiritual life (the Spirit). Many Bible teachers see the modern return of Jews to the land and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 as part of the first stage, with the spiritual stage still to come (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:26). The vision also pictures the regeneration of every sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1-5; John 5:25), and points to the bodily resurrection (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29).

Then God told Ezekiel to take two sticks, one for Judah and one for Joseph (Ephraim, the northern tribes), and join them into one in his hand (37:15-17). "I will make them one nation in the land... and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations" (37:22). "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd... and my servant David shall be their prince for ever" (37:24-25). God would make "an everlasting covenant" with them: "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (37:26-27; quoted in 2 Corinthians 6:16; compare Revelation 21:3).

Chapters 38-39 — Gog and Magog

In "the latter years" (38:8), after Israel has been gathered from the nations and is dwelling securely in "unwalled villages" (38:11), a great northern power will invade. "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal" (38:2). (The Hebrew can also be read "the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.") His allies include Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, "and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters" (38:5-6). Many of these names come from the table of nations in Genesis 10:2-3. They come "like a cloud to cover the land" to take spoil (38:9-12), from "the north parts" (38:15).

But God Himself fights for Israel with a great earthquake, confusion among the invaders so that "every man's sword shall be against his brother," pestilence, blood, overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone (38:19-22). "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD" (38:23). The invaders fall on the mountains of Israel (39:1-5). Israel will burn their weapons for seven years (39:9-10) and spend seven months burying the dead in "the valley of Hamon-gog" (39:11-16). God calls the birds and beasts to a great feast on the slain (39:17-20; compare Revelation 19:17-18). "So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel" (39:7). God will "have mercy upon the whole house of Israel" (39:25), "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel" (39:29).

Christians differ on the timing of this invasion: some place it before or during the tribulation, others at the end of it, and some identify it with the rebellion of "Gog and Magog" after the millennium (Revelation 20:7-9), though Revelation's account differs in several details. What is certain is the message: God will defend His people and display His holiness to the nations.

Chapters 40-42 — The Vision of the New Temple

"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity... in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten" (573 BC), God brought Ezekiel in visions to a very high mountain in Israel (40:1-2). There stood a man "whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed" (40:3). He told Ezekiel, "declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel" (40:4). The man measured the temple complex in detail: the outer wall, the gates with their chambers and porches (east, north and south), the outer and inner courts, the altar area, the temple building and its Most Holy Place, side chambers, and priests' chambers (40:5-42:14). Finally he measured the outer wall, five hundred reeds square, "to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place" (42:15-20). Measuring in Scripture marks something as God's possession and protects its holiness (Zechariah 2:1-5; Revelation 11:1; 21:15-17).

Chapter 43 — The Glory Returns

> *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory... And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east... and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.*
>
> **Ezekiel 43:2, 4-5**

The glory that departed eastward (11:23) now returns from the east. God declares, "Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" (43:7). Israel must no longer defile His name (43:7-9). Ezekiel is to show them the design so they will be ashamed of their iniquities (43:10-11). "This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy" (43:12). The altar of burnt offering is described and its consecration over seven days (43:13-27).

Chapter 44 — The Closed Gate and the Priests

"This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it" (44:2). Only "the prince" may sit in the gateway to eat bread before the LORD (44:3). Foreigners "uncircumcised in heart" may not enter the sanctuary (44:9). The Levites who had gone astray into idolatry would serve in lesser roles (44:10-14), but "the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray" would minister before God (44:15-16). Faithfulness is rewarded. The priests are to "teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (44:23), the very thing Israel's priests had failed to do (22:26). "I am their inheritance... I am their possession" (44:28).

Chapter 45 — The Holy Portion and Just Rulers

A holy portion of land (the "oblation") is set apart for the sanctuary, the priests, the Levites, the city and the prince (45:1-8). The princes must stop oppressing the people: "Execute judgment and justice... take away your exactions from my people" (45:9), and use honest weights and measures (45:10-12). The people bring offerings to the prince, who provides the sacrifices for the feasts (45:13-17). Annual purification of the sanctuary, the Passover (45:21-24), and the Feast of Tabernacles (45:25) are

described. Notably, the Day of Atonement and Pentecost are not mentioned.

Chapter 46 — Worship and the Prince

The prince and people worship at the east gate of the inner court on sabbaths and new moons (46:1-8). Worshippers entering by the north gate must leave by the south, and vice versa: no one turns back, but goes straight through (46:9). The prince's inheritance is protected, and he may not take the people's property (46:16-18). Kitchens for boiling the sacrifices are described (46:19-24).

Chapter 47 — The River of Life

> *Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward*
>
> **Ezekiel 47:1**

The man measured the river at intervals of a thousand cubits: first ankle-deep, then knee-deep, then waist-deep, then "a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in" (47:3-5). Very many trees grew on both banks (47:7). The water flowed east toward the desert and into the Dead Sea, healing its waters: "every thing shall live whither the river cometh," and fishermen would spread their nets from En-gedi to En-eglaim (47:8-10). Only the marshes would remain salt (47:11).

> *And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.*
>
> **Ezekiel 47:12**

The river flowing from God's presence brings life and healing wherever it goes. Joel (3:18) and Zechariah (14:8) foretell the same river. Jesus promised that "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-39), speaking of the Spirit; and Revelation shows "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," with the tree of life on either side, "and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Revelation 22:1-2).

The borders of the land are described (47:13-20), and strangers who live among Israel and have children there are to receive an inheritance among the tribes "as born in the country among the children of Israel" (47:21-23), a remarkable inclusion of Gentiles.

Chapter 48 — The Tribes, the City and "The LORD Is There"

The land is divided into parallel east-west strips for the twelve tribes, seven to the north and five to the south of the holy portion (48:1-29). The city has twelve gates, three on each side, named after the twelve tribes (48:30-34; compare Revelation 21:12-13). The book ends:

> *It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.*
>
> **Ezekiel 48:35**

In Hebrew, Jehovah-shammah. The glory that left in chapter 11 has returned to stay. This is the goal of all God's work: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (Revelation 21:3).

How should chapters 40-48 be understood? Christians hold three main views:

- **A literal future temple** during Christ's millennial reign on earth, where worship and memorial sacrifices point back to Christ's finished work (compare Isaiah 56:7; 60:7; Zechariah 14:16-21). Many Baptist and dispensational interpreters hold this view, noting the detailed measurements and the distinction between this temple and the New Jerusalem, which has no temple (Revelation 21:22).
- **A symbolic picture** of God's presence with His people, fulfilled in Christ and the church and in the eternal state described in Revelation 21-22.
- **An ideal pattern** given to the exiles which was never fully realised after the return.

Whatever view is taken, the vision teaches God's holiness, His desire to dwell with His people, the life-giving power of His presence, and the certainty of His purposes.

Part Three: Christ in Ezekiel

Prophecies and Pictures of Christ

Ezekiel	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:26-28	The likeness of a Man on the throne of glory	The Son of God incarnate and exalted (John 1:14; Revelation 1:13-16; 4:2-3)
2:1 and throughout	"Son of man"	Jesus' favourite title for Himself (Mark 2:10; 10:45; Daniel 7:13-14)
9:4	The man in linen marks those who mourn over sin	God seals His own (Revelation 7:3; 2 Timothy 2:19)
11:16	God a sanctuary for His scattered people	Christ the true Temple, present with His people everywhere (John 2:19-21; Matthew 18:20)
11:22-23	The glory leaves from the Mount of Olives	Christ ascended from Olivet and will return there (Acts 1:9-12; Zechariah 14:4)
17:22-24	A tender twig from the high cedar becomes a great tree	The Branch of David; the kingdom like a mustard tree (Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 13:31-32)
21:27	"Until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him"	Christ the rightful King (Genesis 49:10; Luke 1:32-33)
22:30	God sought a man to stand in the gap	Christ the one Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5; Isaiah 59:16)
34:11-16	God Himself seeks the lost sheep	"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10)
34:23-24; 37:24-25	One Shepherd, "my servant David," prince for ever	The Good Shepherd, Son of David (John 10:11-16; Hebrews 13:20; Luke 1:32)
34:29	"A plant of renown"	The Branch (Isaiah 4:2; Zechariah 3:8)
36:25-27	Clean water, a new heart and God's Spirit within	New birth by water and the Spirit (John 3:5; Titus 3:5)
37:1-14	Life breathed into dead bones	Christ gives life to the spiritually dead and raises the dead (John 5:25-29; Ephesians 2:1-5)
37:26-27	God's tabernacle with His people	"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us" (John 1:14)
43:1-5	The glory returns from the east	The Son of man coming "as the lightning cometh out of the east" (Matthew 24:27)
44:1-3	The east gate shut because the LORD entered by it; the prince alone sits there	Christ the Prince and Lord
47:1-12	The river of life flowing from the sanctuary	Living water from Christ; the river of life (John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1-2)
48:35	"The LORD is there"	Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23; Revelation 21:3)

The Glory of God in Christ

Ezekiel watched God's glory depart from a defiled temple. Six centuries later, John wrote, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "For God... hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). The glory returned in a Person. And in the New Jerusalem, "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Revelation 21:23).

The Good Shepherd

Ezekiel 34 is the background of Jesus' teaching in John 10. Israel's leaders were the false shepherds who fed themselves; Jesus is the Shepherd God promised, who seeks the lost, binds up the broken, heals the sick, and gives His life for the sheep (John 10:11). He gathers one flock under one Shepherd (John 10:16; Ezekiel 37:24).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Ezekiel	Fulfillment
Jerusalem besieged and destroyed	4-5; 7; 24	586 BC (2 Kings 25; Ezekiel 33:21)
The siege began on a specific day	24:1-2	The tenth day of the tenth month (2 Kings 25:1)
The king will flee through the wall, be captured, and die in Babylon without seeing it	12:12-13	Zedekiah captured and blinded, taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:4-7; Jeremiah 52:11)
Pelatiah's death	11:13	Died as Ezekiel prophesied
Nebuchadnezzar will besiege Tyre	26:7-11	Thirteen-year siege (around 586-573 BC)
Many nations against Tyre; its rubble cast into the sea	26:3, 12	Alexander the Great's causeway (332 BC)
Old Tyre a place for spreading nets	26:5, 14	The ruined mainland site
Egypt given to Nebuchadnezzar	29:19-20; 30:10	Babylonian campaign against Egypt (around 568 BC)
Egypt will never again rule the nations	29:15	Ruled by foreign powers for many centuries afterward
Edom made desolate	25:12-14; 35	Edom overrun and disappeared as a nation
The Philistines cut off	25:15-17	The Philistines disappeared from history
The exiles will return to the land	11:17; 36:24	The return under Cyrus (Ezra 1-2)
The throne overturned until the rightful King comes	21:25-27	No Davidic king reigned after Zedekiah until Christ
The new heart and the Spirit	11:19; 36:26-27	Poured out at Pentecost and given in the new birth (Acts 2; John 3:5)

Prophecies still awaiting complete fulfillment include the full spiritual restoration of Israel (36-37), the defeat of Gog (38-39), and the vision of the temple, river and city (40-48).

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Ezekiel 1 — The Glory of God

Ezekiel's ministry began with a vision of God's overwhelming glory: living creatures, wheels within wheels, fire, a sapphire throne, and the likeness of a man upon it. Before he could speak for God, he had to see God, and he fell on his face. Every true ministry begins with a vision of God's holiness and majesty (Isaiah 6:1-8; Revelation 1:12-17).

Ezekiel 3:17-21; 33:1-11 — The Watchman

God's servants are responsible to warn people faithfully. If they warn and are not heeded, they are free of guilt; if they fail to warn, they share responsibility. This applies to pastors, teachers and every believer with the gospel (Acts 20:26-27; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

Ezekiel 18 — Personal Responsibility and God's Desire to Save

No one can blame parents or circumstances for their own sin, and no one is condemned for another's sin. God judges each person by his own response, and He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. "Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (18:32). This is one of the clearest Old Testament invitations to repent.

Ezekiel 22:30 — Standing in the Gap

God looks for intercessors who will stand between His judgment and a sinful people. Moses did (Psalm 106:23). In Ezekiel's day, none was found. Christ is the perfect Intercessor, and believers are called to pray for their nation and for the lost (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Ezekiel 36:25-27 — The New Heart

Religion cannot change the heart; only God can. He cleanses, replaces the heart of stone with a heart of flesh, and puts His Spirit within to produce obedience. This is the inner work of the New Covenant, experienced by every believer through the new birth (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Ezekiel 37:1-14 — Can These Bones Live?

To human eyes, Israel's hope was dead and dry. But God's Word and God's Spirit bring life where there is none. The vision assures Israel of national restoration and every believer of God's power to give life to the spiritually dead and, one day, to raise the bodies of the dead.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 — The River from the Sanctuary

The river grows deeper the further it flows and brings life wherever it reaches, even to the Dead Sea. It pictures the life-giving work of God's Spirit flowing from His presence, beginning small and becoming overwhelming, healing and making fruitful.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Ezekiel

1. The Glory and Holiness of God

God's glory fills the book: revealed by the river, departing from defilement, returning to dwell for ever. His holiness cannot tolerate sin (8-11; 43:7-12).

2. "They Shall Know That I Am the LORD"

Both judgment and restoration have one ultimate purpose: that Israel and the nations will know God (6:7; 36:23; 38:23; 39:7).

3. God Acts for His Name's Sake

God restores Israel not because they deserve it but to vindicate His holy name (20:9; 36:22-23).

4. God's Sovereignty over Nations

Babylon, Tyre, Egypt and Gog are all under God's control and judgment (25-32; 38-39).

5. Sin and Judgment

Idolatry, injustice, false prophecy and spiritual adultery bring judgment (8; 16; 22-23).

6. Individual Responsibility

Each person is accountable for his own sin and his own response to God (18; 33).

7. God's Desire for Repentance

"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (18:23, 32; 33:11).

8. The New Heart and the Holy Spirit

God will give a new heart and put His Spirit within His people (11:19-20; 36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29).

9. The Messianic Shepherd-King

God will raise up one Shepherd, His servant David, to rule His people for ever (34:23-24; 37:24-25).

10. The Restoration and Reunification of Israel

God will gather Israel from the nations, give them life, reunite them and dwell among them (36-37).

11. The Faithful Watchman

God's servants must warn faithfully, whatever the response (3; 33).

12. God's Presence with His People

From "a little sanctuary" in exile (11:16) to "The LORD is there" (48:35), the book's goal is God dwelling with His people.

Part Seven: Connections — How Ezekiel Links to the Rest of the Bible

Ezekiel in the New Testament

Ezekiel Passage	New Testament	Connection
1 (the throne vision)	Revelation 4:2-8	The throne, rainbow, sea of crystal and four living creatures
1:24; 43:2 (voice like many waters)	Revelation 1:15	The voice of the Son of man
1:26 (the likeness of a man)	Revelation 1:13	One like the Son of man
2:1 (son of man)	Mark 2:10; John 5:27	Christ the Son of man
3:1-3 (eating the scroll)	Revelation 10:9-10	Eating the little book, sweet as honey
3:18; 33:8 (the watchman)	Acts 18:6; 20:26-27	Pure from the blood of all men
9:4 (the mark on the forehead)	Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1	The seal of God on His servants
9:6 (begin at my sanctuary)	1 Peter 4:17	Judgment begins at the house of God
11:23 (the glory on the Mount of Olives)	Matthew 23:38-39; Acts 1:9-12	The house left desolate; the ascension from Olivet
11:19; 36:26 (a heart of flesh)	2 Corinthians 3:3	Written in fleshy tables of the heart
15 (the useless vine)	John 15:6	Branches cast into the fire
17:23 (birds in the cedar)	Matthew 13:31-32	The mustard seed becomes a tree
18:4, 20 (individual accountability)	Romans 14:12; Galatians 6:5	Every one shall give account of himself
18:23, 32; 33:11 (no pleasure in death)	2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4	Not willing that any should perish
21:27 (whose right it is)	Luke 1:32-33	The throne of His father David
34 (the shepherds and the Good Shepherd)	John 10:1-16; Luke 15:4-7; 19:10; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:2-4	Christ the Good Shepherd
34:17 (judging between sheep)	Matthew 25:31-33	Sheep and goats

Ezekiel Passage	New Testament	Connection
36:20-23 (God's name profaned among the nations)	Romans 2:24	The name of God blasphemed among the Gentiles
36:25-27 (water and Spirit)	John 3:5; Titus 3:5	Born of water and the Spirit
37:1-14 (dry bones live)	John 5:25; Ephesians 2:1-5; Romans 11:15	Life from the dead
37:15-22 (two become one)	John 10:16; Ephesians 2:14-16	One flock, one new man
37:27 (God's tabernacle with them)	2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:3	God dwelling with His people
38-39 (Gog and Magog)	Revelation 20:8	Gog and Magog
39:17-20 (the feast of the birds)	Revelation 19:17-18	The great supper of God
40:3 (the measuring reed)	Revelation 11:1; 21:15	Measuring the temple and the city
47:1-12 (the river and trees)	John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1-2	The river of life; leaves for healing
48:31-34 (twelve gates named for the tribes)	Revelation 21:12-13	The New Jerusalem's gates
48:35 (The LORD is there)	Matthew 1:23; Revelation 21:3, 22-23	God with us

Ezekiel in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Eden, the garden of God (28:13; 31:8-9; 36:35); the river of Eden (2:10; Ezekiel 47); the nations of Gog's army (10:2-3); Sodom (19; Ezekiel 16:49-50); "until Shiloh come" (49:10; Ezekiel 21:27)
Exodus	The glory filling the tabernacle (40:34-35); the cherubim over the ark (25:18-22)
Leviticus	The covenant curses: sword, famine, beasts, pestilence, cannibalism (26:22-29; Ezekiel 5; 14:21); clean and unclean (Ezekiel 22:26; 44:23)
Numbers	Priests begin service at thirty (4:3; Ezekiel 1:1); only priests in the sanctuary (18:7)
Deuteronomy	Children not punished for fathers' sins (24:16; Ezekiel 18:20); scattering and regathering (30:1-5)
Ruth	Spreading the skirt over her (3:9; Ezekiel 16:8)
1 Kings	The glory filling Solomon's temple (8:10-11)
2 Kings	Jehoiachin's exile (24:12-16; Ezekiel 1:2); Zedekiah's capture (25:4-7; Ezekiel 12:13)

Book	Link
Psalms	The LORD my shepherd (23; Ezekiel 34); Moses standing in the breach (106:23; Ezekiel 22:30); the river that makes glad the city of God (46:4; Ezekiel 47)
Isaiah	The throne vision (6); the fall of Lucifer (14:12-15; Ezekiel 28); Tyre (23); the Shepherd (40:11); the Spirit poured out (44:3); no intercessor found (59:16)
Jeremiah	The contemporary prophet in Jerusalem; the sour-grapes proverb (31:29-30); false shepherds and the Branch (23:1-6); the New Covenant (31:31-34); eating God's words (15:16)
Lamentations	The fall of Jerusalem mourned
Daniel	Ezekiel's contemporary, named as righteous and wise (Ezekiel 14:14; 28:3)
Hosea	Israel as an unfaithful wife (1-3; Ezekiel 16; 23); "David their king" (3:5)
Joel	The Spirit poured out (2:28); a fountain from the house of the LORD (3:18)
Amos	The tabernacle of David raised up (9:11-15)
Obadiah	Judgment on Edom (Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35)
Haggai	The glory of the latter house (2:7-9)
Zechariah	The measuring line (2:1-5); the Branch who builds the temple (6:12-13); the Mount of Olives (14:4); living waters from Jerusalem (14:8)
Malachi	The Lord coming suddenly to His temple; the sons of Levi purified (3:1-3)

Themes That Run from Ezekiel Through Scripture

Theme	In Ezekiel	Developed	Fulfilled
The glory of God dwelling with His people	1; 10-11; 43; 48:35	Exodus 40; 1 Kings 8; Haggai 2:7-9	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3, 23
The Good Shepherd	34; 37:24	Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11	John 10; Hebrews 13:20; Revelation 7:17
The new heart and Spirit	11:19; 36:26-27	Jeremiah 31:33; Joel 2:28	John 3:5; Acts 2; 2 Corinthians 3:3
Life from the dead	37	Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2	John 5:25-29; 1 Corinthians 15
The river of life	47	Psalm 46:4; Joel 3:18; Zechariah 14:8	John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1-2
The watchman	3; 33	Isaiah 62:6	Acts 20:26-31; Hebrews 13:17
Individual responsibility	18	Deuteronomy 24:16	Romans 2:6; 14:12
Gog and Magog	38-39	Genesis 10	Revelation 20:8
The holy city	48:30-35	Isaiah 60; Zechariah 14	Revelation 21-22

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let a vision of God's glory humble you** (1:28).
- **Be faithful whether people listen or not** (2:5-7).
- **Take in God's Word before giving it out** (3:1-3).
- **Warn others faithfully** (3:17-21; 33:7-9).
- **God sees what is done in secret** (8:12).
- **Grieve over sin in God's house** (9:4).
- **God can be your sanctuary wherever you are** (11:16).
- **Beware of false prophets who cry "Peace"** (13:10).
- **Remove the idols of your heart** (14:3-6).
- **Remember what God has done for you, and don't trust in your own beauty** (16:6-15).
- **Pride, excess and neglect of the poor were Sodom's sins too** (16:49-50).
- **Take responsibility for your own sin** (18:20).
- **Turn and live; God has no pleasure in death** (18:32).
- **Stand in the gap in prayer** (22:30).
- **Obey even when it costs you deeply** (24:15-18).
- **Don't just enjoy sermons; do them** (33:31-32).
- **Leaders must serve the flock, not themselves** (34:2-4).
- **Ask God for a new heart and His Spirit** (36:26-27).
- **No situation is too dead for God's Word and Spirit** (37:3-10).
- **Let the river of God's life flow deeper in you** (47:3-5).
- **Live for the day when "The LORD is there"** (48:35).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:28	This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face
3:17	Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.
18:4	Behold, all souls are mine... the soul that sinneth, it shall die.
18:32	For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.
22:30	And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land
33:11	Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?
34:16	I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken
34:23	And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David
36:26	A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you
36:27	And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes
37:3	Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.
37:5	Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live
47:9	Every thing shall live whither the river cometh.
48:35	And the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.

Conclusion

Ezekiel is the book of the glory of God. A priest in exile by a river in Babylon saw the heavens opened and the likeness of a Man on a throne of fire. He was called to be a watchman to a rebellious people, to act out the coming siege, and to watch in vision as God's glory left a temple defiled by idols, rising from the Mount of Olives. He paid a heavy price, even losing his wife as a sign. When Jerusalem fell, his message turned to hope: God Himself would seek His lost sheep and set over them one Shepherd, His servant David; He would cleanse His people, give them a new heart and put His Spirit within them; He would breathe life into dry bones, reunite His people, defeat their last enemies, and return in glory to dwell among them for ever, with a river of life flowing from His presence. All these promises meet in Jesus Christ, the Son of man and Good Shepherd, in whom God's glory dwelt among us, who gives the new heart and the Spirit, who raises the dead, and who will bring His people to the city whose name is "The LORD is there."

> *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*
>
> **Ezekiel 36:26**

Daniel

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Daniel • Date: c. 605-530 BC • Chapters: 12

> *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed*
>
> **Daniel 2:44**

Part One: Introduction to Daniel

The Prophet

Daniel, whose name means "God is my judge," was a young man of Judah's royal or noble family, taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of King Jehoiakim, 605 BC (1:1-6), in the first of the Babylonian deportations. This fulfilled Isaiah's word to Hezekiah that some of his descendants would be "eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (Isaiah 39:7). He was given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar (1:7), trained in the learning of the Chaldeans, and rose to high office under Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian (1:21; 6:28). His ministry spanned about seventy years, the whole period of the exile; his last dated vision was in "the third year of Cyrus" (10:1), around 536 BC.

Daniel is one of the few major Bible characters about whom nothing negative is recorded. God called him "greatly beloved" (9:23; 10:11, 19). Ezekiel named him with Noah and Job as an example of righteousness (Ezekiel 14:14, 20) and of wisdom (28:3). Jesus called him "Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24:15).

Author and Date

The book presents itself as written by Daniel; the visions of chapters 7-12 are in the first person ("I Daniel"). Conservative scholars date it to the sixth century BC. Many modern critics date it to around 165 BC, mainly because its prophecies, especially in chapter 11, are so precise that they assume they must have been written after the events. Against this:

- **Jesus** called Daniel a prophet and treated his prophecy as still awaiting fulfillment (Matthew 24:15).
- **Copies of Daniel** were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the book was already accepted as Scripture by the second century BC, too soon for a book supposedly written in 165 BC.
- **Historical details** fit the sixth century: Belshazzar, once unknown outside the Bible, is now known from Babylonian records (the Nabonidus Cylinder) as the son of King Nabonidus and his co-regent in Babylon, which explains why he could only offer Daniel the position of "third ruler in the kingdom" (5:7, 16, 29).
- **Daniel's prophecies go beyond 165 BC**: the fourth kingdom (Rome), the coming of Messiah the Prince, His being cut off, and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (9:25-26) were all future even on the late date.

The precision of Daniel's prophecies is not a reason to doubt the book, but evidence of the God who "revealeth secrets" (2:28).

Two Languages

Daniel is written in two languages. Chapters 1:1-2:4a and 8-12 are in Hebrew; 2:4b-7:28 are in Aramaic, the international language of the time. The Aramaic section concerns the Gentile kingdoms and God's rule over them; the Hebrew sections concern God's people Israel more directly.

Purpose and Theme

Daniel shows that **God rules over all the kingdoms of the world**. Though Judah had fallen and God's people were captives, the God of heaven was still sovereign. He raises and removes kings, humbles the proud, protects His faithful servants, and will finally set up His own everlasting kingdom through the Son of man. The book also teaches how to live faithfully in a godless culture.

> *To the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*
>
> **Daniel 4:17**

> *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed*
>
> **Daniel 2:44**

Kings in Daniel

King	Empire	Reign	Chapters
Nebuchadnezzar	Babylon	605-562 BC	1-4
Belshazzar	Babylon (co-regent with Nabonidus)	About 553-539 BC	5; 7; 8
Darius the Mede	Medo-Persia	From 539 BC	6; 9; 11:1
Cyrus	Persia	539-530 BC (over Babylon)	1:21; 6:28; 10

The identity of "Darius the Mede" is debated. Suggestions include Gubaru, the governor Cyrus appointed over Babylon; Cyaxares II; or Cyrus himself, since 6:28 can be translated "in the reign of Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

The Kingdoms of Daniel's Visions

Kingdom	Chapter 2: The Image	Chapter 7: The Beasts	Chapter 8: Ram and Goat
Babylon (605-539 BC)	Head of fine gold (2:32, 38)	A lion with eagle's wings (7:4)	
Medo-Persia (539-331 BC)	Breast and arms of silver (2:32, 39)	A bear raised up on one side, with three ribs (7:5)	A ram with two horns, the higher coming up last (8:3, 20)
Greece (331-63 BC)	Belly and thighs of brass (2:32, 39)	A leopard with four wings and four heads (7:6)	A he goat with a notable horn, broken and replaced by four (8:5-8, 21-22)
Rome (and its final form)	Legs of iron; feet of iron and clay, with ten toes (2:33, 40-43)	A terrible beast with iron teeth and ten horns; a little horn (7:7-8, 23-25)	A little horn from one of the four (Antiochus IV, a type of the final Antichrist) (8:9-12, 23-25)

Kingdom	Chapter 2: The Image	Chapter 7: The Beasts	Chapter 8: Ram and Goat
The Kingdom of God	A stone cut out without hands, becoming a mountain filling the earth (2:34-35, 44-45)	One like the Son of man receives an everlasting kingdom (7:13-14, 27)	

Outline of Daniel

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Daniel and His Friends in Babylon (History)	1-6	Faithfulness and God's sovereignty over kings
Faithfulness in food	1	"Daniel purposed in his heart"
Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image	2	The God who reveals secrets; the stone kingdom
The fiery furnace	3	"But if not"; the fourth man
Nebuchadnezzar humbled	4	"The most High ruleth"
Belshazzar's feast	5	The writing on the wall
The lions' den	6	Faithful in prayer
II. Daniel's Visions (Prophecy)	7-12	The future of the kingdoms and of Israel
The four beasts and the Son of man	7	The everlasting kingdom
The ram and the goat	8	Persia, Greece and the little horn
The seventy weeks	9	Prayer and the timetable of Messiah
The heavenly messenger	10	Spiritual warfare
Kings of the north and south; the willful king	11	Detailed prophecy
The time of the end	12	Great tribulation and resurrection

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Daniel and His Friends in Babylon (Chapters 1-6)

Chapter 1 — Faithful in Small Things

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God" (1:1-2). The fall was God's doing, not merely Babylon's. Nebuchadnezzar chose young men of royal and noble birth, "Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom," to be trained for three years in the language and learning of the Chaldeans and then serve the king (1:3-5). Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, renamed Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (1:6-7). Their Hebrew names honoured the God of Israel; their new names honoured Babylonian gods. Babylon sought to change their names, their education and their diet, but not their hearts.

> *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank*
>
> **Daniel 1:8**

The king's food probably included meat forbidden by the law of Moses (Leviticus 11) or offered to idols. Daniel made a decision in his heart before the test came. "Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (1:9). Daniel respectfully proposed a ten-day test of vegetables ("pulse") and water (1:11-14). At the end, they looked healthier than all the others (1:15). "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams" (1:17). The king found them "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (1:20). "And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus" (1:21): he outlasted the Babylonian Empire itself. Faithfulness in small things prepared him for greater tests (Luke 16:10).

Chapter 2 — The Dream of the Great Image

In his second year, Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream (2:1). He demanded that his wise men tell him both the dream and its interpretation, or die (2:2-9). They protested, "There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter... except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh" (2:10-11). The king ordered all the wise men killed, including Daniel and his friends (2:12-13). Daniel calmly asked for time (2:14-16), then gathered his friends to pray "that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret" (2:17-18). That night God revealed it in a vision, and Daniel praised Him:

> *Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things*
>
> **Daniel 2:20-22**

Before the king, Daniel gave God all the credit: "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (2:28). The dream: a great, terrifying image with a head of fine gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part iron and part clay (2:31-33). "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces... and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (2:34-35).

The interpretation: Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold (2:37-38). After him would come an inferior kingdom (Medo-Persia), then a kingdom of brass ruling over all the earth (Greece), then a fourth kingdom "strong as iron" that breaks everything in pieces (Rome), ending in a divided form, part strong and part brittle, that would not hold together (2:39-43). Then:

> *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*
>
> **Daniel 2:44**

The stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" is the kingdom of God brought by Christ, not by human effort (2:45). Jesus referred to Himself as the stone: "whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matthew 21:44). Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and confessed, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets" (2:47). Daniel was made ruler over the province of Babylon and chief of the wise men, and his friends were promoted (2:48-49).

Chapter 3 — The Fiery Furnace

Nebuchadnezzar made a golden image sixty cubits high and six cubits wide and set it up in the plain of Dura (3:1), perhaps inspired by the dream in which he was the head of gold. All officials were commanded to bow down when the music sounded, on pain of being thrown into a burning fiery furnace (3:2-6). Certain Chaldeans accused the three Jews of refusing (3:8-12). The furious king gave them one more chance: "who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (3:15). Their answer is one of the great statements of faith in the Bible:

> *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*
>
> **Daniel 3:16-18**

They were confident in God's power, but their obedience did not depend on being rescued. The king had the furnace heated seven times hotter; the soldiers who threw them in were killed by the flames (3:19-23). Then Nebuchadnezzar was astonished:

> *Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*

Daniel 3:25

Many Bible teachers believe the fourth man was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ; the king later called him God's "angel" (3:28). God did not keep them out of the fire; He met them in it. "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned" (Isaiah 43:2). When they came out, the fire had no power on their bodies: "nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them" (3:27). Only their bonds were burned. The king blessed their God, "who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him," and decreed that no one should speak against Him, "because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort" (3:28-29). Hebrews honours those who "quenched the violence of fire" by faith (Hebrews 11:34).

Chapter 4 — Nebuchadnezzar Humbled

This chapter is Nebuchadnezzar's own proclamation to the world. "I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me... his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" (4:2-3). He dreamed of a great tree reaching to heaven, sheltering all creatures, which a holy watcher ordered cut down, leaving the stump bound with iron and brass; the man represented by the tree would have a beast's mind for "seven times" (4:10-16).

> *This matter is by the decree of the watchers... to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.*
>
> **Daniel 4:17**

Daniel was troubled to tell him, but explained that the tree was the king himself, who would be driven from men and live like an animal until he acknowledged that the Most High rules (4:19-26). He pleaded, "break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity" (4:27).

Twelve months later, walking on his palace roof, the king boasted: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (4:29-30). "While the word was in the king's mouth," a voice from heaven declared the kingdom departed from him (4:31). He was driven from men, ate grass like oxen, his body wet with dew, "till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (4:33). Babylon was famous for its building projects, and inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar boast of them in similar terms.

At the end of the time, he lifted his eyes to heaven, and his understanding returned:

> *I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion... And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*
>
> **Daniel 4:34-35**

He was restored to his kingdom, with more greatness than before (4:36). "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (4:37). The most powerful man on earth learned that God resists

the proud (James 4:6).

Chapter 5 — The Writing on the Wall

In October 539 BC, while the Medo-Persian army was outside Babylon, King Belshazzar held a great feast for a thousand of his lords. Under the influence of wine, he ordered the gold and silver vessels taken from God's temple in Jerusalem to be brought, and they drank from them and "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone" (5:1-4). "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote... upon the plaister of the wall" (5:5). The king turned pale and his knees knocked together (5:6). No wise man could read it, though he offered purple clothing, a gold chain and the position of "third ruler in the kingdom" (5:7-9). The queen (probably the queen mother) remembered Daniel, in whom was "the spirit of the holy gods" (5:10-12).

Daniel, now an old man, refused the rewards (5:17). He reminded Belshazzar how God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar (5:18-21), then delivered the charge:

> *And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this... and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified*
>
> **Daniel 5:22-23**

The writing was MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN (5:25). "MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (5:26-28). Belshazzar honoured Daniel as he had promised (5:29).

> *In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.*
>
> **Daniel 5:30-31**

Babylon fell in one night, as Isaiah and Jeremiah had foretold (Isaiah 21:9; 45:1-2; Jeremiah 51:39, 57). Ancient historians record that the city was taken while the Babylonians were feasting. Every person is weighed in God's balances; only those clothed in Christ's righteousness will not be found wanting (Philippians 3:9).

Chapter 6 — The Lions' Den

Darius appointed 120 princes over the kingdom, with three presidents over them, Daniel being first, "because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm" (6:1-3). His jealous rivals searched for grounds to accuse him, but "they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful" (6:4).

> *Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.*
>
> **Daniel 6:5**

They persuaded Darius to sign a decree that for thirty days no one could pray to any god or man except the king, on pain of the lions' den, and it was sealed as "the law of the Medes and Persians, which

altereth not" (6:6-9).

> *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*
>
> **Daniel 6:10**

Daniel did not change his habit, hide it, or flaunt it. He prayed toward Jerusalem as Solomon had asked (1 Kings 8:48), three times a day like David (Psalm 55:17), and gave thanks even in danger. His enemies reported him (6:11-13). The king, greatly distressed, tried until sunset to save him, but the law could not be changed (6:14-15). As Daniel was thrown into the den, the king said, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee" (6:16). A stone was laid over the mouth of the den and sealed with the king's signet (6:17). The king spent the night fasting and sleepless (6:18).

Very early in the morning he hurried to the den and called, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" (6:19-20). Daniel answered:

> *My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me*
>
> **Daniel 6:22**

"So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (6:23). Hebrews speaks of those who by faith "stopped the mouths of lions" (Hebrews 11:33). The accusers and their families were thrown into the den and destroyed (6:24). Darius decreed that everyone "tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed... He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth" (6:26-27). "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" (6:28).

Section II: Daniel's Visions (Chapters 7-12)

Chapter 7 — The Four Beasts and the Son of Man

In the first year of Belshazzar (about 553 BC), Daniel saw the four winds stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts coming up out of it (7:1-3):

- **A lion with eagle's wings,** whose wings were plucked and which was given a man's heart (7:4): Babylon, and perhaps Nebuchadnezzar's humbling.
- **A bear raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth** (7:5): Medo-Persia, with Persia the stronger side, devouring three kingdoms (Lydia, Babylon and Egypt).
- **A leopard with four wings of a fowl and four heads** (7:6): Greece, with the lightning speed of Alexander's conquests and the fourfold division after his death.
- **A fourth beast, "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," with great iron teeth and ten horns** (7:7): Rome, and the final form of world power.

Among the ten horns came up "another little horn," which uprooted three of the others, with "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" (7:8).

Then the scene shifts to heaven:

> *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire... thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.*
>
> **Daniel 7:9-10**

The beast was slain and destroyed (7:11). Then:

> *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*
>
> **Daniel 7:13-14**

This is one of the most important Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. The "Son of man" is a heavenly figure who comes with the clouds (a sign of deity, Psalm 104:3), approaches God, and receives universal and eternal dominion and worship. Jesus called Himself "the Son of man" more than any other title. At His trial, when the high priest asked if He was the Christ, He answered, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven," and the high priest tore his clothes, charging Him with blasphemy (Mark 14:61-64). Jesus was claiming to be the divine King of Daniel 7.

An angel explained that the four beasts are four kings (kingdoms), "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever" (7:17-18). The little horn "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them" until the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints (7:21-22). He would "speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (7:25), that is, three and a half years. Then his dominion would be taken away, "And the kingdom and dominion... shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" (7:26-27). Many Bible teachers identify the little horn with the final Antichrist, "the man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) and the beast of Revelation 13, who has "a mouth speaking great things" and makes war with the saints for "forty and two months" (Revelation 13:5-7).

Chapter 8 — The Ram and the He Goat

In the third year of Belshazzar, Daniel saw a vision at Shushan by the river Ulai (8:1-2). A ram with two horns, one higher than the other and the higher coming up last, pushed west, north and south, and no beast could stand before it (8:3-4). Then a he goat came from the west across the whole earth, so fast it "touched not the ground," with a notable horn between its eyes. It struck the ram, broke its two horns, and trampled it (8:5-7). But when the goat was strong, the great horn was broken, and four notable horns came up toward the four winds (8:8).

Out of one of them came a little horn that grew great toward the south, the east and "the pleasant land" (Israel). It magnified itself against "the prince of the host," took away the daily sacrifice and cast down the sanctuary (8:9-12). "How long shall be the vision...? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (8:13-14).

For the first time in Scripture, an angel is named: Gabriel came to explain (8:15-16; compare Luke 1:19, 26). "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king" (8:20-21). This was fulfilled precisely: Persia rose to dominance after Media; Alexander the Great swept east from Greece with astonishing speed (334-331 BC) and conquered the Persian Empire; at the height of his power he died suddenly (323 BC, aged 32); and his empire was divided among four generals (8:22). From one of these divisions, the Seleucid kingdom of Syria, came "a king of fierce countenance" (8:23), Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BC). He persecuted the Jews, stopped the temple sacrifices, and in 167 BC set up an altar to Zeus in the temple and offered swine on it. The Maccabees resisted, and the temple was cleansed and rededicated in December 164 BC, remembered in the Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah (John 10:22). Antiochus died of illness the same year, "broken without hand" (8:25). The 2,300 "evenings and mornings" are understood either as 2,300 days (about six years) or as 1,150 days of evening and morning sacrifices; both fit the period of his persecution.

Gabriel also said the vision concerned "the time of the end" (8:17, 19). Antiochus, who "shall stand up against the Prince of princes" (8:25), is widely seen as a foreshadowing of the final Antichrist. Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days" (8:27).

Chapter 9 — Daniel's Prayer and the Seventy Weeks

In the first year of Darius (539 BC), Daniel "understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem" (9:2; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10). Knowing the time was almost up, he did not sit back; he set his face to seek God "by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes" (9:3). His prayer (9:4-19) is a model of confession:

- **Adoration:** "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him" (9:4).
- **Confession, including himself:** "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled" (9:5). "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces" (9:7).
- **Acknowledging that judgment was just:** the curse written in the law of Moses had been poured out (9:11-14).
- **Appealing to God's mercy and glory alone:**

> *For we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*
>
> **Daniel 9:18-19**

While he was still praying, at the time of the evening sacrifice, Gabriel came: "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding... for thou art greatly beloved" (9:20-23). He then gave the prophecy of the seventy weeks:

> *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*
>
> **Daniel 9:24-27**

See Part Four for a full explanation. In brief: seventy "weeks" (sevens) of years, 490 years, are decreed for Israel and Jerusalem. From the command to rebuild Jerusalem to "Messiah the Prince" would be 69 weeks (483 years). Then Messiah would be "cut off, but not for himself," a prophecy of His atoning death, and afterward the city and sanctuary would be destroyed, as the Romans did in AD 70.

Chapter 10 — The Heavenly Messenger and Spiritual Warfare

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" (about 536 BC), after the first exiles had returned, Daniel mourned and fasted for three full weeks (10:1-3). By the river Hiddekel (Tigris) he saw "a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude" (10:5-6). This description closely matches John's vision of the glorified Christ (Revelation 1:13-15), and many believe it was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ; others think it was a mighty angel. Daniel's companions fled, and he fell into a deep sleep, face to the ground (10:7-9).

A hand touched him (10:10), and a messenger said, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved... from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words" (10:11-12). The delay had a reason:

> *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me*

> **Daniel 10:13**

This rare glimpse behind the scenes reveals spiritual warfare: evil spiritual powers associated with nations ("the prince of Persia," "the prince of Grecia," 10:20) oppose God's messengers, while Michael, the archangel who stands for Israel (10:21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7), fights on God's side. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers" (Ephesians 6:12). Prayer is heard at once, even when the answer seems delayed. The messenger strengthened Daniel: "O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong" (10:19), and prepared to show him "that which is noted in the scripture of truth" (10:21).

Chapter 11 — Kings of the North and South, and the Willful King

This chapter contains the most detailed prophecy in the Bible, covering about 375 years of history in advance.

- **Persia (11:2):** three more Persian kings, then a fourth "far richer than they all," who would stir up all against Greece: Xerxes (Ahasuerus of Esther), who invaded Greece in 480 BC.
- **Alexander (11:3-4):** "a mighty king" whose kingdom would be broken and divided toward the four winds, "and not to his posterity." After Alexander's death, his young son and half-brother were murdered, and his empire was divided among his generals.
- **The kings of the south and north (11:5-20):** the Ptolemies of Egypt (south) and the Seleucids of Syria (north), who fought over the land of Israel for generations. The details are precise: for example, the daughter of the king of the south would come to the king of the north to make an agreement but would not keep her power (11:6), fulfilled when the Egyptian princess Berenice married the Seleucid king Antiochus II around 250 BC and was later murdered.
- **"A vile person" (11:21-35):** Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who would obtain the kingdom by flatteries, invade Egypt, be turned back by "the ships of Chittim" (a Roman fleet, which forced him to withdraw from Egypt in 168 BC), then vent his rage on "the holy covenant," pollute the sanctuary, take away the daily sacrifice, and "place the abomination that maketh desolate" (11:30-31). "But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (11:32), fulfilled in the Maccabean resistance.
- **The willful king (11:36-45):** "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods... Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all" (11:36-37). The details of these verses do not fit Antiochus' life and death, and the passage is tied to "the time of the end" (11:40). Many Bible teachers see here a jump to the final Antichrist, whom Antiochus foreshadowed, the one Paul describes "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (11:45).

The detailed accuracy of 11:2-35 is so striking that critics argue it must have been written after the events. Those who believe in the God who "declares the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:10) see it as evidence of divine inspiration.

Chapter 12 — The Time of the End

> *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*
>
> **Daniel 12:1**

Jesus referred to this unparalleled tribulation (Matthew 24:21), also called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7). Then comes the clearest statement of bodily resurrection in the Old Testament:

> *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*
>
> **Daniel 12:2-3**

Jesus taught the same: "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43).

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (12:4). By contrast, John was told, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (Revelation 22:10). Two angels appeared by the river, and one asked the man clothed in linen, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" He lifted his hands to heaven and swore "by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half" (12:5-7; compare Revelation 10:5-7). Daniel did not understand and asked again; he was told, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly... but the wise shall understand" (12:8-10). From the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination would be 1,290 days, and "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (12:11-12), periods slightly longer than three and a half years (1,260 days; Revelation 11:3; 12:6), perhaps allowing for events following the tribulation. The book ends with a personal promise to the aged prophet:

> *But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.*
>
> **Daniel 12:13**

Daniel would die ("rest") and rise again to receive his inheritance at the end.

Part Three: Christ in Daniel

Prophecies and Pictures of Christ

Daniel	Prophecy or Picture	Fulfillment in Christ
2:34-35, 44-45	The stone cut out without hands that destroys the kingdoms and fills the earth	Christ and His everlasting kingdom (Matthew 21:42-44; Luke 20:17-18; Revelation 11:15)
3:25	The fourth man in the fire, "like the Son of God"	Christ present with His people in trial (Isaiah 43:2; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5)
7:13-14	One like the Son of man comes with the clouds and receives an everlasting kingdom	Jesus the Son of man (Matthew 24:30; 26:64; Mark 14:62; Revelation 1:7, 13; 14:14)
7:9-10	The Ancient of days on His throne; the books opened	God's final judgment, committed to the Son (John 5:22, 27; Revelation 20:11-12)
8:25	"The Prince of princes"	Christ, "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (Revelation 17:14; 19:16)
9:24	To make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness	Christ's atonement (Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21)
9:24	To anoint the most Holy	Christ, the Anointed (Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38)
9:25	Messiah the Prince comes at an appointed time	Jesus came "when the fulness of the time was come" (Galatians 4:4)
9:26	Messiah cut off, but not for Himself	The crucifixion for others' sins (Isaiah 53:8; John 11:50-52)
10:5-6	The man clothed in linen with eyes as fire and feet like brass	The glorified Christ (Revelation 1:13-15)
12:2	The resurrection to everlasting life or shame	Christ's voice raising the dead (John 5:28-29)

Daniel as a Picture of Christ

Daniel	Daniel	Christ	New Testament
Faultless; enemies could find no accusation	6:4-5	"Which of you convinceth me of sin?"; no fault found	John 8:46; Luke 23:4
Accused only over loyalty to his God	6:5	Condemned for claiming to be the Son of God	John 19:7
The ruler wanted to release him but was bound	6:14	Pilate sought to release Jesus	John 19:12
Condemned by an unchangeable decree	6:15	Delivered "by the determinate counsel... of God"	Acts 2:23
A stone sealed over the den	6:17	The tomb sealed with a stone	Matthew 27:66

Daniel	Daniel	Christ	New Testament
Brought out alive very early in the morning	6:19-23	Risen very early on the first day of the week	Mark 16:2
His enemies destroyed	6:24	Christ triumphs over His enemies	Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:25

Part Four: The Seventy Weeks Explained

The Basic Framework

Element	Daniel 9	Meaning
Seventy weeks	9:24	Seventy "sevens" of years: 490 years
"Upon thy people and upon thy holy city"	9:24	The prophecy concerns Israel and Jerusalem
Six purposes	9:24	Finish transgression, end sins, make reconciliation, bring everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, anoint the most Holy
The starting point	9:25	"The commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem"
Seven weeks	9:25	49 years: the rebuilding of the street and wall "in troublous times"
Sixty-two weeks	9:25-26	434 more years, a total of 69 weeks (483 years) to "Messiah the Prince"
Messiah cut off	9:26	After the 69 weeks: the crucifixion
The city and sanctuary destroyed	9:26	By "the people of the prince that shall come": the Romans, AD 70
The seventieth week	9:27	One final week of seven years

The Starting Point and the Arrival of Messiah

Two decrees are most often proposed:

- **Artaxerxes' decree to Ezra (457 BC; Ezra 7).** Counting 483 years brings the reckoning to about AD 27, the year many date Jesus' baptism and the beginning of His public ministry as the Messiah, the Anointed One.
- **Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah (444 BC; Nehemiah 2:1-8),** which specifically concerned rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. Using "prophetic years" of 360 days, the 483 years come to about AD 32-33, which Sir Robert Anderson and others connected with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as King, shortly before He was cut off.

Either way, Daniel's prophecy pointed to the very period when Jesus of Nazareth came, was presented as Messiah, and was crucified, before the temple was destroyed in AD 70. The Messiah had to come before the second temple was destroyed.

The Seventieth Week

Bible-believing Christians understand verse 27 in two main ways:

- **A future seven-year period (the view of most Baptist and dispensational interpreters).** There is a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks, the present church age. "He" in verse 27 refers to "the prince that shall come" (9:26), a future ruler from the revived Roman world, the Antichrist. He will make a seven-year covenant with Israel, break it in the middle by stopping the sacrifices, and set up "the abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4). The second half of the week,

three and a half years, is the great tribulation (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5), ending with Christ's return.

- **Fulfilled in Christ.** Others take "he" to be the Messiah, who confirmed the New Covenant with many and, by His death after about three and a half years of ministry, caused the sacrifices to cease in significance (Hebrews 10:8-18), with the destruction of Jerusalem following.

Jesus Himself pointed to Daniel's "abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" as a future sign (Matthew 24:15), which supports the view that at least part of the prophecy was still future in His day.

The Antichrist in Daniel

Daniel	Description	New Testament
7:8, 20-25	The little horn: a mouth speaking great things, war against the saints, changing times and laws, for time, times and half a time	The beast with a mouth speaking great things, warring with the saints for 42 months (Revelation 13:5-7)
8:23-25	A king of fierce countenance, destroying by peace, standing against the Prince of princes (fulfilled first in Antiochus IV)	The man of sin (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)
9:26-27	The prince that shall come; the covenant broken; the abomination	"The abomination of desolation... stand in the holy place" (Matthew 24:15)
11:36-45	The willful king, exalting himself above every god	"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

Part Five: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Daniel	Fulfillment
Babylon will be followed by an inferior kingdom	2:39	Medo-Persia, 539 BC
The kingdom given to the Medes and Persians	5:28	Babylon fell that night (5:30-31)
Nebuchadnezzar's madness and restoration	4:25-26	4:33-36
The ram's higher horn coming up last	8:3, 20	Persia overtook Media within the empire
The goat from the west, not touching the ground	8:5	Alexander's lightning conquests (334-331 BC)
The great horn broken at the height of power	8:8; 11:4	Alexander's death at 32 (323 BC)
Four kingdoms, not to his posterity	8:8, 22; 11:4	Divided among four generals; his heirs murdered
Wars between the kings of north and south	11:5-20	Seleucid and Ptolemaic wars
The marriage alliance that failed	11:6	Berenice and Antiochus II
The vile person stops the sacrifice and sets up the abomination	8:11; 11:31	Antiochus IV, 167 BC
Ships of Chittim turn him back	11:30	Rome halted Antiochus in Egypt, 168 BC
The sanctuary cleansed	8:14	Rededicated 164 BC (John 10:22)
A fourth, iron kingdom	2:40; 7:7	The Roman Empire
Messiah the Prince comes after 69 weeks	9:25	Jesus Christ
Messiah cut off, not for Himself	9:26	The crucifixion
The city and sanctuary destroyed	9:26	Jerusalem and the temple destroyed by Rome, AD 70
The return after seventy years	9:2	Ezra 1

Prophecies still awaiting complete fulfillment include the final form of the fourth kingdom, the reign of the little horn, the seventieth week (on the future view), the great tribulation, the resurrection, and the everlasting kingdom of the Son of man.

Part Six: Key Passages in Depth

Daniel 1:8 — Purpose in the Heart

Daniel decided in advance what he would and would not do. He was respectful, creative and courteous in his request, but firm in his conviction. God honoured that faithfulness with favour, wisdom and influence. Young believers in particular face the pressures of a culture that wants to rename and reshape them; the answer is a heart purposed toward God (2 Timothy 2:22).

Daniel 2:44 — The Kingdom That Shall Never Be Destroyed

Every human empire, however glorious, is temporary. Gold, silver, brass and iron all crumble at the touch of the stone. God's kingdom, brought by Christ, will outlast and replace them all (Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15). Believers' ultimate citizenship is in that kingdom (Philippians 3:20).

Daniel 3:16-18 — "But If Not"

True faith trusts God's power ("he is able"), expects His help ("he will deliver us"), and obeys regardless of the outcome ("But if not... we will not serve thy gods"). Faith is not a bargain with God but loyalty to Him. And God was with them in the fire.

Daniel 4:34-37 — The Most High Rules

The proud king learned that God's dominion is everlasting, that all earthly power is His to give and take, that no one can stop His hand, and that He is able to humble the proud. These are truths every ruler and every person must learn (Romans 13:1; James 4:6).

Daniel 5:27 — Weighed and Found Wanting

Belshazzar knew the lesson of Nebuchadnezzar but ignored it, defied God and mocked His holy things. God weighs every life. No one can balance the scales by his own merit; only those clothed in Christ's righteousness will stand (Romans 3:23-24; Philippians 3:9).

Daniel 6:10 — Faithful in Prayer

Daniel's prayer life was regular ("three times a day"), reverent ("kneeled"), directed by Scripture (toward Jerusalem), grateful ("gave thanks"), consistent ("as he did aforetime"), and courageous. When the crisis came, he did not need to start praying; he simply continued. "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Daniel 7:13-14 — The Son of Man

This vision reveals a divine Person, distinct from the Ancient of days, who receives the eternal kingdom and the worship of all nations. Jesus deliberately identified Himself with this figure, especially at His trial. The Son of man who came in humility will come again "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30).

Daniel 9:3-19 — A Prayer Shaped by Scripture

Daniel read God's promise in Jeremiah and responded with prayer, not passivity. Promises do not make prayer unnecessary; they make it confident. His prayer combined humility, confession, appeal to God's character, and concern for God's glory.

Daniel 12:2-3 — Resurrection and Reward

All the dead will rise, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame. The wise, especially those who turn many to righteousness, will shine like the stars for ever. This gives eternal significance to faithful witness (Proverbs 11:30; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

Part Seven: The Major Teachings of Daniel

1. God's Sovereignty over History and Nations

"The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (4:17, 25, 32). He sets up and removes kings (2:21) and has written history in advance (2; 7-12).

2. Faithfulness in a Hostile Culture

Daniel and his friends served a pagan government with excellence while refusing to compromise their worship of God (1; 3; 6).

3. God Protects and Vindicates His Faithful Servants

In the furnace and the lions' den, God delivered (3; 6), and He promises final vindication to all His people (7:22, 27; 12:1-3).

4. Pride Brings Judgment; Humility Brings Restoration

Nebuchadnezzar was humbled and restored; Belshazzar was weighed and destroyed (4-5).

5. The Power of Prayer

Prayer preceded revelation (2:17-19), sustained Daniel in danger (6:10), and was answered immediately even when the answer was delayed (9:20-23; 10:12).

6. God Reveals the Future

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets" (2:28). The accuracy of Daniel's prophecies demonstrates that God knows and controls the future.

7. The Messiah and His Timetable

Messiah the Prince would come at a set time and be cut off for others (9:24-27).

8. The Son of Man and the Everlasting Kingdom

The final kingdom belongs to the Son of man and His saints (2:44; 7:13-14, 27).

9. The Antichrist and the Great Tribulation

A final evil ruler will persecute God's people for a limited time before being destroyed (7:25-26; 9:27; 11:36-45; 12:1).

10. Angels and Spiritual Warfare

God's angels protect His people (3:28; 6:22), deliver messages (8:16; 9:21), and fight against evil spiritual powers behind nations (10:13, 20-21; 12:1).

11. Resurrection and Judgment

The dead will rise to everlasting life or everlasting contempt, and the books will be opened (7:10; 12:2).

Part Eight: Connections — How Daniel Links to the Rest of the Bible

Daniel in the New Testament

Daniel Passage	New Testament	Connection
1:1-2 (exile to Babylon)	Matthew 1:11-12	The carrying away to Babylon
2:21; 4:17 (God sets up kings)	Romans 13:1; John 19:11	No power but of God
2:34-35, 44-45 (the stone)	Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18	The stone that grinds to powder
2:44; 7:14, 27 (the everlasting kingdom)	Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15	Of His kingdom there shall be no end
3:17-18; 6:10 (obedience to God over the state)	Acts 4:19-20; 5:29	Obey God rather than men
3:25-27; 6:22 (fire and lions)	Hebrews 11:33-34; 2 Timothy 4:17	Stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the fire
4:37 (the proud abased)	James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5-6; Luke 1:51-52	God resists the proud
7:9-10 (the throne and the books)	Revelation 4:2-11; 5:11; 20:4, 11-12	The throne, myriads of angels, the books opened
7:13 (the Son of man with the clouds)	Matthew 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Revelation 1:7, 13; 14:14	The coming of the Son of man
7:7-8, 20-25 (the beast and little horn)	Revelation 13:1-8; 17:12	The beast with ten horns and a blasphemous mouth
7:25; 12:7 (time, times and half)	Revelation 12:14; 11:2-3; 13:5	Three and a half years, 1260 days, 42 months
8:16; 9:21 (Gabriel)	Luke 1:19, 26	Gabriel announces John and Jesus
9:26 (Messiah cut off; the city destroyed)	Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-24	Jerusalem's destruction foretold
9:27; 11:31; 12:11 (the abomination of desolation)	Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14	"Spoken of by Daniel the prophet"
10:5-6 (the man in linen)	Revelation 1:13-15	The glorified Christ
10:13, 21; 12:1 (Michael)	Jude 9; Revelation 12:7	Michael the archangel

Daniel Passage	New Testament	Connection
10:13, 20 (princes of Persia and Greece)	Ephesians 6:12	Principalities and powers
11:36-37 (the willful king)	2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; 1 John 2:18	The man of sin; antichrist
12:1 (unequalled tribulation)	Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14	The great tribulation
12:1 (written in the book)	Philippians 4:3; Revelation 20:15	The book of life
12:2 (resurrection)	John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15	Resurrection of the just and unjust
12:3 (shine as the stars)	Matthew 13:43; Philippians 2:15	The righteous shine
12:4, 9 (seal the book)	Revelation 10:4; 22:10	Sealed and unsealed prophecy
8:14; 11:31 (the sanctuary cleansed)	John 10:22	The Feast of Dedication

Daniel in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Shinar, the land of Babel (11:2; Daniel 1:2); Joseph, a Hebrew who interpreted a pagan king's dreams and rose to power (41)
Leviticus	The food laws (11; Daniel 1:8)
Deuteronomy	The curses of the law poured out (28; Daniel 9:11-13)
1 Kings	Praying toward Jerusalem in exile (8:46-50; Daniel 6:10)
2 Kings	Jehoiakim and the first deportation (24:1); Isaiah's prophecy of eunuchs in Babylon (20:17-18)
2 Chronicles	The temple vessels taken to Babylon (36:7, 10, 18; Daniel 1:2; 5:2)
Ezra	Cyrus' decree (1:1); the decree of Artaxerxes (7; Daniel 9:25)
Nehemiah	Rebuilding the wall in troublous times (2-6; Daniel 9:25); a prayer of confession (1; 9)
Esther	The Persian court at Shushan; laws that cannot be changed (1:19; 8:8; Daniel 6:8; 8:2)
Psalms	God's King and kingdom (2); praying three times a day (55:17); the lion trampled (91:13)
Isaiah	Eunuchs in Babylon's palace (39:7); Cyrus named (44:28-45:1); Babylon's fall (13; 21:9); walking through the fire (43:2); God declaring the end from the beginning (46:9-10)
Jeremiah	Seventy years (25:11-12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2); Babylon's sudden fall during drunken feasting (51:39, 57)
Ezekiel	Daniel named for righteousness and wisdom (14:14, 20; 28:3); the man clothed in linen (9:2)
Joel	A time of trouble like none before (2:2)
Zechariah	The nations and Jerusalem at the end; the LORD as King over all the earth (12-14)

Themes That Run from Daniel Through Scripture

Theme	In Daniel	Developed	Fulfilled
God's sovereignty over nations	2:21; 4:17, 34-35	Isaiah 40:15-23	Acts 17:26; Romans 13:1; Revelation 19:16
The everlasting kingdom	2:44; 7:14, 27	Psalm 145:13; Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15
The Son of man	7:13-14	Psalm 8:4; 80:17	The Gospels; Revelation 1:13
The Messiah's timing and death	9:24-27	Isaiah 53:8	Galatians 4:4; Mark 15
Faithfulness under persecution	3; 6	Esther 4:16	Acts 4-5; Hebrews 11:33-38; Revelation 2:10
The Antichrist	7:8; 8:23; 11:36	Zechariah 11:16-17	2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 13
The great tribulation	12:1	Jeremiah 30:7	Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14
Resurrection	12:2	Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:19	John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15
Angels and spiritual warfare	10:13, 20-21	2 Kings 6:17	Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 12:7-9

Part Nine: Practical Lessons

- **Purpose in your heart to obey God before the test comes** (1:8).
- **Be respectful and wise in standing for your convictions** (1:8-14).
- **Excel in your work as a testimony** (1:20; 6:3).
- **Pray with others in a crisis** (2:17-18).
- **Give God the glory for every gift** (2:20-23, 28).
- **Trust God's power, but obey Him whether or not He rescues you** (3:17-18).
- **God is with you in the fire** (3:25).
- **Beware of pride in your achievements** (4:30).
- **Learn from others' mistakes; don't ignore what you know** (5:22).
- **Live so that enemies can find no fault except your faith** (6:4-5).
- **Keep a steady habit of prayer and thanksgiving** (6:10).
- **Serve God continually** (6:16, 20).
- **Remember that earthly kingdoms pass, but Christ's kingdom stands** (2:44; 7:14).
- **Let God's promises drive you to prayer** (9:2-3).
- **Confess sin honestly, pleading God's mercy, not your merit** (9:18).
- **Your prayers are heard from the first day** (10:12).
- **Know your God, and be strong** (11:32).
- **Turn many to righteousness** (12:3).
- **Go your way and rest; God will raise you up** (12:13).

Part Ten: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:8	But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself
2:20-21	Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings
2:44	The God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed
3:17-18	Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us... But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods
4:17	The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will
4:35	He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand
5:27	Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.
6:10	He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.
7:13-14	One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven... his dominion is an everlasting dominion
9:19	O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God
11:32	The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.
12:2	Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
12:3	They that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Conclusion

Daniel is the book of God's sovereignty over the kingdoms of the world. Its first half shows a young exile and his friends living faithfully in Babylon: refusing the king's food, praying for a revelation, walking in the furnace with a fourth Man, watching the proudest king on earth eat grass until he confessed that the Most High rules, reading the writing on the wall the night Babylon fell, and being delivered from the lions because he would not stop praying. Its second half lifts the curtain on history: four great empires rise and fall, a little horn makes war on the saints, the angels fight unseen battles, and Messiah the Prince comes at God's appointed time to be cut off for others. At the end stands the stone that fills the earth and the Son of man who receives an everlasting kingdom, Jesus Christ, before whom every earthly throne will fall. The book closes with the promise of resurrection: the wise will shine like the stars, and Daniel himself will rise to stand in his lot at the end of the days.

> *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... and it shall stand for ever.*
>
> **Daniel 2:44**

Hosea

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Hosea • Date: c. 755-715 BC • Chapters: 14

> *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*
>
> **Hosea 11:1**

Part One: Introduction to Hosea

The Minor Prophets

Hosea is the first of the twelve "Minor Prophets." They are called "minor" not because they are less important, but because their books are shorter than those of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In the Hebrew Bible they were written on a single scroll called "The Twelve." They span about three centuries, from the eighth century BC to the return from exile.

The Prophet

Hosea, "the son of Beeri" (1:1), was a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, which he often calls "Ephraim" after its largest tribe, or "Samaria" after its capital. His name means "salvation," from the same Hebrew root as Joshua and Jesus. He was one of the few writing prophets who came from and spoke to the northern kingdom itself. He prophesied "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel" (1:1), roughly 755-715 BC, through Israel's last decades and into the time of its fall to Assyria in 722 BC. His contemporaries were Amos (also in Israel), and Isaiah and Micah (in Judah).

Historical Setting

Hosea began his ministry in a time of prosperity under Jeroboam II (793-753 BC), when Israel was wealthy, outwardly religious and morally corrupt. After Jeroboam's death, the kingdom collapsed into chaos: six kings reigned in about thirty years, and four of them were assassinated (2 Kings 15). "They have set up kings, but not by me" (8:4); "all their kings are fallen" (7:7). Israel swung between Egypt and Assyria for help: "they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria" (7:11). The people worshipped the golden calves at Bethel and Dan set up by Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12:28-33), and mixed the worship of the LORD with Baal, the Canaanite fertility god, believing Baal gave them rain and crops. In 722 BC Samaria fell, and the northern kingdom was carried into exile (2 Kings 17).

King of Israel	Years	How His Reign Ended
Jeroboam II	793-753 BC	Died; prosperity at its height
Zechariah	753 BC (6 months)	Assassinated by Shallum; end of Jehu's dynasty (Hosea 1:4)
Shallum	752 BC (1 month)	Assassinated by Menahem
Menahem	752-742 BC	Paid tribute to Assyria
Pekahiah	742-740 BC	Assassinated by Pekah
Pekah	752-732 BC	Assassinated by Hoshea
Hoshea	732-722 BC	Imprisoned by Assyria; Samaria fell

Hosea's Marriage

God told Hosea to marry "a wife of whoredoms" (1:2). He married Gomer, who bore three children with prophetic names, and later was unfaithful and left him. God then told him to love her again and buy her back (3:1-3). Most interpreters take this as a real marriage and real events, which made Hosea's own life a living picture of God's love for unfaithful Israel. Some suggest Gomer became unfaithful only after the marriage, and that "wife of whoredoms" describes what she would become. Either way, Hosea felt in his own heart something of the pain of God's love betrayed, and something of the cost of His redeeming grace.

Child	Name Means	Message	Reversed
Jezreel (1:4)	"God sows" or "God scatters"	Judgment on Jehu's dynasty for the bloodshed at Jezreel; Israel scattered	"Great shall be the day of Jezreel" (1:11); God will sow her in the land (2:22-23)
Lo-ruhamah (1:6)	"Not pitied" or "No mercy"	God would no longer have mercy on Israel	"I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy" (2:23)
Lo-ammi (1:9)	"Not my people"	"Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God"	"Ye are the sons of the living God" (1:10); "Thou art my people" (2:23)

Purpose and Theme

Hosea reveals the heart of God: a love that is wounded by unfaithfulness, that must judge sin, and yet will not let go. Israel had committed spiritual adultery by worshipping idols and trusting foreign powers. They lacked "the knowledge of God" (4:1, 6). God would discipline them, but in the end He would heal them, love them freely, and betroth them to Himself for ever. Key words include "whoredom" (spiritual unfaithfulness), "return" (repentance), "know/knowledge" (of God), and "mercy" or "lovingkindness" (Hebrew hesed, God's covenant love).

> *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?... mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*
>
> **Hosea 11:8**

> *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.*
>
> **Hosea 14:4**

Outline of Hosea

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Hosea's Marriage: A Living Parable	1-3	The unfaithful wife and the faithful husband
The marriage and the children	1	Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, Lo-ammi
The unfaithful wife judged and restored	2	"I will betroth thee unto me for ever"
The wife bought back	3	"Love a woman... according to the love of the LORD"

Section	Chapters	Theme
II. God's Case Against Israel	4-13	Sin, judgment and wounded love
No knowledge of God	4-5	"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"
Shallow repentance	6-7	"I desired mercy, and not sacrifice"
Sowing the wind	8-10	Idols, kings and alliances
God's love and Israel's ingratitude	11-13	"How shall I give thee up?"
III. The Call to Return and the Promise of Healing	14	"I will love them freely"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Hosea's Marriage (Chapters 1-3)

Chapter 1 — The Marriage and the Children

"The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD" (1:2). Hosea married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim (1:3). Their three children became walking sermons:

- **Jezreel:** "for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (1:4). Jehu had been commanded to destroy Ahab's house, but he did so with excessive bloodshed and for his own power, and he kept the golden calves (2 Kings 10). His dynasty ended when his great-great-grandson Zechariah was assassinated (2 Kings 15:10-12), and the kingdom of Israel itself ended in 722 BC.
- **Lo-ruhamah, "not pitied":** "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel" (1:6). "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword" (1:7), fulfilled when God destroyed Sennacherib's army without a battle (2 Kings 19:35).
- **Lo-ammi, "not my people":** "for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" (1:9), a reversal of the covenant promise (Exodus 6:7).

Yet the chapter ends with hope:

> *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea... and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head*
>
> **Hosea 1:10-11**

Paul and Peter apply these words to God's calling of the Gentiles, who were "not my people," to become His people through Christ (Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:10). Israel and Judah will be reunited under "one head," the Messiah.

Chapter 2 — The Unfaithful Wife Judged and Restored

God speaks as the wronged Husband: "Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband" (2:2). Israel had said, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink" (2:5), crediting Baal with the blessings of harvest.

> *For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.*
>
> **Hosea 2:8**

God would block her path with thorns so she could not find her lovers, until she said, "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now" (2:6-7; compare the prodigal son, Luke 15:17-18). He would take back the grain, wine and wool, expose her shame, and end her feasts (2:9-13).

Then, unexpectedly, the tone turns to tenderness:

> *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope*
>
> **Hosea 2:14-15**

The wilderness, the place of Israel's first love after the Exodus (Jeremiah 2:2), would become the place of a new beginning. The valley of Achor ("trouble"), where Achan was judged (Joshua 7:24-26), would become "a door of hope." God would remove the names of the Baals from her mouth: "thou shalt call me Ishi [my husband]; and shalt call me no more Baali [my master]" (2:16-17). He would make a covenant of peace with creation (2:18), and then:

> *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.*
>
> **Hosea 2:19-20**

God Himself provides everything the marriage requires: righteousness, justice, love, mercy and faithfulness. The heavens, earth, grain and wine would respond in blessing (2:21-22). And the children's names would be reversed: "I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God" (2:23).

Chapter 3 — The Wife Bought Back

> *Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.*
>
> **Hosea 3:1**

Gomer had left Hosea and fallen into slavery or the possession of another man. God told Hosea to love her again. "So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley" (3:2), about the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32). He paid to redeem his own wife. He told her, "Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot... so will I also be for thee" (3:3): a period of waiting and restoration. This pictures Israel's future:

> *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.*
>
> **Hosea 3:4-5**

For many centuries Israel has been without a king, without a temple and sacrifice, and yet also without idols. In the last days they will return to the LORD and to "David their king," the Messiah, the Son of David (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 37:24; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 11:26). Hosea's purchase of Gomer is one of the clearest pictures in the Old Testament of redemption: God buying back sinners who have sold themselves into bondage, at great cost to Himself (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Section II: God's Case Against Israel (Chapters 4-13)

Chapter 4 — No Knowledge of God

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land" (4:1). Instead there was swearing, lying, killing, stealing and adultery, breaking the Ten Commandments (4:2). The land itself mourned (4:3). The priests were especially guilty:

> *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*
>
> **Hosea 4:6**

The problem was not ignorance by accident but rejection of God's Word. "And there shall be, like people, like priest" (4:9). "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart" (4:11). The people consulted wooden idols (4:12) and practised ritual prostitution at the high places (4:13-14). Judah was warned not to follow, nor go to Beth-aven, "house of wickedness," Hosea's mocking name for Bethel, "house of God" (4:15). "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (4:17): sometimes God gives people over to their chosen sins (Romans 1:24).

Chapter 5 — When God Withdraws

Priests, people and king alike were snares (5:1). "They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD" (5:4). Even when they sought God with their flocks and herds, "they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them" (5:6). God would be "as a moth" to Ephraim and "as rottenness" to Judah (5:12), slowly destroying them. When they saw their sickness, they went to Assyria for help, but the Assyrian king "could not heal you" (5:13). God would be like a lion tearing its prey (5:14). Then:

> *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.*
>
> **Hosea 5:15**

Chapter 6 — Shallow Repentance

The people respond, apparently with repentance:

> *Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning*
>
> **Hosea 6:1-3**

The words are beautiful, and many Christians see in "the third day he will raise us up" a foreshadowing of Christ's resurrection, which Paul says happened "according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4; Luke 24:46). But in Hosea's day the people's repentance was shallow. God answered with grief:

> *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*
>
> **Hosea 6:4**

Their devotion evaporated like morning mist. Then one of the key verses of the Old Testament:

> *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*
>
> **Hosea 6:6**

Jesus quoted this twice to the Pharisees: "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13; 12:7). God wants steadfast love and a real relationship, not mere ritual (1 Samuel 15:22; Micah 6:6-8). "But they like men [or, like Adam] have transgressed the covenant" (6:7).

Chapter 7 — A Cake Not Turned

Israel's sins were everywhere: lying, theft, robbery (7:1). God remembered all their wickedness, though they did not consider it (7:2). Their leaders were "all adulterers, as an oven heated by the baker" (7:4), burning with passion and intrigue; "all their kings are fallen: there is none among them that calleth unto me" (7:7). "Ephraim is a cake not turned" (7:8): burnt on one side and raw on the other, half-baked and useless.

> *Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.*
>
> **Hosea 7:9**

Israel was declining without realising it, like a man aging without noticing. "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria" (7:11). "They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds" (7:14). "They return, but not to the most High: they are like a deceitful bow" (7:16), a bow that misses its target.

Chapter 8 — Sowing the Wind

"Set the trumpet to thy mouth" (8:1): an enemy swooped like an eagle because Israel had broken God's covenant. "Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good" (8:2-3). "They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not" (8:4). Their golden calf of Samaria was made by a workman, "therefore it is not God: but the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces" (8:5-6).

> *For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind*
>
> **Hosea 8:7**

Empty, worthless choices would bring overwhelming destruction (Galatians 6:7-8). Israel had hired lovers among the nations (8:9-10). God had written His law for them, "but they were counted as a strange thing" (8:12). "For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples" (8:14).

Chapter 9 — The Days of Visitation

Israel would not stay in the LORD's land; they would return to "Egypt" (bondage) and eat unclean food in Assyria (9:3). "The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come" (9:7). The people mocked God's messengers: "the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad" (9:7). They had corrupted themselves "as in the days of Gibeah" (9:9; Judges 19-21). God remembered His first delight in them: "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness... but they went to Baal-peor" (9:10; Numbers 25). Their glory would fly away like a bird (9:11). "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (9:17).

Chapter 10 — Break Up Your Fallow Ground

"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself" (10:1). As they prospered, they built more altars and images. "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty" (10:2). The calf of Beth-aven would be carried to Assyria as a present to the king (10:5-6). Samaria's king would be cut off "as the foam upon the water" (10:7). In terror, "they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us" (10:8), words Jesus used on the way to the cross (Luke 23:30) and which appear in Revelation (6:16). Yet God still called:

> *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way*
>
> **Hosea 10:12-13**

Hardened hearts, like unploughed fields, must be broken up to receive God's Word (Jeremiah 4:3; Matthew 13:4-8).

Chapter 11 — How Shall I Give Thee Up?

This chapter is one of the most tender revelations of God's heart in Scripture. God speaks as a loving Father:

> *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim*
>
> **Hosea 11:1-2**

Matthew applies 11:1 to Jesus, who as a child was taken to Egypt and called back (Matthew 2:15). Christ is the true Son and true Israel, who succeeded where the nation failed. "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (11:3-4). Like a father teaching his toddler to walk, God had cared for Israel. But they would not return, so Assyria would rule them (11:5-7). Then God's heart breaks:

> *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee*
>
> **Hosea 11:8-9**

Admah and Zeboim were cities destroyed with Sodom (Deuteronomy 29:23). God's justice demanded such judgment, but His love would not allow Israel's final destruction. Because He is God and not man, His mercy is not limited like human forgiveness. One day He will roar like a lion, and His children will come trembling from the west, from Egypt and Assyria, and He will bring them home (11:10-11).

Chapter 12 — Learn from Jacob

"Ephraim feedeth on wind" (12:1), making treaties with Assyria and Egypt. God reminded them of their ancestor Jacob: "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel" (12:3-4; Genesis 25:26; 28; 32:24-30). Jacob the schemer was transformed when he wrestled with God and pleaded for His blessing. Israel must do the same:

> *Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.*
>
> **Hosea 12:6**

Instead, Israel was like a merchant with "the balances of deceit" (12:7), boasting of riches (12:8). God had spoken "by the prophets... and used similitudes" (12:10), and "by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt" (12:13).

Chapter 13 — No Saviour Beside Me

When Ephraim spoke humbly, he was exalted; "but when he offended in Baal, he died" (13:1). They made idols and said, "Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves" (13:2). They would vanish like morning cloud, dew, chaff and smoke (13:3).

> *Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me.*
>
> **Hosea 13:4**

"I did know thee in the wilderness... According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me" (13:5-6; Deuteronomy 8:11-14). Prosperity led to pride and forgetfulness. God would meet them like a lion, a leopard and a bear robbed of her cubs (13:7-8). "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help" (13:9). They had demanded a king (1 Samuel 8), "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath" (13:10-11). Then, in the midst of judgment, a promise of triumph over death:

> *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction*
>
> **Hosea 13:14**

Paul quotes this in his great chapter on resurrection: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?... thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:55-57). The chapter ends with the terrible fall of Samaria (13:16), fulfilled in 722 BC.

Section III: The Call to Return (Chapter 14)

Chapter 14 — "I Will Love Them Freely"

The book ends with God's invitation and promise:

> *O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.*
>
> **Hosea 14:1-2**

God even gives them the words of repentance to pray. Instead of sacrificing calves, they would offer "the calves of our lips," praise and confession (Hebrews 13:15: "the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"). They would renounce false trust: "Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (14:3). God answers:

> *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.*
>
> **Hosea 14:4-5**

"Freely" means without cause in them, by grace alone (Romans 3:24). Israel would become beautiful as the olive tree, fragrant as Lebanon, fruitful as the vine (14:6-7). "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found" (14:8). All true fruitfulness comes from God (John 15:4-5). The book closes with wisdom:

> *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.*
>
> **Hosea 14:9**

Part Three: Christ in Hosea

The Faithful Husband Who Redeems

Hosea's purchase of his unfaithful wife (3:1-3) is one of the clearest Old Testament pictures of what Christ did for sinners. We, like Gomer, were unfaithful and in bondage to sin. Christ loved us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8) and bought us back, not with silver and barley but "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 Corinthians 6:20). He is the Bridegroom who "loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Ephesians 5:25-27), to present it to Himself as "a chaste virgin" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

Hosea	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
Hosea's name ("salvation")	The prophet's very name	Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21)
1:10; 2:23	"Not my people" become "sons of the living God"	Gentiles and Jews made God's people in Christ (Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:10)
1:11	Israel and Judah under "one head"	Christ, head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22)
2:14-15	The valley of trouble made a door of hope	Christ the door (John 10:9); hope through suffering (Romans 5:3-5)
2:19-20	Betrothed for ever in righteousness, love and faithfulness	The church betrothed to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7-9)
3:1-3	The unfaithful wife bought back	Redeemed by Christ's blood (1 Peter 1:18-19; Galatians 3:13)
3:5	Israel will seek "David their king" in the latter days	Christ the Son of David (Luke 1:32-33; Romans 11:26)
6:2	"In the third day he will raise us up"	Christ raised the third day "according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4)
6:6	"I desired mercy, and not sacrifice"	Quoted by Jesus (Matthew 9:13; 12:7)
10:8	"Say to the mountains, Cover us"	Quoted by Jesus on the way to the cross (Luke 23:30)
11:1	"I called my son out of Egypt"	Jesus called out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15)
11:4	"Cords of a man... bands of love"	"I, if I be lifted up... will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32)
13:4	"There is no saviour beside me"	"Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12)
13:14	Ransom from the grave; death's destruction	Christ's victory over death (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Hebrews 2:14)
14:4	"I will love them freely"	"Justified freely by his grace" (Romans 3:24)
14:8	"From me is thy fruit found"	"Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5)

Christ, the True Son Called out of Egypt

Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 is not a misunderstanding of the verse, which plainly speaks of Israel. Rather, Matthew sees Jesus as the true Israel, God's perfect Son. Israel was called out of Egypt and failed; Jesus was called out of Egypt and fulfilled all that Israel was meant to be, perfectly obeying the Father where the nation disobeyed (compare Matthew 4:1-11 with Israel's wilderness testing).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Hosea	Fulfillment
The end of Jehu's dynasty	1:4	Zechariah, Jehu's great-great-grandson, assassinated (2 Kings 15:10-12)
The end of the kingdom of Israel	1:4; 10:7; 13:16	Samaria fell to Assyria, 722 BC (2 Kings 17:5-6)
Israel carried to Assyria	9:3; 10:6; 11:5	The exile of the northern tribes (2 Kings 17:6, 23)
The golden calf carried to Assyria	10:5-6	The calf-shrine at Bethel was plundered and Israel's idols taken in the Assyrian conquest
Judah saved without bow or sword	1:7	185,000 Assyrians slain in one night (2 Kings 19:35)
Israel to wander among the nations	9:17	The scattering of Israel
Many days without king, sacrifice or idol	3:4	Israel without king or temple for many centuries, yet not returning to idol worship
"Not my people" become "sons of the living God"	1:10; 2:23	The calling of the Gentiles and Jews into the church (Romans 9:24-26)
"Out of Egypt have I called my son"	11:1	Jesus returns from Egypt (Matthew 2:15)
Raised up the third day	6:2	Christ's resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:4)
Death's destruction	13:14	Christ's victory (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)
Israel will return to the LORD and David their king	3:5; 14	Still future (Romans 11:25-27)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Hosea 2:14-20 — The Wilderness and the Door of Hope

God's discipline is not the end of the story. He leads His people into the wilderness to strip away false loves and speak tenderly to them. Even the valley of trouble becomes a door of hope. God's goal is not punishment but a restored relationship: "thou shalt know the LORD."

Hosea 3:1-3 — Redeeming Love

God told Hosea to love an unfaithful wife and buy her back, "according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel." This is grace: love that pursues the unworthy, pays the price, and restores the relationship. It is the gospel in miniature (Romans 5:8).

Hosea 4:6 — Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge

Israel's ruin came from rejecting God's Word. Knowing about God is not enough; Hosea speaks of knowing God personally, in covenant love and obedience. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Leaders who neglect God's Word bring destruction on those they lead.

Hosea 6:4-6 — Morning-Cloud Religion

Israel's repentance was emotional but shallow, vanishing like dew. God desires steady love and real knowledge of Him, not religious performance. Jesus used this verse to rebuke those who valued ritual above mercy (Matthew 9:13; 12:7).

Hosea 11:1-9 — The Father's Heart

No passage reveals more clearly the emotional depth of God's love. He loved Israel as a child, taught them to walk, healed them, and drew them with bands of love. When justice demanded their destruction, His heart recoiled: "How shall I give thee up?" This is the love that sent Christ to the cross, where justice and mercy met (Romans 3:26).

Hosea 14 — The Way Back

God provides the words for repentance (14:2), the promise of healing (14:4), the freeness of His love (14:4), the beauty and fruitfulness of restored life (14:5-8), and the call to wisdom (14:9). No one is too far gone to return.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Hosea

1. God's Covenant Love (Hesed)

God's love is loyal, persistent and undeserved. He loves His people even when they betray Him (3:1; 11:1-9; 14:4).

2. Spiritual Adultery

Idolatry and trusting in anything other than God are unfaithfulness to Him, like adultery against a husband (1:2; 2:2-13; 4:12; James 4:4).

3. The Knowledge of God

True religion is knowing God personally and obeying Him (2:20; 4:1, 6; 6:3, 6).

4. Sin Brings Its Own Harvest

"They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (8:7; 10:13).

5. The Danger of Prosperity

When Israel was full, its heart became proud and forgot God (13:6; 10:1; Deuteronomy 8:10-14).

6. False Repentance and True Repentance

Shallow sorrow fades like dew (6:4); true repentance involves returning to God with words of confession and turning from idols (14:1-3).

7. Mercy Over Ritual

God values steadfast love and knowledge of Him above sacrifices (6:6).

8. Judgment and Restoration

God disciplines His people severely, but His final word is healing and restoration (2:14-23; 11:8-11; 14:4-8).

9. Grace to the Undeserving

"I will love them freely" (14:4): salvation is entirely by grace.

10. Victory Over Death

God will ransom His people from the grave and destroy death (13:14).

Part Seven: Connections — How Hosea Links to the Rest of the Bible

Hosea in the New Testament

Hosea	New Testament	Connection
1:9-10; 2:23	Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:10	"Not my people" made God's people
2:7, 14; 14:1	Luke 15:17-20	The return of the prodigal
2:19-20; 3:1-3	Ephesians 5:25-32; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7	Christ the faithful Bridegroom who redeems His bride
2:2-13 (spiritual adultery)	James 4:4	"Ye adulterers... friendship of the world is enmity with God"
2:7 (returning to the first husband)	Revelation 2:4-5	Returning to first love
3:5 (David their king)	Luke 1:32-33; Acts 15:16; Romans 11:26	Christ, the Son of David; Israel's future salvation
4:6 (lack of knowledge)	John 17:3; 2 Peter 3:18	Knowing God
6:2 (the third day)	Luke 24:46; 1 Corinthians 15:4	Raised the third day
6:6 (mercy, not sacrifice)	Matthew 9:13; 12:7	Quoted by Jesus
8:7; 10:12-13 (sowing and reaping)	Galatians 6:7-8	Whatsoever a man soweth
10:8 (cover us)	Luke 23:30; Revelation 6:16	Calling on mountains to fall
11:1 (out of Egypt)	Matthew 2:15	Jesus called out of Egypt
11:1-4 (God's prior love)	1 John 4:10, 19; Romans 5:8	We love Him because He first loved us
13:4 (no other saviour)	Acts 4:12	Salvation in no other
13:14 (death destroyed)	1 Corinthians 15:54-57	"O death, where is thy sting?"
14:2 (the calves of our lips)	Hebrews 13:15	The fruit of our lips
14:4 (love freely)	Romans 3:24	Justified freely by grace
14:8 (fruit from God)	John 15:4-5	Abide in the vine

Hosea in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Jacob's birth, Bethel and wrestling with the angel (25:26; 28:10-22; 32:24-30; Hosea 12:3-4); Admah and Zeboim (14:8; 19)
Exodus	Israel God's firstborn son (4:22; Hosea 11:1); "I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt... Thou shalt have no other gods" (20:2-3; Hosea 13:4); the golden calf (32); the price of a slave (21:32)
Numbers	Baal-peor (25; Hosea 9:10)
Deuteronomy	Prosperity leading to forgetting God (8:10-14; Hosea 13:6); Admah and Zeboim destroyed (29:23; Hosea 11:8)
Joshua	The valley of Achor (7:24-26; Hosea 2:15)
Judges	The sin at Gibeah (19-21; Hosea 9:9; 10:9)
1 Samuel	Israel's demand for a king (8; Hosea 13:10-11); obedience better than sacrifice (15:22; Hosea 6:6)
1 Kings	Jeroboam's golden calves at Bethel and Dan (12:28-33)
2 Kings	Jehu's bloodshed at Jezreel (10); the last kings of Israel (15); the fall of Samaria (17)
Psalms	"Thou desirest not sacrifice... The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (51:16-17)
Isaiah	God as Israel's husband (54:5-8; 62:4-5); Ephraim's pride (28:1-4)
Jeremiah	Israel's first love in the wilderness (2:2); spiritual adultery (3); "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (31:3); break up your fallow ground (4:3)
Ezekiel	The unfaithful bride (16; 23); David their king (34:23-24; 37:24)
Joel	"Turn ye even to me with all your heart" (2:12-13)
Amos	The contemporary prophet to Israel; judgment on Bethel (3:14; 7:10-13)
Micah	"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good" (6:6-8; Hosea 6:6)
Malachi	"I have loved you, saith the LORD" (1:2)

Themes That Run from Hosea Through Scripture

Theme	In Hosea	Developed	Fulfilled
God as Husband of His people	2:16, 19-20	Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:14; Ezekiel 16	Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7; 21:2
Redemption by a price	3:2	Ruth 4; Isaiah 52:3	1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 Corinthians 6:20
"Not my people" made God's people	1:10; 2:23	Isaiah 65:1	Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:10
Mercy over ritual	6:6	1 Samuel 15:22; Micah 6:8	Matthew 9:13; 12:7

Theme	In Hosea	Developed	Fulfilled
The Son out of Egypt	11:1	Exodus 4:22	Matthew 2:15
Resurrection and victory over death	6:2; 13:14	Isaiah 25:8; Daniel 12:2	1 Corinthians 15
Return and restoration of Israel	3:5; 14	Jeremiah 31; Ezekiel 37	Romans 11:25-27
Grace freely given	14:4	Isaiah 55:1	Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8-9

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Recognise that every blessing comes from God, not from idols** (2:8).
- **Remember your first love** (2:7, 15).
- **Let God speak tenderly to you in the wilderness** (2:14).
- **Your valley of trouble can become a door of hope** (2:15).
- **Love the unlovely, as God loves you** (3:1).
- **Value the knowledge of God and His Word** (4:6).
- **Don't let pleasures take away your heart** (4:11).
- **Seek God in your affliction** (5:15).
- **Press on to know the LORD** (6:3).
- **Don't let your devotion evaporate like morning dew** (6:4).
- **Show mercy; don't just perform religion** (6:6).
- **Watch for the "gray hairs" of spiritual decline** (7:9).
- **Don't be a half-baked cake** (7:8).
- **Remember that what you sow, you reap** (8:7; 10:12-13).
- **Don't let prosperity make you forget God** (13:6).
- **Break up the fallow ground of your heart** (10:12).
- **Rest in God's fatherly love** (11:1-4).
- **Wait on God continually** (12:6).
- **Return to the LORD with words of confession** (14:1-2).
- **Receive His free love and healing** (14:4).
- **Draw your fruitfulness from Him** (14:8).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:10	In the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.
2:19	And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.
3:1	Love a woman... according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel
4:6	My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge
6:1	Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us
6:3	Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD
6:6	For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
8:7	For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind
10:12	Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD
11:1	When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.
11:8	How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?
13:14	O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction
14:1	O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.
14:4	I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely

Conclusion

Hosea is the love story of the Bible's prophets. God told His prophet to marry a woman who would betray him, to name his children "Not pitied" and "Not my people," and then to go and buy back his unfaithful wife at the price of a slave. Through Hosea's broken heart, Israel was shown the broken heart of God. The nation had forgotten its Maker, chased Baal for its grain and wine, trusted Egypt and Assyria, offered shallow repentance that vanished like morning dew, and lacked the knowledge of God. Judgment came, and Samaria fell. Yet God cried, "How shall I give thee up?" and promised to betroth His people to Himself for ever, to call "Not my people" His people, to ransom them from the grave, and to love them freely. That love was fully revealed in Jesus Christ, whose name means "salvation" like Hosea's, the Son called out of Egypt, raised the third day, who paid the price to redeem His unfaithful bride with His own blood.

> *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.*
>
> **Hosea 14:4**

Joel

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Joel • Date: Uncertain (c. 835 or c. 500 BC) • Chapters: 3

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*
>
> **Joel 2:28**

Part One: Introduction to Joel

The Prophet

Joel, "the son of Pethuel" (1:1), prophesied to Judah and Jerusalem. His name means "the LORD is God." Nothing else is known about his life, but his message shows a close concern for the temple, the priests and the offerings (1:9, 13-14; 2:17), and great familiarity with the land and its harvests.

Date

The book gives no date, and scholars hold two main views:

- **An early date (around 835-800 BC),** during the boyhood of King Joash, when the priest Jehoiada effectively governed (2 Kings 11-12). This would explain why no king is mentioned and the elders and priests lead the people. The enemies named are Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, Egypt and Edom (3:4, 19), not Assyria or Babylon, which fits the ninth century. Joel's place between Hosea and Amos in the Hebrew order may also suggest an early date. Many conservative scholars hold this view.
- **A late date (after the exile, around 500-400 BC),** because there is no king, the temple is functioning, and the Greeks are mentioned (3:6).

Whatever the date, the message is timeless.

The Occasion

Joel's prophecy was prompted by a devastating plague of locusts, worse than anything in living memory (1:2-4), followed by severe drought (1:17-20). The crops, vines and fig trees were destroyed, the grain offerings and drink offerings for the temple were cut off, and even the animals groaned. Joel saw in this disaster a warning of a far greater judgment to come: "the day of the LORD."

Theme: The Day of the LORD

"The day of the LORD" appears five times in Joel (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14), more often in proportion to its length than any other book. In Scripture this phrase describes any time when God intervenes directly in history to judge sin and vindicate His people, and supremely the final day when He will judge the world and establish His kingdom.

Day of the LORD	Joel	Meaning
The locust plague	1:15	A present judgment, a foretaste of the greater day
The invading army	2:1-11	An imminent judgment on Judah, by locusts or by a human army they foreshadow
The cosmic signs	2:30-31	Wonders in heaven before "the great and the terrible day of the LORD"
The valley of decision	3:14	The final judgment of the nations and the deliverance of God's people

The book moves from judgment to repentance to restoration, and from a local disaster to the end of history:

> *Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart... And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness*
>
> **Joel 2:12-13**

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*
>
> **Joel 2:28**

The Locusts

"That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpiller eaten" (1:4). These four names may describe different kinds of locusts, or the successive stages of the locust's life cycle, or successive waves of a swarm. Together they picture total destruction. A locust swarm can contain billions of insects, darken the sky, and strip every green thing over vast areas.

Note on Chapter Numbering

In the Hebrew Bible, Joel 2:28-32 is chapter 3, and the English chapter 3 is chapter 4. This study follows the King James Version's numbering.

Outline of Joel

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Day of the Locust	1	Present judgment and a call to lament
The unprecedented plague	1:1-12	Everything destroyed
The call to fast and cry out	1:13-20	"The day of the LORD is at hand"
II. The Day of the LORD Approaching	2:1-17	Coming judgment and the call to repent
The great army	2:1-11	"Who can abide it?"
Rend your heart	2:12-17	"Spare thy people, O LORD"
III. The LORD's Answer	2:18-32	Restoration and the Spirit
Material restoration	2:18-27	"I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten"
Spiritual outpouring	2:28-32	"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh"
IV. The Day of the LORD: Judgment and Blessing	3	The nations judged; Zion blessed
The nations gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat	3:1-16	"Multitudes in the valley of decision"
Blessing for God's people	3:17-21	"The LORD dwelleth in Zion"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — The Day of the Locust

The Unprecedented Plague (1:1-12)

"Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation" (1:2-3). This disaster was to be remembered and its lesson passed down. The four kinds of locusts had devoured everything (1:4).

Joel addresses one group after another:

- **The drunkards (1:5):** "Awake, ye drunkards, and weep... for the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth." Those who lived for pleasure lost it first.
- **The nation as a whole (1:6-8):** the locusts are described as "a nation... strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion" (1:6). They had stripped the vines and the bark of the fig trees, leaving the branches white (1:7). "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth" (1:8).
- **The priests (1:9):** "The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn." Without grain and wine, the daily offerings could not continue. The disaster struck at worship itself.
- **The farmers and vinedressers (1:10-12):** "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth." The wheat, barley, vine, fig, pomegranate, palm and apple trees withered, "because joy is withered away from the sons of men" (1:12).

The Call to Fast and Cry Out (1:13-20)

"Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar" (1:13).

> *Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.*
>
> **Joel 1:14-15**

The right response to national disaster was not merely to mourn the crops but to turn to God. The seed rotted under the clods, the barns were broken down, and the cattle groaned and wandered without pasture (1:17-18). Joel himself prayed: "O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness" (1:19). "The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up" (1:20). Even the animals looked to God (Psalm 104:21, 27).

Chapter 2 — The Day of the LORD, Repentance and the Spirit

The Great Army (2:1-11)

> *Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness*
>
> **Joel 2:1-2**

An army approaches "as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like" (2:2). "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness" (2:3). They look like horses and run like horsemen, with a noise like chariots and crackling fire (2:4-5). They march in perfect order, break no ranks, climb walls, run through the city, and enter houses through the windows "like a thief" (2:7-9). The earth quakes, the heavens tremble, and the sun, moon and stars grow dark (2:10).

> *And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*
>
> **Joel 2:11**

This army may be a further, worse wave of locusts described as an army, or a human invading army (from the north, 2:20) foreshadowed by the locusts. Either way, it is "his army": God Himself leads the judgment. Revelation uses Joel's imagery for the demonic locusts of the end times, with faces of men, teeth of lions and the sound of chariots (Revelation 9:7-9), and asks the same question: "the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:17).

Rend Your Heart (2:12-17)

Yet even now, it is not too late:

> *Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*
>
> **Joel 2:12-13**

Tearing one's clothes was a traditional sign of grief, but God wanted inward repentance, a broken heart (Psalm 51:17), not mere outward show. The basis of hope is God's own character, revealed to Moses (Exodus 34:6-7). "Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?" (2:14; compare Jonah 3:9). The blessing God would leave behind would make it possible to worship Him again.

Everyone was to gather: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet" (2:15-16). No one

was exempt, not even newlyweds. Then the priests' prayer:

> *Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?*
>
> **Joel 2:17**

The plea appeals to God's own honour among the nations (compare Exodus 32:12; Daniel 9:19).

The LORD's Answer: Restoration (2:18-27)

"Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people" (2:18). God promised grain, wine and oil (2:19), the removal of "the northern army" into a barren land (2:20), and joy for the land, the animals and the people:

> *Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.*
>
> **Joel 2:21**

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain" (2:23). (The KJV margin notes that "the former rain moderately" can be read "a teacher of righteousness," and some have seen in this a hint of the Messiah.) The threshing floors would be full of wheat and the vats overflow with wine and oil (2:24).

> *And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpiller, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.*
>
> **Joel 2:25-26**

God can restore what sin and judgment have destroyed, even lost years. "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else" (2:27).

The Outpouring of the Spirit (2:28-32)

Then Joel looks far beyond the harvest to a greater blessing:

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*
>
> **Joel 2:28-29**

In the Old Testament, the Spirit came on particular individuals, such as prophets, judges and kings, for particular tasks. Moses had longed, "would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:29). Joel promised exactly this: the Spirit poured

out on all kinds of people, without distinction of sex ("sons and daughters"), age ("old men... young men") or social status ("servants and... handmaids").

> *And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.*
>
> **Joel 2:30-32**

On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and they spoke in other languages, Peter stood up and declared, "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," quoting the whole passage (Acts 2:16-21). He explained that the risen Jesus, exalted at God's right hand, "hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33), and invited all to repent and be baptized, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39), echoing Joel's "the remnant whom the LORD shall call."

Christians understand the fulfillment in slightly different ways. Many Baptist and dispensational interpreters see Pentecost as the beginning or a pattern of the fulfillment, with the cosmic signs of verses 30-31 and the complete outpouring on Israel still to come at the end of the age (Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12). Others see the whole "last days" period from Pentecost to Christ's return as the fulfillment. All agree that the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost as Joel foretold, and that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," which Paul applies to calling on Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9-13).

Chapter 3 — The Valley of Decision

The Nations Gathered for Judgment (3:1-8)

"For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land" (3:1-2). "Jehoshaphat" means "the LORD judges." Some connect it with the valley where King Jehoshaphat saw God destroy an invading army (2 Chronicles 20); others see it as a symbolic name for the place of God's final judgment, often associated with the Kidron Valley beside Jerusalem.

The nations would be judged for how they treated God's people: they cast lots for them, traded a boy for a prostitute and a girl for wine (3:3). Tyre, Sidon and the Philistines had plundered God's treasures and sold the people of Judah as slaves "unto the Grecians" (3:4-6). God would repay them in kind: their own sons and daughters would be sold (3:7-8). Ancient historians record that when Alexander the Great conquered Tyre and Gaza, he sold many of their inhabitants into slavery.

The Battle and the Harvest (3:9-16)

God summons the nations to war with irony:

> *Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.*
>
> **Joel 3:9-10**

This reverses the famous promise of peace in Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3, where swords will be beaten into plowshares. Before the final peace comes the final war. "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great" (3:13). Revelation uses this same imagery of the harvest and the winepress of God's wrath at Christ's return (Revelation 14:14-20; 19:15).

> *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.*
>
> **Joel 3:14**

The "decision" here is God's verdict, His judgment on the nations, rather than a choice people make. The sun, moon and stars are darkened (3:15).

> *The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.*
>
> **Joel 3:16**

The same voice that shakes the universe is the refuge of His people (Amos 1:2; Hebrews 12:26-28).

Blessing for God's People (3:17-21)

"So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more" (3:17).

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.*
>
> **Joel 3:18**

The locust-stripped land of chapter 1 becomes a land overflowing with abundance. The fountain from God's house matches Ezekiel's river (Ezekiel 47:1-12) and Zechariah's living waters (Zechariah 14:8), fulfilled in "the pure river of water of life" (Revelation 22:1). Egypt and Edom, which shed innocent blood in Judah, would become desolate (3:19). "But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion" (3:20-21).

Part Three: Christ in Joel

The Giver of the Spirit

Joel promised that God would pour out His Spirit; Peter declared that the risen and exalted Jesus is the One who poured Him out: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). John the Baptist had said Christ would "baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 3:11), and Jesus promised the Spirit to all who believe in Him (John 7:37-39).

The LORD on Whom We Call

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (2:32). In Joel, "the LORD" is Jehovah. Paul quotes this verse about Jesus: "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus... thou shalt be saved... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:9-13). The New Testament identifies Jesus with the LORD of the Old Testament, a powerful witness to His deity.

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Joel	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
2:12-13	"Rend your heart... turn unto the LORD"	Christ's call: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15)
2:23	"A teacher of righteousness" (KJV margin)	Christ the true Teacher (John 3:2; Matthew 23:10)
2:25	Restoring the years the locust ate	Christ redeems wasted lives and makes all things new (2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5)
2:28-29	The Spirit poured out on all flesh	Poured out by the exalted Christ at Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18, 33)
2:32	"Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered"	Calling on Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9-13; Acts 2:21)
3:2, 12	The LORD sits to judge all the nations	The Son of man judges the nations (Matthew 25:31-32; John 5:22; Acts 17:31)
3:13	The sickle and the winepress	One like the Son of man with a sharp sickle (Revelation 14:14-20); He treads the winepress (Revelation 19:15)
3:16	The LORD roars from Zion; heaven and earth shake	Christ's return in glory (Revelation 19:11-16; Hebrews 12:26)
3:17, 21	The LORD dwelling in Zion	"The tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3)
3:18	A fountain from the house of the LORD	Living water from Christ; the river of life (John 7:38; Revelation 22:1)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Joel	Fulfillment
The land restored after the locusts	2:19-26	Restoration of the harvests (in Joel's day)
The Spirit poured out on all flesh, sons and daughters, servants and handmaids	2:28-29	Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21); the Spirit given to Gentiles (Acts 10:44-45)
Whosoever calls on the LORD will be saved	2:32	The gospel offered to all (Acts 2:21, 39; Romans 10:13)
Deliverance in Zion and Jerusalem	2:32	The gospel first preached in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8)
Tyre, Sidon and Philistia repaid for selling Judeans	3:4-8	Their conquest and the enslavement of their people (Alexander, 332 BC)
Egypt and Edom desolate	3:19	Edom disappeared as a nation; Egypt declined
Cosmic signs before the great day	2:30-31; 3:15	Still future (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12-17)
The nations judged; Zion blessed; the LORD dwelling in Zion	3	Still future, at Christ's return

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Joel 1:14-15 — Responding to Disaster

When disaster struck, Joel did not explain it as mere chance. He called everyone, from the priests to the elders to the farmers, to gather before God in fasting and prayer. National and personal calamities are calls to seek God (Luke 13:1-5).

Joel 2:12-14 — True Repentance

God calls for repentance "with all your heart," not outward show. The basis is His character: gracious, merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness. "Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?" True repentance is grief over sin that turns to God, trusting His mercy (2 Corinthians 7:10).

Joel 2:25 — Restoring the Lost Years

God promised to restore what the locusts had devoured. Many believers testify that God has redeemed years lost to sin, foolishness or suffering. This does not mean consequences vanish, but that God can bring fruitfulness and joy out of loss (Romans 8:28).

Joel 2:28-32 — The Promise of the Spirit

This passage is the Old Testament foundation of Pentecost. The Spirit is given not to a select few but to all God's people, regardless of gender, age or status. Salvation is offered to "whosoever" calls on the Lord. It is both a promise of blessing and a warning of the great and terrible day to come.

Joel 3:14 — The Valley of Decision

History is moving toward a day of reckoning when the nations will stand before the Judge. The multitudes in the valley await God's decision. The time for people to make their own decision about the Lord is now (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Joel

1. The Day of the LORD

God intervenes in history to judge sin and save His people, and will do so finally at the end of the age (1:15; 2:1-11, 31; 3:14).

2. God Is Sovereign over Nature

The locusts were "my great army which I sent among you" (2:25). God uses natural disasters as warnings and judgments (Deuteronomy 28:38-42).

3. The Call to Wholehearted Repentance

God wants torn hearts, not torn clothes (2:12-13).

4. The Character of God

He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, and ready to relent (2:13).

5. Corporate Prayer and Fasting

The whole community, from elders to infants, was called to seek God together (1:14; 2:15-17).

6. Restoration and Abundance

God restores what judgment has taken and gives more than was lost (2:19-27; 3:18).

7. The Outpouring of the Spirit

God promised His Spirit on all His people, fulfilled at Pentecost (2:28-29; Acts 2).

8. Salvation for Whosoever Calls

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (2:32).

9. The Judgment of the Nations

God will judge the nations for their treatment of His people (3:1-16).

10. God Dwelling with His People

The final goal: "the LORD dwelleth in Zion" (3:17, 21).

Part Seven: Connections — How Joel Links to the Rest of the Bible

Joel in the New Testament

Joel	New Testament	Connection
1:6; 2:4-5 (locusts like horses, with lions' teeth)	Revelation 9:7-9	The demonic locusts
1:14; 2:12, 15 (fasting)	Matthew 6:16-18; Acts 13:2-3	Fasting before God
2:1, 11 (the terrible day; who can abide it?)	Revelation 6:17; Malachi 3:2	"Who shall be able to stand?"
2:2, 10, 31; 3:15 (darkened sun, moon and stars)	Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Revelation 6:12	Signs before Christ's return
2:9 (entering like a thief)	1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10	The day of the Lord comes as a thief
2:12-13 (rend your heart)	James 4:8-10; 2 Corinthians 7:10	Godly sorrow and repentance
2:28-32 (the Spirit poured out)	Acts 2:16-21	"This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel"
2:28 (all flesh)	Acts 10:44-45; Galatians 3:28	The Spirit given to Gentiles; all one in Christ
2:32 (whosoever shall call)	Romans 10:13; Acts 2:21	Whosoever calls on the Lord shall be saved
2:32 (whom the LORD shall call)	Acts 2:39	The promise to all whom the Lord shall call
3:2, 12 (the nations judged)	Matthew 25:31-46	The judgment of the nations
3:13 (the sickle and the winepress)	Revelation 14:14-20; 19:15	The harvest and the winepress of God's wrath
3:16 (heaven and earth shaken)	Hebrews 12:26-28	Yet once more I shake heaven and earth
3:17 (nothing unclean in Jerusalem)	Revelation 21:27	Nothing that defiles shall enter
3:18 (the fountain)	John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1	Living water; the river of life

Joel in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	The locust plague on Egypt, "before them there were no such locusts" (10:4-15); God "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness" (34:6-7; Joel 2:13); "Wherefore should the Egyptians speak?" (32:12; Joel 2:17)
Numbers	Moses' wish that all the LORD's people were prophets (11:29)
Deuteronomy	Locusts as a covenant curse (28:38-42); the former and latter rain (11:14)
1 Kings	Solomon's prayer about locusts and repentance at the temple (8:37-40)
2 Chronicles	"If I command the locusts... If my people... shall humble themselves, and pray" (7:13-14); Jehoshaphat's assembly with the little ones and God's victory in the valley (20:13, 26)
Psalms	God as refuge and strength when the earth is moved (46); the restoration of Zion (126)
Isaiah	The day of the LORD (13:6-10); the Spirit poured out (32:15; 44:3); swords into plowshares (2:4, reversed in Joel 3:10)
Jeremiah	The LORD roaring from on high (25:30)
Ezekiel	The Spirit poured out on Israel (39:29); the river from the temple (47:1-12)
Amos	"The LORD will roar from Zion" (1:2; Joel 3:16); the mountains dropping sweet wine (9:13; Joel 3:18)
Obadiah	The day of the LORD near upon the nations; deliverance on Mount Zion (15-17; Joel 2:32)
Jonah	"Who can tell if God will turn and repent?" (3:9; 4:2; Joel 2:13-14)
Micah	Swords into plowshares (4:3)
Zephaniah	The great day of the LORD, a day of darkness (1:14-16)
Zechariah	The Spirit of grace poured on Jerusalem (12:10); the nations gathered against Jerusalem; the LORD's feet on the Mount of Olives; living waters (14:2-8)
Malachi	"The great and dreadful day of the LORD" (4:5)

Themes That Run from Joel Through Scripture

Theme	In Joel	Developed	Fulfilled
The Day of the LORD	1:15; 2:1-11, 31; 3:14	Isaiah 13; Zephaniah 1; Malachi 4	1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:17
The outpouring of the Spirit	2:28-29	Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:27	Acts 2; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6
Salvation for all who call	2:32	Isaiah 45:22; 55:1	Romans 10:13; Revelation 22:17
Heart repentance	2:12-13	Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 57:15	Luke 18:13-14; 2 Corinthians 7:10
God's judgment of the nations	3:1-16	Zechariah 14; Daniel 2:44	Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 19:11-21

Theme	In Joel	Developed	Fulfilled
The harvest of judgment	3:13	Isaiah 63:1-6	Revelation 14:14-20
The river of life	3:18	Ezekiel 47; Zechariah 14:8	John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:1-2
God dwelling with His people	3:17, 21	Ezekiel 48:35	Revelation 21:3

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Tell your children what God has done, including His judgments** (1:3).
- **See disasters as calls to seek God** (1:14).
- **Cry to the LORD in trouble** (1:19).
- **Take God's warnings seriously** (2:1, 11).
- **It is not too late to return** (2:12).
- **Rend your heart, not your garments** (2:13).
- **Trust God's gracious and merciful character** (2:13).
- **Gather God's people to pray together** (2:15-17).
- **Intercede for God's honour among the nations** (2:17).
- **Believe God can restore the lost years** (2:25).
- **Praise God for His wondrous dealings** (2:26).
- **Be filled with and led by the Spirit God has poured out** (2:28-29; Ephesians 5:18).
- **Call on the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved** (2:32).
- **Remember that God will judge the nations justly** (3:2).
- **Make your decision for the Lord now, before the day of His decision** (3:14).
- **Make the LORD your hope and strength** (3:16).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:15	Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.
2:12	Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning
2:13	And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness
2:21	Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.
2:25	And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten
2:28	I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy
2:32	Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered
3:14	Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.
3:16	But the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

Conclusion

Joel is the prophet of the Day of the LORD. A devastating locust plague stripped Judah bare, cut off the offerings in the temple, and withered the joy of the people. Joel saw in it a warning of a greater day, a day of darkness when the LORD would lead His army in judgment, and asked, "who can abide it?" Yet God's call came even then: "Turn ye even to me with all your heart... rend your heart, and not your garments," for He is gracious and merciful. To a repentant people He promised to restore the years the locust had eaten, and then promised something far greater: to pour out His Spirit on all flesh, so that whosoever calls on His name will be delivered. That promise was fulfilled when the risen Christ poured out the Spirit at Pentecost, and it is still offered to all who call on the Lord Jesus. The book ends looking to the final day, when the nations will be judged in the valley of decision, the LORD will roar from Zion, and He will dwell for ever among His people, with a fountain flowing from His house.

> *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered*
>
> **Joel 2:32**

Amos

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Amos, a shepherd of Tekoa • Date: c. 760 BC • Chapters: 9

> *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*
>
> **Amos 5:24**

Part One: Introduction to Amos

The Prophet

Amos, whose name means "burden" or "burden-bearer," was "among the herdmen of Tekoa" (1:1), a village about ten miles south of Jerusalem in Judah. He described himself as "an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit" (7:14), a sheep breeder who also tended sycamore-fig trees. He was not a professional prophet: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son... And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (7:14-15). A layman from the southern kingdom, he was sent north to preach at Bethel, the royal sanctuary of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Date and Setting

Amos prophesied "in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake" (1:1), around 760 BC. This earthquake was so severe that it was remembered centuries later: "ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah" (Zechariah 14:5). Archaeologists have found evidence of a major earthquake around this time at Hazor and other sites.

Under Jeroboam II, Israel enjoyed its greatest prosperity since Solomon. Jeroboam restored Israel's borders (2 Kings 14:25), trade flourished, and the wealthy built winter and summer houses decorated with ivory (3:15; 6:4). Excavations at Samaria have uncovered hundreds of carved ivory pieces from this period. But the prosperity was built on injustice: the rich exploited the poor, bribed judges, cheated in business, and enjoyed luxury while ignoring suffering. Religion was busy and popular at Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba, but it was empty. Amos's contemporary Hosea also preached to Israel. Within forty years, Assyria would destroy the northern kingdom (722 BC).

Purpose and Theme

Amos is the prophet of **justice and righteousness**. He declared that God judges not only idolatry but injustice, and that worship without righteousness is hateful to Him. Israel's privilege as God's chosen people did not protect them; it increased their responsibility.

> *You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*
>
> **Amos 3:2**

> *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*
>
> **Amos 5:24**

Yet the book ends with hope: God will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David and restore His people to their land for ever (9:11-15).

The Sins Amos Condemned

Sin	Amos	Description
Selling the poor	2:6; 8:6	"They sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes"
Oppressing the needy	2:7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4	Trampling the poor; crushing the needy
Sexual immorality	2:7	Father and son going in to the same young woman
Abusing pledges	2:8	Keeping poor men's garments taken in pledge (Exodus 22:26-27)
Silencing God's messengers	2:12; 7:10-13	Making Nazarites drink wine; commanding prophets not to prophesy
Violence and robbery	3:10	Storing up violence and robbery in their palaces
Luxury and self-indulgence	3:15; 4:1; 6:4-6	Ivory beds, feasts, wine by the bowlful, while ignoring Joseph's affliction
Corrupt courts	5:7, 10-12	Taking bribes; turning aside the poor in the gate; hating honest witnesses
Empty religion	4:4-5; 5:21-23	Sacrifices and songs without righteousness
Cheating in business	8:5-6	Small measures, inflated prices, false balances, selling the sweepings
Complacency	6:1-3	At ease in Zion, putting far away the evil day
Pride and self-reliance	6:8, 13	Trusting in their own strength

Outline of Amos

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Judgments on the Nations	1-2	"For three transgressions... and for four"
Six foreign nations	1:3-2:3	Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab
Judah	2:4-5	They despised the law of the LORD
Israel	2:6-16	The climax: Israel's sins exposed
II. Three Sermons Against Israel	3-6	"Hear this word"
Privilege and responsibility	3	"You only have I known"
Ignored warnings	4	"Yet have ye not returned... prepare to meet thy God"
Lament and call to seek God	5	"Seek ye me, and ye shall live"; "let judgment run down as waters"
Woe to the complacent	6	"At ease in Zion"
III. Five Visions of Judgment	7-9:10	The end is coming
Locusts and fire (God relents)	7:1-6	Intercession heard
The plumbline	7:7-9	No more passing by
Amos and Amaziah	7:10-17	The prophet opposed
The basket of summer fruit	8	"The end is come"; a famine of the word

Section	Chapters	Theme
The Lord at the altar	9:1-10	No escape; sifting
IV. The Promise of Restoration	9:11-15	The tabernacle of David raised up

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Judgments on the Nations (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — The Lion Roars

"The LORD will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither" (1:2). The shepherd-prophet hears God as a lion about to pounce. Amos then pronounces judgment on Israel's neighbours, each oracle beginning, "For three transgressions of... and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." The formula means: their sins have piled up and overflowed; God's patience is exhausted. Each nation was judged for crimes against humanity, sins against conscience and the moral law God has written on every heart (Romans 2:14-15):

- **Damascus (Syria) (1:3-5):** "they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron," brutal cruelty in war. Its people would go captive to Kir (fulfilled in 2 Kings 16:9).
- **Gaza (Philistia) (1:6-8):** "they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to Edom," trading entire communities as slaves.
- **Tyre (Phoenicia) (1:9-10):** it also sold captives to Edom "and remembered not the brotherly covenant," breaking a treaty of friendship.
- **Edom (1:11-12):** "he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually," endless hatred against Israel, its brother nation (Genesis 25-27; Obadiah 10).
- **Ammon (1:13-15):** "they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border," atrocities for land.

Israel's audience would have cheered as Amos condemned their enemies.

Chapter 2 — Judah and Israel

- **Moab (2:1-3):** "he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime," desecrating the dead of an enemy nation. God's justice protects even Israel's enemies.
- **Judah (2:4-5):** "they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err." Judah was judged for rejecting God's revealed Word. Fire would devour Jerusalem's palaces (fulfilled in 586 BC).

Having circled around Israel, naming its neighbours and then its brother Judah, Amos now turns the full force of his message on Israel itself, the longest and most detailed oracle:

> *For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek*
>
> **Amos 2:6-7**

They sold people into slavery for trivial debts, as cheap as a pair of sandals. They trampled the poor into the dust. Father and son went in to the same girl, profaning God's holy name (2:7). They lay beside every altar on garments taken in pledge from the poor, which the law required to be returned by nightfall

(2:8; Exodus 22:26-27), and drank wine bought with fines unjustly imposed.

God reminded them of His grace: He destroyed the mighty Amorites before them (2:9), brought them out of Egypt and led them forty years in the wilderness (2:10), and raised up prophets and Nazarites from their sons (2:11). "But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not" (2:12). They corrupted the devoted and silenced God's messengers. "Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves" (2:13). Judgment would be inescapable: the swift would not flee, the strong would not save himself, and the mighty would flee away naked (2:14-16).

Section II: Three Sermons Against Israel (Chapters 3-6)

Chapter 3 — Privilege and Responsibility

"Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt" (3:1).

> *You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*
>
> **Amos 3:2**

"Known" means chosen in a covenant relationship (Genesis 18:19). Israel assumed their election guaranteed safety; Amos taught that it increased their accountability. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48).

A series of questions shows that every effect has a cause: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (3:3). Does a lion roar without prey? Does a bird fall into a snare without a trap? "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?" (3:4-6). Disaster comes from God, and so does the prophet's message:

> *Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*
>
> **Amos 3:7-8**

Amos had no choice but to speak. He called Philistia and Egypt to witness the oppression in Samaria, for "they know not to do right... who store up violence and robbery in their palaces" (3:9-10). An enemy would surround the land (3:11). Only a fragment would survive, as a shepherd rescues "out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear" (3:12), proof that the sheep had been devoured. God would destroy the altars of Bethel (3:14; fulfilled by Josiah, 2 Kings 23:15) "and I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish" (3:15).

Chapter 4 — "Yet Have Ye Not Returned"

Amos addressed the wealthy women of Samaria with startling bluntness:

> *Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.*
>
> **Amos 4:1**

Bashan was famous for its fat cattle. These women demanded luxury from their husbands, paid for by oppressing the poor. They would be dragged away with hooks (4:2-3), as Assyrian reliefs show captives being led.

With biting sarcasm Amos invited Israel to its shrines: "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression" (4:4). They loved their religious activity and boasted of their offerings (4:5), but it was sin. Then God listed the warnings He had sent, each followed by the same sad refrain:

God's Warning	Amos	Israel's Response
Famine: "cleanness of teeth in all your cities"	4:6	"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD"
Drought: rain withheld from one city and given to another	4:7-8	"Yet have ye not returned unto me"
Crop diseases and locusts: blasting, mildew, palmerworm	4:9	"Yet have ye not returned unto me"
Pestilence and war	4:10	"Yet have ye not returned unto me"
Destruction like Sodom; "a firebrand plucked out of the burning"	4:11	"Yet have ye not returned unto me"

These were the very covenant curses God had warned of (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28), meant to bring His people back. Since they would not return, they must face God Himself:

> *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The LORD, The God of hosts, is his name.*
>
> **Amos 4:12-13**

Every person will meet God, either as Saviour or as Judge (Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:31).

Chapter 5 — Seek the LORD and Live

Amos took up a funeral lament for a nation still alive: "The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise" (5:2). Yet God still invited:

> *For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live: But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba*
>
> **Amos 5:4-5**

The people sought religious places instead of God Himself. "Seek the LORD, and ye shall live" (5:6). They had turned justice into bitterness (5:7). The God they ignored is the Creator: "Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning" (5:8). "They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly" (5:10). They taxed the poor's grain and built houses of hewn stone they would never live in (5:11). "They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate" (5:12). "The prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time" (5:13).

> *Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.*
>
> **Amos 5:14-15**

Israel looked forward to "the day of the LORD" as a day when God would defeat their enemies. Amos turned it upside down:

> *Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.*
>
> **Amos 5:18-19**

Then God's verdict on their worship:

> *I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them... Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*
>
> **Amos 5:21-24**

God does not want religious performance from people who live unjustly; He wants justice that flows like a never-failing river. Israel's idolatry went back to the wilderness, when they carried "the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god" (5:25-26). Stephen quoted this to the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:42-43). "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus" (5:27), to Assyria.

Chapter 6 — Woe to Those at Ease

> *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria*
>
> **Amos 6:1**

The leaders felt secure, "put far away the evil day" (6:3), and lived in luxury:

> *That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock... That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*
>
> **Amos 6:4-6**

The sin was not enjoying good things but indifference to the nation's moral and spiritual ruin. "Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive" (6:7): the first in luxury would be the first in chains. "I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces" (6:8). Death would be so widespread that survivors would be afraid even to mention the LORD's name (6:9-10). "Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock" (6:12): perverting justice is as absurd as ploughing rock. They boasted of their own strength (6:13), but God would raise up a nation to afflict them from one end of the land to the other (6:14).

Section III: Five Visions of Judgment (Chapters 7-9:10)

Chapter 7 — Locusts, Fire, the Plumbline, and Amaziah

Vision 1: Locusts (7:1-3). God formed locusts to devour the late crop after the king's harvest. Amos interceded: "O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. The LORD repented for this: It shall not be, saith the LORD."

Vision 2: Fire (7:4-6). A fire consumed the great deep and began to eat the land. Amos pleaded again, "cease, I beseech thee," and God relented. Intercession matters; the prayers of a righteous man avail much (James 5:16).

Vision 3: The plumbline (7:7-9). The Lord stood on a wall built true, with a plumbline in His hand.

> *Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more*
>
> **Amos 7:8**

A plumbline shows whether a wall is straight. Measured by God's standard, Israel was hopelessly crooked. This time Amos did not intercede. The high places and sanctuaries would be destroyed, and God would rise "against the house of Jeroboam with the sword" (7:9), fulfilled when Jeroboam's son Zechariah was assassinated (2 Kings 15:8-10).

Amos and Amaziah (7:10-17). Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, reported to King Jeroboam: "Amos hath conspired against thee... the land is not able to bear all his words" (7:10). He told Amos, "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court" (7:12-13). The state religion served the king, not God. Amos replied:

> *I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.*
>
> **Amos 7:14-15**

Amos was not a hired religious professional; he spoke by God's direct call. He then pronounced judgment on Amaziah: his wife would be shamed, his children killed, his land divided, and he would die in a foreign land, "and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land" (7:16-17).

Chapter 8 — The Basket of Summer Fruit and the Famine of the Word

Vision 4: Summer fruit (8:1-3). God showed Amos a basket of ripe summer fruit (Hebrew qayits). "Then said the LORD unto me, The end [qets] is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more" (8:2). The wordplay made the point: Israel was ripe for judgment. Temple songs would become howling, and corpses would be everywhere (8:3).

Amos then exposed the greed of the merchants:

> *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?*
>
> **Amos 8:4-6**

They kept the holy days outwardly while impatient to get back to cheating: shrinking measures, inflating prices, rigging scales, enslaving the poor, and selling the sweepings with the grain (Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 25:13-16). "The LORD hath sworn... Surely I will never forget any of their works" (8:7). The land would tremble (8:8).

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning... and I will make it as the mourning of an only son*
>
> **Amos 8:9-10**

A total solar eclipse occurred in 763 BC, recorded in Assyrian records, which may have given this image added force. Christians also see a striking picture of the darkness over the land at noon when Christ, God's only Son, died (Matthew 27:45), and of the mourning for Him "as one mourneth for his only son" (Zechariah 12:10; John 19:37).

Then a terrible judgment:

> *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.*
>
> **Amos 8:11-12**

Those who silenced the prophets (2:12; 7:12-13) would lose the word of God altogether. The worst judgment is God's silence (1 Samuel 28:6). After Malachi, there were about four hundred years without a prophetic word, until John the Baptist and Jesus. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

Chapter 9:1-10 — No Escape

Vision 5: The Lord at the altar (9:1). "I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake." The very place of false worship would collapse on the worshippers. There would be no escape:

> *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent*
>
> **Amos 9:2-3**

Compare Psalm 139:7-12, where God's presence everywhere is a comfort to the believer; here it is a terror to the rebellious. God, who touches the earth and it melts (9:5-6), is sovereign over all nations: "Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" (9:7). Israel's Exodus did not make them untouchable; God directs the movements of every people.

> *Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.*
>
> **Amos 9:8-9**

God would scatter Israel among the nations but preserve a remnant; not one true grain would be lost. The sinners who said "The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us" would die by the sword (9:10).

Section IV: The Promise of Restoration (Chapter 9:11-15)

Chapter 9:11-15 — The Tabernacle of David Raised Up

After nine chapters of judgment, the book ends in glorious hope:

> *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.*
>
> **Amos 9:11-12**

The "tabernacle" (booth or hut) of David was his royal house, which would fall into ruin, but God would rebuild it. At the Jerusalem council, when the apostles debated whether Gentiles must keep the law of Moses to be saved, James quoted this passage: "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down... That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called" (Acts 15:15-17). Through Christ, the Son of David, God is gathering people from all nations into His kingdom, a work that will be completed when Christ reigns on David's throne (Luke 1:32-33).

The land will be so fruitful that "the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine" (9:13): harvests so abundant that one season runs into the next.

> *And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards... And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.*
>
> **Amos 9:14-15**

This promise of permanent restoration looks beyond the return from Babylon to the final regathering of Israel under the Messiah.

Part Three: Christ in Amos

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Amos	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:2; 3:8	The LORD roars like a lion from Zion	The Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5)
2:6	"They sold the righteous for silver"	Jesus, the Righteous One, sold for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15; Acts 3:14)
3:12	The shepherd rescuing a remnant from the lion's mouth	The Good Shepherd who saves His sheep (John 10:11, 28)
4:11	"A firebrand plucked out of the burning"	Saved by grace from judgment (Zechariah 3:2; Jude 23)
4:12	"Prepare to meet thy God"	Every person will meet Christ, as Saviour or Judge (Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
5:4, 6	"Seek the LORD, and ye shall live"	"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6; 5:40)
5:24	Justice and righteousness flowing like a river	Christ the righteous Judge and our righteousness (Isaiah 11:3-5; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
7:2, 5	The prophet interceding: "forgive, I beseech thee"	Christ who ever lives to make intercession (Hebrews 7:25)
7:7-8	The plumbline: God's perfect standard	Christ, the measure of perfection (Ephesians 4:13)
8:9	The sun going down at noon	Darkness at noon at the crucifixion (Matthew 27:45; Luke 23:44)
8:10	Mourning as for an only son	Mourning for the pierced only Son (Zechariah 12:10; John 19:37)
8:11-12	A famine of hearing the words of the LORD	Ended by Christ, the Word made flesh (John 1:1, 14; 6:68)
9:9	Sifting without losing a single grain	Christ keeps all who are His (John 6:39; Luke 22:31-32)
9:11-12	The tabernacle of David raised; Gentiles called by His name	Christ, the Son of David, gathering all nations (Acts 15:15-17; Luke 1:32-33)

The Rebuilt House of David

The promise of Amos 9:11 shows that God's judgment on Israel was not the end of His covenant with David (2 Samuel 7:12-16). The fallen royal house would be rebuilt in Christ. James's use of the passage in Acts 15 shows that the inclusion of believing Gentiles in God's people was part of God's plan all along, foretold by the prophets.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Amos	Fulfillment
Syria taken captive to Kir	1:5	Tiglath-pileser III took Damascus, 732 BC (2 Kings 16:9)
The Philistine cities judged	1:6-8	Conquered by Assyria and later powers; the Philistines disappeared
Fire on the walls of Tyre	1:10	Besieged by Nebuchadnezzar and destroyed by Alexander the Great (332 BC)
Edom, Ammon and Moab judged	1:11-2:3	All were overrun and eventually disappeared as nations
Fire on Jerusalem's palaces	2:5	Burned by Babylon, 586 BC (2 Kings 25:9)
Israel taken captive beyond Damascus	5:27; 7:17	Exiled to Assyria, 722 BC (2 Kings 17:6)
The altars of Bethel destroyed	3:14	Josiah broke down the altar at Bethel (2 Kings 23:15)
The houses of ivory perish	3:15	Samaria destroyed (722 BC)
The sword against the house of Jeroboam	7:9	Zechariah son of Jeroboam assassinated (2 Kings 15:8-10)
A famine of the word of the LORD	8:11-12	The silent years after Malachi
Israel sifted among the nations yet preserved	9:8-9	The worldwide dispersion and survival of the Jewish people
The tabernacle of David rebuilt; Gentiles called by God's name	9:11-12	Christ and the calling of the Gentiles (Acts 15:15-17)
Israel restored to the land, never again uprooted	9:14-15	Partly in the return from exile; its complete fulfillment is still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Amos 1-2 — The Circle of Judgment

Amos drew his listeners in by condemning their enemies, then their brother Judah, and finally landed the blow on Israel itself. God judges all nations by the light they have: the pagan nations for cruelty against conscience, Judah for rejecting His law, and Israel most fully because it had received the most (Romans 2:12-16).

Amos 3:2 — Privilege Brings Responsibility

Being God's chosen people did not exempt Israel from judgment; it made judgment more certain. Church members, Christian families and Bible-believing nations must remember that greater light brings greater accountability (Luke 12:47-48; 1 Peter 4:17).

Amos 4:6-12 — Ignored Warnings

God sent famine, drought, blight, plague and war, each time hoping His people would return. Five times He said, "Yet have ye not returned unto me." Hardships can be God's loving warnings (Hebrews 12:5-11). Those who ignore every warning must finally "prepare to meet thy God."

Amos 5:21-24 — Worship and Justice

God hated Israel's feasts, offerings and songs, not because worship is wrong, but because it was offered by people who oppressed the poor and perverted justice. True worship cannot be separated from righteous living (Isaiah 1:11-17; Micah 6:6-8; James 1:27). God wants justice and righteousness to flow continually, like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos 6:1-6 — The Sin of Complacency

The leaders of Israel were "at ease in Zion," enjoying luxury and entertainment, "but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Comfort can numb the conscience. Believers are called to care about the spiritual and moral condition of their nation and the suffering of others (Romans 12:15; Philippians 2:4).

Amos 7:14-15 — God Calls Ordinary People

Amos was a shepherd and fig farmer, not a trained prophet, yet God called him to confront a king and a priest. God often uses unlikely people (1 Corinthians 1:26-29), like the fishermen Jesus called (Acts 4:13).

Amos 8:11-12 — The Famine of the Word

A people who reject God's Word may find it taken away. Hearing God's Word is a privilege, not a right. Those who have access to Scripture should treasure it (Psalm 119:103; Hebrews 2:1-3).

Amos 9:11-15 — Hope After Judgment

God's final word is not destruction but restoration: the house of David rebuilt, the nations brought in, the land made fruitful, and Israel planted securely for ever. God keeps His covenant promises.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Amos

1. God Is Sovereign over All Nations

He judges the nations (1-2), directs their movements (9:7), and controls history.

2. God Demands Justice and Righteousness

He cares how the poor, the weak and the defenceless are treated (2:6-8; 5:11-12, 24; 8:4-6).

3. Privilege Increases Responsibility

"You only have I known... therefore I will punish you" (3:2).

4. Empty Religion Is Hateful to God

Rituals without righteousness are worthless (4:4-5; 5:21-23).

5. God Warns Before He Judges

He sends warnings through circumstances (4:6-11) and prophets (3:7).

6. Seek God and Live

The way of life is to seek the LORD Himself, love good and hate evil (5:4, 6, 14-15).

7. The Danger of Complacency and Luxury

Ease, self-indulgence and indifference to others' suffering bring judgment (6:1-7).

8. The Power of Intercession

God relented twice in response to Amos's prayer (7:1-6).

9. The Word of God Is Precious

Silencing God's messengers leads to a famine of His Word (2:12; 7:12-13; 8:11-12).

10. God Preserves a Remnant and Restores

Israel would be sifted but not one true grain lost, and the house of David would be rebuilt (9:8-15).

Part Seven: Connections — How Amos Links to the Rest of the Bible

Amos in the New Testament

Amos	New Testament	Connection
2:6; 8:6 (selling the righteous for silver)	Matthew 26:15	Jesus sold for thirty pieces of silver
3:2 (privilege and accountability)	Luke 12:47-48; 1 Peter 4:17	To whom much is given, much is required
3:7 (God reveals His secret to the prophets)	Revelation 10:7; Ephesians 3:5	The mystery declared to His servants the prophets
3:13; 4:13 (the LORD God of hosts)	Revelation 4:8; 11:17	The Lord God Almighty
4:1; 5:11-12; 6:4-6 (the rich oppressing the poor)	James 2:1-9; 5:1-6; Luke 6:24-25; 16:19-31	Warnings to the rich; the rich man and Lazarus
4:11 (a firebrand from the burning)	Jude 23	Pulling them out of the fire
4:12 (prepare to meet thy God)	Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:31	Judgment after death
5:21-24 (justice over ritual)	Matthew 23:23; James 1:27	The weightier matters of the law
5:25-27 (Moloch and Remphan/Chiun)	Acts 7:42-43	Stephen's speech
6:1 (at ease in Zion)	1 Thessalonians 5:3; Revelation 3:17	False security; "I am rich... and have need of nothing"
8:9 (darkness at noon)	Matthew 27:45; Luke 23:44	Darkness at the crucifixion
8:10 (mourning for an only son)	John 19:37	They shall look on Him whom they pierced
8:11 (a famine of the word)	Matthew 4:4; John 6:68	Living by every word of God; the words of eternal life
9:2-3 (no escape from God)	Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 6:15-16	All things naked before Him
9:9 (sifted as corn)	Luke 22:31-32	Satan desires to sift you as wheat
9:11-12 (the tabernacle of David)	Acts 15:15-17	The Gentiles called by God's name

Amos in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Edom as Israel's brother (25-27; Amos 1:11); Sodom and Gomorrah (19; Amos 4:11); God knowing Abraham to command justice (18:19; Amos 3:2)
Exodus	Garments taken in pledge to be returned (22:26-27; Amos 2:8); justice for the poor; no bribes (23:6-8)
Leviticus	Just weights and measures (19:35-36; Amos 8:5); the covenant curses (26)
Numbers	The Nazarite vow (6; Amos 2:11-12)
Deuteronomy	Covenant curses of famine, drought, blight and plague (28; Amos 4:6-11); honest weights (25:13-16); Caphtor (2:23; Amos 9:7)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David's house (7:12-16; Amos 9:11)
1 Kings	Jeroboam I's calf worship at Bethel (12:28-33); the man of God's prophecy against the altar at Bethel (13:1-3)
2 Kings	Jeroboam II's prosperity (14:23-29); his son's assassination (15:8-10); Damascus to Kir (16:9); the fall of Samaria (17); Josiah at Bethel (23:15)
Job	The Maker of the seven stars and Orion (9:9; Amos 5:8)
Psalms	No escape from God's presence (139:7-12; Amos 9:2-4)
Isaiah	God hates empty worship (1:11-17); woe to the luxurious (5:8-12); the tabernacle of David (16:5)
Jeremiah	Knowing God means doing justice to the poor (22:13-16)
Hosea	The contemporary prophet to Israel; Beth-aven for Bethel
Joel	"The LORD also shall roar out of Zion" (3:16; Amos 1:2); the mountains dropping sweet wine (3:18; Amos 9:13)
Micah	"Do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (6:8)
Zephaniah	Those "settled on their lees" in complacency (1:12)
Zechariah	The earthquake in Uzziah's days (14:5; Amos 1:1); a brand plucked from the fire (3:2); mourning for the only son (12:10)
Malachi	Judgment on those who oppress the hireling, the widow and the fatherless (3:5)

Themes That Run from Amos Through Scripture

Theme	In Amos	Developed	Fulfilled
Justice for the poor	2:6-7; 5:24; 8:4-6	Isaiah 1:17; Micah 6:8	Luke 4:18; James 2:1-9; 5:1-6
Worship and righteousness together	5:21-24	Isaiah 1:11-17; Hosea 6:6	Matthew 23:23; John 4:23-24
The Day of the LORD	5:18-20; 8:9	Joel 2; Zephaniah 1	1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10

Theme	In Amos	Developed	Fulfilled
Privilege and accountability	3:2	Deuteronomy 7:6-11	Luke 12:48; Romans 2:17-24
Famine of God's Word	8:11-12	1 Samuel 3:1	Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 4:3-4
The remnant preserved	3:12; 9:8-9	Isaiah 10:20-22	Romans 9:27; 11:5
The house of David rebuilt	9:11	Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5	Luke 1:32-33; Acts 15:16
Gentiles brought in	9:12	Isaiah 49:6	Acts 15:14-17; Ephesians 2:11-22

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **God hears the cry of the oppressed; so should we** (2:6-7).
- **Never silence God's messengers or corrupt the devoted** (2:12).
- **The more you know, the more responsible you are** (3:2).
- **Walk in agreement with God** (3:3).
- **When God speaks, respond** (3:8).
- **Beware of luxury that blinds you to others' needs** (4:1; 6:4-6).
- **Let hardships turn you back to God** (4:6-11).
- **Prepare to meet your God** (4:12).
- **Seek the LORD Himself, not religious places or routines** (5:4-6).
- **Hate evil, love good, and stand for justice** (5:15).
- **Don't assume the Day of the Lord will be light for you** (5:18).
- **Let justice and righteousness flow from your life** (5:24).
- **Don't be at ease in Zion** (6:1).
- **Grieve over the spiritual condition of your nation** (6:6).
- **Intercede for others** (7:2, 5).
- **Measure your life by God's plumbline, not others' standards** (7:7-8).
- **Obey God's call even if you feel unqualified** (7:14-15).
- **Be honest in business** (8:5).
- **Treasure God's Word while you have it** (8:11).
- **There is no hiding from God** (9:2-3).
- **Trust God's promises of restoration** (9:11-15).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
3:2	You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.
3:3	Can two walk together, except they be agreed?
3:7	Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.
4:12	Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.
5:4	Seek ye me, and ye shall live
5:14	Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live
5:24	But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.
6:1	Woe to them that are at ease in Zion
7:14-15	I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son... And the LORD took me as I followed the flock
8:11	I will send a famine in the land... of hearing the words of the LORD
9:11	In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen

Conclusion

Amos was a shepherd from Tekoa whom God sent to preach at the royal sanctuary of a prosperous, religious and unjust nation. He heard the LORD roar like a lion against the cruelty of the nations, and then turned the full force of that roar on Israel, which sold the righteous for silver and the poor for a pair of shoes, lounged on ivory beds while ignoring the ruin of Joseph, and filled its shrines with songs and sacrifices while bribing judges and cheating the poor. God had sent famine, drought and plague, but "yet have ye not returned unto me." So Amos called them to "prepare to meet thy God," to seek the LORD and live, and to "let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." When a priest told him to go home, he answered that God had taken him from the flock. His visions announced the end, even a famine of the word of the LORD. Yet the book closes with hope: God will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David, bring in the nations who are called by His name, and plant His people in their land for ever. That promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Son of David and Lion of Judah, the Righteous One sold for silver, the Word who ends the famine, and the King through whom all nations may seek the Lord and live.

> *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*
>
> **Amos 5:24**

Obadiah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Obadiah • Date: Uncertain (c. 845 or c. 586 BC) • Chapters: 1

> *For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee*
>
> **Obadiah 1:15**

Part One: Introduction to Obadiah

The Book

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament: one chapter of just 21 verses. It is a single prophecy against Edom, the nation descended from Esau, for its pride and its cruelty toward its brother nation, Israel (Jacob), in the day of Jerusalem's destruction. Though brief, it carries the whole sweep of biblical prophecy: God's judgment on human pride, the principle that what nations sow they will reap, the coming Day of the LORD, the deliverance of God's people on Mount Zion, and the final triumph of God's kingdom.

The Prophet

Obadiah means "servant" or "worshipper of the LORD." It was a common name; about a dozen men in the Old Testament are called Obadiah, including King Ahab's God-fearing steward (1 Kings 18:3-16). Nothing is known of this prophet except his name and his message.

Date

There are two main views:

- **After the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.** Verses 11-14 describe foreigners entering Jerusalem's gates, casting lots for the city, and carrying away its people, while Edom gloated, plundered and handed over fugitives. This fits the Babylonian destruction, when Edom's behaviour was remembered with bitterness: "Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Psalm 137:7; compare Lamentations 4:21-22; Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35:1-15). Many scholars hold this view.
- **During the reign of Jehoram of Judah (around 845 BC),** when Edom revolted and the Philistines and Arabians plundered Jerusalem and carried away the king's household (2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chronicles 21:8-10, 16-17). Some conservative scholars prefer this earlier date, which would place Obadiah among the earliest writing prophets.

Obadiah 1-9 closely parallels Jeremiah 49:7-22, either because one prophet drew on the other or both drew on an earlier oracle.

Who Was Edom?

Edom's History	Scripture	Significance
Jacob and Esau struggle in the womb	Genesis 25:22-23	"Two nations are in thy womb... the elder shall serve the younger"
Esau sells his birthright	Genesis 25:29-34	He was called Edom ("red") from the red pottage
Esau vows to kill Jacob	Genesis 27:41	The beginning of the brothers' enmity
Esau settles in Mount Seir	Genesis 36:8-9	"Esau is Edom"; the rocky land south-east of the Dead Sea
Edom refuses Israel passage	Numbers 20:14-21	Hostility to Israel in the wilderness

Edom's History	Scripture	Significance
God commands Israel not to despise Edom	Deuteronomy 23:7	"Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother"
David subdues Edom	2 Samuel 8:14	Edom becomes subject to Israel
Edom revolts	2 Kings 8:20-22	Fulfilling Isaac's word that Esau would break Jacob's yoke (Genesis 27:40)
Edom rejoices at Jerusalem's fall	Psalm 137:7; Lamentations 4:21	"Rase it, rase it"
Edom driven from its land	Around 500-300 BC	The Nabataean Arabs took over the region of Petra; Edomites moved into southern Judah (called Idumea)
The Idumeans forcibly absorbed	Around 125 BC	The Jewish ruler John Hyrcanus conquered them and forced them to adopt Judaism
Herod the Great, an Idumean, rules Judea	37-4 BC	He tried to kill the infant Jesus (Matthew 2:16)
The Idumeans vanish from history	After AD 70	No trace of Esau's house remains (Obadiah 18)

Edom's homeland was a rugged, mountainous region of red sandstone cliffs, with cities built high among the rocks. The Edomites believed their mountain strongholds made them invincible. They were also famed for wisdom; Eliphaz, Job's friend, came from Teman in Edom (Job 2:11; Jeremiah 49:7).

Purpose and Theme

Obadiah declares that God will judge Edom for its pride and for its violence against its brother, and that the Day of the LORD will bring judgment on all nations and deliverance to God's people. Its key principles are:

- **Pride goes before a fall:** "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee... thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (3-4).
- **God repays nations according to their deeds:** "as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee" (15).
- **God's kingdom will triumph:** "and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S" (21).

> *For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.*
>
> **Obadiah 15**

Outline of Obadiah

Section	Verses	Theme
I. Edom's Destruction Announced	1-9	Pride brought down
The nations summoned	1-2	"I have made thee small"
Pride deceived	3-4	"Though thou... set thy nest among the stars"
Total plunder and betrayal	5-7	Allies turn against Edom

Section	Verses	Theme
Wisdom and strength fail	8-9	The wise men and mighty men cut off
II. Edom's Crimes Exposed	10-14	Violence against its brother
III. The Day of the LORD	15-21	Judgment and deliverance
Judgment on all nations	15-16	"As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee"
Deliverance and possession for Israel	17-20	"Upon mount Zion shall be deliverance"
The kingdom of the LORD	21	"The kingdom shall be the LORD'S"

Part Two: Verse-by-Verse Analysis

Section I: Edom's Destruction Announced (Verses 1-9)

Verses 1-2 — The Nations Summoned

> *The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.*
>
> **Obadiah 1**

God was stirring the nations to attack Edom. The God of Israel directs the movements of foreign armies (Isaiah 10:5-6; Jeremiah 25:9). "Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised" (2). The proud nation would be reduced to insignificance.

Verses 3-4 — The Deception of Pride

> *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Obadiah 3-4**

Edom's mountain fortresses gave it a sense of total security. But pride is self-deception: it makes people believe they are beyond the reach of judgment. The language echoes the fall of the proud king of Babylon, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell" (Isaiah 14:13-15). "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

Verses 5-7 — Total Plunder and Betrayal

Even thieves take only what they want, and grape-gatherers leave some gleanings, but Edom would be stripped completely (5). "How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!" (6). Its hidden treasures, stored in rock caves, would be found and taken.

> *All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: there is none understanding in him.*
>
> **Obadiah 7**

Edom's own allies would betray it. Historically, the Nabataean Arabs, once Edom's trading partners, gradually took over its homeland, and the Edomites were pushed out into southern Judah. Those who betray their brother will themselves be betrayed.

Verses 8-9 — Wisdom and Strength Fail

"Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?" (8). Edom's famed wisdom could not save it (1 Corinthians 1:19-20). Its "mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed" (9). Neither human wisdom nor military strength can stand when God acts.

Section II: Edom's Crimes Exposed (Verses 10-14)

> *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.*
>
> **Obadiah 10**

Edom's sin was all the worse because Israel was its brother. Esau and Jacob were twins; God had commanded Israel, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother" (Deuteronomy 23:7). Edom should have helped. Instead:

> *In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.*
>
> **Obadiah 11**

To stand aside and do nothing while a brother suffers is to take part in the crime. Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan condemns those who "passed by on the other side" (Luke 10:31-32). Then come eight solemn statements of what Edom "shouldest not" have done, a downward progression from attitude to action:

Edom's Sin	Verse	Progression
"Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger"	12	Watching with indifference
"Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction"	12	Gloating at their ruin
"Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress"	12	Mocking with words
"Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity"	13	Joining the invaders
"Yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity"	13	Staring at their suffering
"Nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity"	13	Looting their possessions
"Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape"	14	Blocking the escape of refugees
"Neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress"	14	Handing survivors to the enemy

Sin rarely begins with violence. It often starts with indifference, grows into secret pleasure at another's trouble, finds expression in proud words, and ends in active cruelty. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth" (Proverbs 24:17). "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15).

Section III: The Day of the LORD (Verses 15-21)

Verses 15-16 — Judgment on All Nations

> *For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.*
>
> **Obadiah 15**

Edom's judgment was part of a larger day of judgment on all nations. The principle of God's justice is reciprocal: what Edom did to Judah would be done to Edom. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:2). "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). "For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually... and they shall be as though they had not been" (16). The nations who celebrated on God's mountain would drink the cup of His wrath (Jeremiah 25:15-29; Revelation 14:10).

Verses 17-20 — Deliverance and Possession

> *But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.*
>
> **Obadiah 17**

In contrast to Edom's destruction, Zion would see deliverance, holiness and restoration (compare Joel 2:32). "And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble... and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it" (18). Israel, both Judah ("Jacob") and the northern tribes ("Joseph"), would be reunited and consume Edom like fire in dry straw.

Verses 19-20 describe Israel reclaiming land on every side: the people of the south (the Negev) would possess the mountain of Esau; those of the lowlands would take Philistia; they would possess Ephraim, Samaria, Benjamin and Gilead; the exiles of Israel would possess land as far as Zarephath in Phoenicia; and the exiles of Jerusalem in "Sepharad" (an unknown place, perhaps Sardis in Asia Minor; later Jewish tradition used the name for Spain) would possess the cities of the south. God's people, scattered and despised, would inherit the land.

Verse 21 — The Kingdom Shall Be the LORD'S

> *And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.*
>
> **Obadiah 21**

The book ends with deliverers ruling from Zion and the final, universal reign of God. Edom, the proud mountain, is judged; Zion, the holy mountain, is exalted. Every human kingdom built on pride will fall, and God's kingdom will stand for ever (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 11:15).

Part Three: Christ in Obadiah

Jacob and Esau, Christ and Herod

The ancient conflict between Jacob and Esau reached a remarkable climax in the New Testament. Herod the Great, king of Judea when Jesus was born, was an Idumean, a descendant of Edom. He tried to kill the newborn King of the Jews (Matthew 2:13-16). His son Herod Antipas, also of Idumean descent, mocked Jesus before His crucifixion (Luke 23:8-11). Esau's house stood against Jacob's greatest Son. But Herod's line vanished, and Christ's kingdom endures for ever.

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Obadiah	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
3-4	The proud who exalt themselves are brought down	Christ humbled Himself and was exalted; the proud are scattered (Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 1:51-52)
10-11	Edom stood aloof while its brother suffered	Christ, our Brother, did not stand aside but came to our side and suffered for us (Hebrews 2:11-17)
15	"As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee"	Christ took on Himself the judgment we deserved, so that we receive mercy instead (Isaiah 53:5-6; 1 Peter 2:24)
17	"Upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness"	"There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer" (Romans 11:26); believers come to Mount Sion (Hebrews 12:22-24)
17	The house of Jacob possesses its possessions	Believers receive an inheritance in Christ (Ephesians 1:11, 14; 1 Peter 1:4)
21	"Saviours shall come up on mount Zion"	Christ the Saviour, who will reign from Zion (Luke 2:11; Psalm 2:6; Revelation 14:1)
21	"The kingdom shall be the LORD'S"	"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Revelation 11:15)

The Conqueror from Edom

Isaiah pictured the Messiah returning from Edom after defeating God's enemies: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?... I have trodden the winepress alone... and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments" (Isaiah 63:1-6). Revelation shows Christ returning "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," treading "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:13-15). Edom stands for all God's proud enemies, whom Christ will finally overthrow.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Obadiah	Fulfillment
The nations will rise against Edom	1	Babylon under Nabonidus campaigned in Edom (around 552 BC); later powers followed
Edom made small and despised	2	Edom declined from a kingdom to a minor people
Brought down from its rocky heights	3-4	Its mountain strongholds were taken and abandoned
Betrayed by its allies	7	The Nabataean Arabs took over Edom's homeland
Its wise men and mighty men destroyed	8-9	Edom's leadership and identity disappeared
Cut off for ever	10	The Edomites, later called Idumeans, vanished as a people after AD 70
"There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau"	18	No identifiable descendants of Edom exist today, while the descendants of Jacob remain
Judah and Israel will possess Edom's land	19	The Idumeans were conquered and absorbed by the Jewish Hasmonean kingdom (around 125 BC); fuller fulfillment future
Deliverance on Mount Zion	17	The return from exile; the gospel first preached in Jerusalem; the future deliverance of Israel (Romans 11:26)
The kingdom shall be the LORD'S	21	Still future in its full form (Revelation 11:15)

Edom's complete disappearance stands in striking contrast to the survival of the Jewish people, scattered across the world for two thousand years yet still preserved. God's word to the two brothers came true.

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Obadiah 3-4 — The Deceitfulness of Pride

Pride deceives. It tells us we are secure, self-sufficient, beyond correction and beyond judgment. Edom's high cliffs seemed impregnable, but God said, "thence will I bring thee down." Every form of human pride, whether in wealth, position, intelligence or strength, is vulnerable before God. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Obadiah 10-14 — The Sin of Standing Aside

Edom's sins began with looking on and doing nothing. God holds us responsible not only for the evil we do but for the good we fail to do when others suffer (James 4:17; Proverbs 24:11-12). Gloating over others' misfortune, especially those close to us, is a serious sin.

Obadiah 15 — Reaping What We Sow

The Day of the LORD will bring perfect justice. Nations and individuals will receive according to their deeds. This should both sober us and comfort the oppressed: no injustice escapes God's notice. For the believer, the good news is that Christ bore the judgment our deeds deserved.

Obadiah 17, 21 — Deliverance and the Kingdom

The book that begins with judgment ends with deliverance on Mount Zion and the universal kingdom of God. History is moving toward the reign of God through His Messiah. The proud mountains of this world will fall; the holy mountain of God will stand.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Obadiah

1. God Judges Pride

He brings down those who exalt themselves (3-4; Luke 14:11).

2. God Holds Nations Accountable

Edom was judged for its treatment of Israel (10-14; Genesis 12:3).

3. The Sin of Indifference and Gloating

Standing aside, rejoicing in others' ruin and taking advantage of their misfortune are serious sins (11-14).

4. Family Ties Increase Responsibility

Edom's violence was worse because Jacob was its brother (10, 12).

5. The Law of Reaping What We Sow

"As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee" (15).

6. Human Wisdom and Strength Cannot Save

Edom's wise men and warriors failed (8-9).

7. The Day of the LORD

God will judge all nations (15-16).

8. God Preserves and Restores His People

Deliverance and holiness on Mount Zion; Israel will possess its inheritance (17-20).

9. The Final Kingdom Belongs to God

"The kingdom shall be the LORD'S" (21).

Part Seven: Connections — How Obadiah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Obadiah and the New Testament

Obadiah is not quoted directly in the New Testament, but its themes are developed there:

Obadiah	New Testament	Connection
Jacob and Esau (10)	Romans 9:10-13; Hebrews 12:16-17	God's choice of Jacob; Esau, a profane person who sold his birthright
Edom's descendants opposing Jacob	Matthew 2:13-16; Luke 23:8-11	Herod the Idumean against the Christ
3-4 (pride brought low)	Luke 1:51-52; 14:11; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5	God resists the proud
11 (standing on the other side)	Luke 10:31-32	Passing by on the other side
12 (rejoicing in a brother's ruin)	1 Corinthians 13:6; Romans 12:15	Love rejoices not in iniquity; weep with those who weep
10-14 (hating a brother)	1 John 3:15-17	Whoever hates his brother
15 (as thou hast done)	Matthew 7:2; Galatians 6:7; Revelation 18:6	Measured and reaped accordingly
15 (the day of the LORD)	1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10	The day of the Lord comes as a thief
16 (drinking the cup)	Revelation 14:10; 16:19	The cup of God's wrath
17 (deliverance on Zion)	Romans 11:26; Hebrews 12:22	The Deliverer out of Sion; Mount Sion
21 (the kingdom shall be the LORD'S)	Revelation 11:15; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28	The kingdoms of this world become Christ's

Obadiah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Jacob and Esau in the womb (25:22-23); the birthright (25:29-34); Esau's hatred (27:41); Isaac's blessing on Esau (27:39-40); Esau in Seir (36)
Numbers	Edom refuses Israel passage (20:14-21); "Edom shall be a possession" (24:18)
Deuteronomy	Do not meddle with Esau (2:4-5); "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother" (23:7)
1 Samuel	Doeg the Edomite betrays the priests (22:9-19)
2 Samuel	David subdues Edom (8:14)

Book	Link
1 Kings	Hadad the Edomite, an adversary to Solomon (11:14-22); Obadiah, Ahab's steward (18:3-16)
2 Kings	Edom revolts (8:20-22); Amaziah's victory (14:7)
2 Chronicles	Edom with Moab and Ammon against Jehoshaphat (20:10, 22-23); Jerusalem plundered under Jehoram (21:16-17)
Job	Eliphaz the Temanite (2:11)
Psalms	"Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem" (137:7)
Proverbs	"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth" (24:17); pride before a fall (16:18)
Isaiah	The proud brought down from the stars (14:13-15); judgment on Edom (34:5-17); the Conqueror from Edom (63:1-6)
Jeremiah	The parallel oracle against Edom (49:7-22)
Lamentations	"Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom... the cup also shall pass through unto thee" (4:21-22)
Ezekiel	Edom's vengeance and judgment (25:12-14; 35; 36:5)
Joel	Deliverance in Mount Zion (2:32); Edom made desolate (3:19)
Amos	Edom pursued his brother with the sword (1:11-12); Israel possessing the remnant of Edom (9:12)
Malachi	"I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains... waste" (1:2-5)

Themes That Run from Obadiah Through Scripture

Theme	In Obadiah	Developed	Fulfilled
Jacob and Esau	10, 18	Genesis 25-36; Malachi 1:2-5	Romans 9:10-13; Hebrews 12:16-17
Pride brought low	3-4	Proverbs 16:18; Isaiah 14:12-15	Luke 14:11; James 4:6
Reaping what is sown	15	Psalm 7:15-16	Galatians 6:7; Revelation 18:6
The Day of the LORD	15-16	Joel 2-3; Zephaniah 1	2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:17
Deliverance on Mount Zion	17, 21	Joel 2:32; Isaiah 59:20	Romans 11:26; Hebrews 12:22
The kingdom belongs to God	21	Psalm 22:28; Daniel 2:44	Revelation 11:15

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Don't let pride deceive you into feeling secure apart from God** (3).
- **No height of human achievement is beyond God's reach** (4).
- **Beware of trusting allies and alliances more than God** (7).
- **Human wisdom and strength cannot save** (8-9).
- **Treat your brother with love, especially in his trouble** (10).
- **Don't stand on the other side when others suffer** (11).
- **Never rejoice over another's downfall** (12).
- **Guard your words in others' distress** (12).
- **Don't take advantage of anyone's misfortune** (13).
- **Help those trying to escape trouble; don't hinder them** (14).
- **Remember that what you do to others will come back to you** (15).
- **Look to Mount Zion for deliverance and holiness** (17).
- **Trust that God's kingdom will prevail** (21).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
3	The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock
4	Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.
10	For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.
11	In the day that thou stoodest on the other side... even thou wast as one of them.
12	Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction
15	For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee
17	But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness
21	And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

Conclusion

Obadiah, the shortest book of the Old Testament, carries a weighty message. Edom, the proud descendants of Esau, lived in rocky fortresses high among the cliffs and believed no one could bring them down. When their brother Jacob was invaded, they stood aside, gloated, mocked, looted and handed fleeing survivors to the enemy. God declared that their pride had deceived them, that their allies would betray them, that their wisdom and strength would fail, and that as they had done, so it would be done to them. History confirmed His word: Edom vanished from the earth, while Jacob's descendants endure. But Obadiah looks beyond Edom to the Day of the LORD on all nations, to deliverance and holiness on Mount Zion, and to the day when "the kingdom shall be the LORD'S." That kingdom belongs to Jesus Christ, the Son of Jacob, whom an Edomite king tried to destroy, who humbled Himself rather than exalting Himself, who did not stand aside but took our judgment on Himself, and who will reign from Zion for ever.

> *And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.*
>
> **Obadiah 21**

Jonah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Jonah son of Amittai • Date: c. 760 BC • Chapters: 4

> *Salvation is of the LORD.*
>
> **Jonah 2:9**

Part One: Introduction to Jonah

The Prophet

Jonah, whose name means "dove," was "the son of Amittai" (1:1) from Gath-hepher in the territory of Zebulun (2 Kings 14:25; Joshua 19:13), a village in Galilee only a few miles from Nazareth. He prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (793-753 BC), when he foretold that Israel's borders would be restored, "according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet" (2 Kings 14:25). That prophecy came true. Jonah was a popular, patriotic prophet in a prosperous time, a contemporary of Amos and Hosea, ministering around 780-760 BC.

A Different Kind of Prophetic Book

Unlike the other prophetic books, Jonah is mainly a story about the prophet, not a collection of his sermons. His entire recorded message to Nineveh is a single sentence: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (3:4). The book reveals God's heart through Jonah's experience and through his resistance. It is also the only book of the Bible that ends with a question, a question God asks Jonah and every reader (4:11).

Was Jonah a Real Person, and Did This Really Happen?

Some treat the book as a parable or legend because of the great fish. But Scripture presents Jonah as a historical prophet (2 Kings 14:25), and Jesus treated the events of the book as real history. He compared His own death, burial and resurrection to Jonah's three days in the fish, and said that "the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas" (Matthew 12:40-41). Real people who did not exist could not rise in judgment. The book itself presents the fish as a miracle that God "prepared" (1:17). For those who believe in the God who raised Jesus from the dead, there is no difficulty in believing that He preserved Jonah.

Nineveh and Assyria

Nineveh, on the east bank of the Tigris River (opposite modern Mosul in Iraq), was one of the great cities of Assyria, founded long before by Nimrod (Genesis 10:11-12). It is called "that great city" four times (1:2; 3:2; 4:11) and "an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (3:3), which may refer to the size of the greater city district or to the time needed to preach throughout it. Assyria was the most feared empire of the age, notorious for its cruelty to conquered peoples: impaling, flaying and mass deportation. Within a few decades it would destroy the northern kingdom of Israel (722 BC). It is no surprise that a patriotic Israelite prophet did not want God to show it mercy.

Assyrian records show that during this period the empire was weakened by revolts, plague outbreaks (around 765 and 759 BC), and a total eclipse of the sun (763 BC), which was considered an ill omen. Some have suggested that these events may have prepared the city to listen to a foreign prophet's warning, though the Bible itself attributes their repentance to God's word.

Purpose and Theme

Jonah reveals the **wideness of God's mercy**. God cares not only for Israel but for all nations, even Israel's worst enemies. He is "a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (4:2), ready to forgive any who repent. The book also exposes the sin of a narrow, self-centred heart in God's own servant, who wanted grace for himself but judgment for his enemies. It shows God's sovereignty over nature and nations, His patience with a disobedient prophet, and the power of repentance.

> *Salvation is of the LORD.*
>
> **Jonah 2:9**

> *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*
>
> **Jonah 4:11**

What God "Prepared"

God's sovereign control runs through the book. He sent or "prepared" each element of nature to accomplish His purpose:

What God Sent	Jonah	Purpose
A great wind	1:4	To stop the fleeing prophet
A great fish	1:17	To rescue Jonah and bring him back
A gourd (a fast-growing plant)	4:6	To shade and comfort Jonah
A worm	4:7	To destroy the gourd
A vehement east wind	4:8	To teach Jonah about his priorities

Everything in creation obeyed God: the wind, the sea, the fish, the plant, the worm and the pagan sailors and Ninevites. Only the prophet of God resisted.

Outline of Jonah

Chapter	Jonah's Relationship to God	Theme
1	Running from God	Disobedience and the storm; the sailors saved
2	Praying to God	In the fish: "Salvation is of the LORD"
3	Running with God	Obedience and Nineveh's repentance
4	Angry with God	God's compassion and Jonah's narrow heart

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — Running from God

The Call and the Flight (1:1-3)

> *Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.*
>
> **Jonah 1:1-2**

God sees the wickedness of every nation, not only Israel's (Genesis 18:20-21). But Jonah did the opposite of what God said:

> *But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.*
>
> **Jonah 1:3**

Nineveh lay about 500 miles to the east; Tarshish, probably Tartessus in Spain, lay over 2,000 miles to the west, the far end of the known world. Jonah was not ignorant of God's omnipresence (he confesses God made the sea and the dry land, 1:9); he was trying to escape God's service and call (compare Psalm 139:7-10). Notice his path: he "went down" to Joppa, "went down" into the ship, went "down into the sides of the ship" (1:5), and finally "went down to the bottoms of the mountains" (2:6). Running from God is always a downward path. And disobedience has a cost: "he paid the fare thereof."

The Storm (1:4-10)

"But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken" (1:4). The pagan sailors, experienced men, were terrified; "every man cried unto his god," and they threw the cargo overboard (1:5). Meanwhile Jonah was "fast asleep" in the hold (1:5). The captain woke him: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not" (1:6). The pagans were praying; the prophet was sleeping. The sailors cast lots to find the cause, "and the lot fell upon Jonah" (1:7; Proverbs 16:33). Questioned, he confessed:

> *I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.*
>
> **Jonah 1:9**

The irony is sharp: he claimed to fear the God who made the sea while fleeing from Him across it. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this?" (1:10). Disobedient believers bring trouble not only on themselves but on those around them.

Jonah Cast into the Sea (1:11-16)

As the sea grew rougher, Jonah said, "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you" (1:12). The sailors showed more compassion than Jonah had for Nineveh: they "rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not" (1:13). Then they prayed to the LORD: "We beseech thee, O LORD, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee" (1:14). "So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging" (1:15).

> *Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.*
>
> **Jonah 1:16**

Even through Jonah's disobedience, God brought pagan sailors to fear and worship Him. They moved from crying "every man unto his god" (1:5) to calling on "the LORD" (1:14) and offering Him sacrifices. God's purpose to save the nations cannot be stopped by His servant's reluctance.

The Great Fish (1:17)

> *Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*
>
> **Jonah 1:17**

The fish was not God's punishment but His rescue. Jonah expected to drown; God preserved him. Jesus called this "the sign of the prophet Jonas" and applied it to His own death and resurrection (Matthew 12:39-40).

Chapter 2 — Praying to God

Jonah's Prayer from the Fish (2:1-9)

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly" (2:1). His prayer is full of phrases from the Psalms, showing a mind steeped in Scripture:

> *I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.*
>
> **Jonah 2:2-3**

(Compare Psalm 120:1; 18:4-6; 42:7.) "Hell" here is Sheol, the realm of the dead; Jonah felt he was as good as dead. "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple" (2:4; Psalm 31:22). He describes sinking through the waters, seaweed wrapped around his head (2:5), down "to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God" (2:6).

> *When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.*
>
> **Jonah 2:7-9**

Those who cling to worthless idols give up the mercy that could be theirs. Jonah now praised God and promised to keep his vows. His conclusion is one of the great statements of Scripture: "Salvation is of the LORD." Salvation is God's work from beginning to end, not man's achievement (Psalm 3:8; Ephesians 2:8-9). The name Jesus means "the LORD is salvation."

Notice that Jonah gave thanks before he was delivered from the fish. Faith praises God for His promised deliverance even before it arrives.

Delivered (2:10)

"And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land" (2:10). The fish obeyed God's word instantly.

Chapter 3 — Running with God

The Second Call (3:1-4)

> *And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.*
>
> **Jonah 3:1-2**

God is the God of the second chance. He did not abandon His disobedient servant but recommissioned him (compare Peter after his denial, John 21:15-19). The message was the same; Jonah's response was different: "So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD" (3:3). He was told to preach only "the preaching that I bid thee": the messenger must deliver God's message, not his own. Entering the city a day's journey, he cried:

> *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*
>
> **Jonah 3:4**

Five Hebrew words, with no mention of mercy, yet God used them powerfully. Forty is often a number of testing in Scripture (the flood, Israel in the wilderness, Jesus' temptation).

Nineveh Repents (3:5-9)

> *So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.*
>
> **Jonah 3:5**

It is one of the greatest revivals in history. The people "believed God": their repentance began with faith. The king heard, rose from his throne, removed his royal robe, put on sackcloth and sat in ashes (3:6). He decreed that neither man nor beast should eat or drink, that all should be covered in sackcloth, "and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands" (3:7-8). Their repentance was practical: they turned from violence, the very sin for which Assyria was infamous. "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" (3:9; compare Joel 2:14). They had no promise, only hope in God's character.

God Relents (3:10)

> *And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.*
>
> **Jonah 3:10**

God "repented" means He relented from the judgment He had threatened. This does not mean God changed His character or made a mistake. His warnings of judgment carry an unspoken condition: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation... to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them" (Jeremiah 18:7-8). God's unchanging character is to show mercy to the repentant (Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11).

Chapter 4 — Angry with God

Jonah's Anger (4:1-4)

> *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.*
>
> **Jonah 4:1**

God's greatest mercy made His prophet furious. Then Jonah revealed why he had run away in the first place:

> *And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.*
>
> **Jonah 4:2**

Jonah quoted God's own self-revelation to Moses (Exodus 34:6) as a complaint. He fled not because he feared Nineveh but because he feared God would forgive Nineveh. He wanted mercy for Israel and for himself (he had just been rescued from the fish!) but not for his enemies. "Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live" (4:3), echoing Elijah's despair (1 Kings 19:4). God answered gently with a question: "Doest thou well to be angry?" (4:4).

The Gourd, the Worm and the Wind (4:5-9)

Jonah went out east of the city, built a shelter, and sat to see what would happen, perhaps hoping God would still destroy it (4:5). "And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd" (4:6). The only time Jonah is said to be glad in the whole book is over his own comfort. The next morning "God prepared a worm," which destroyed the plant (4:7), and then "a vehement east wind," and the sun beat on Jonah's head until he fainted and again wished to die (4:8). God asked, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah answered, "I do well to be angry, even unto death" (4:9).

God's Final Question (4:10-11)

> *Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*
>
> **Jonah 4:10-11**

Jonah cared more about a plant that gave him shade than about 120,000 people, possibly the city's young children, who could not tell right from left, or the whole population in their moral ignorance. God cares even for the animals. If Jonah grieved over a plant he had not made, how much more should God, the Creator, care for the people He made?

The book ends with God's question unanswered. We do not know how Jonah responded. The question is left for every reader: Do you share God's compassion for the lost, even for your enemies?

Part Three: Christ in Jonah

The Sign of the Prophet Jonah

When the religious leaders demanded a sign, Jesus answered:

> *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*
>
> **Matthew 12:39-41**

Jonah's "death" in the sea and return to life after three days pictured Christ's death, burial and resurrection. (In Jewish reckoning, any part of a day counted as a day; Jesus was in the tomb part of Friday, all of Saturday and part of Sunday, "the third day," Matthew 16:21; 1 Corinthians 15:4.) The resurrection is the great sign that validates Christ's claims (Romans 1:4). And if Nineveh repented at Jonah's brief warning, how much more should people repent at the message of Christ, "a greater than Jonas."

Jonah and Jesus Compared

Jonah	Jonah	Jesus	New Testament
A prophet from Galilee (Gath-hepher)	2 Kings 14:25	A prophet from Galilee (Nazareth)	Matthew 21:11; John 7:52
Fled from God's will	1:3	Came to do God's will: "Lo, I come... to do thy will"	Hebrews 10:7; John 6:38
Asleep in a ship during a storm	1:5	Asleep in a ship during a storm	Mark 4:37-38
Woken by frightened sailors	1:6	Woken by frightened disciples	Mark 4:38
The sea calmed when Jonah was thrown in	1:15	The sea calmed at Jesus' word	Mark 4:39
The sailors "feared the LORD exceedingly"	1:16	The disciples "feared exceedingly"	Mark 4:41
Thrown into the sea for his own sin	1:12	Gave Himself for others' sins	1 Peter 3:18
His death saved the sailors from the storm	1:15	His death saves us from the storm of God's wrath	Romans 5:9
Three days and three nights in the fish	1:17	Three days in the heart of the earth	Matthew 12:40
Brought up alive	2:10	Raised from the dead	1 Corinthians 15:4
"Salvation is of the LORD"	2:9	Jesus, "the LORD is salvation"; "Neither is there salvation in any other"	Matthew 1:21; Acts 4:12

Jonah	Jonah	Jesus	New Testament
Preached to the Gentile city of Nineveh	3:4	Commanded the gospel be preached to all nations	Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47
Preached reluctantly	1:3; 4:1-2	Preached with compassion	Matthew 9:36
Angry that the city was spared	4:1	Wept over the city that would be destroyed	Luke 19:41
Wanted to die out of anger	4:3, 8	Laid down His life out of love	John 10:11, 15

Peter, Son of Jonah, at Joppa

Jonah fled from God's call to the Gentiles from the port of Joppa (1:3). Eight centuries later, at the same city of Joppa, the apostle Peter, called "Simon Bar-jona" ("son of Jonah," Matthew 16:17), received a vision teaching him that God was opening the door of salvation to the Gentiles (Acts 10:5-48). Peter at first resisted, but then obeyed and went to the Gentile household of Cornelius. The church concluded, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18), the very lesson Jonah resisted learning.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Signs

Prophecy or Sign	Scripture	Fulfillment
Israel's borders restored from Hamath to the Dead Sea	2 Kings 14:25 (Jonah's earlier prophecy)	Fulfilled under Jeroboam II
"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown"	Jonah 3:4	Conditional warning; Nineveh repented and was spared (3:10)
Nineveh's later destruction	Nahum 1-3; Zephaniah 2:13-15	When Nineveh returned to its wickedness, it was destroyed in 612 BC
The sign of Jonah	Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40	Christ's death, burial and resurrection on the third day
The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment	Matthew 12:41	The final judgment (future)
God's mercy extended to the Gentiles	Jonah 4:11	The gospel to all nations (Acts 10-11; Romans 15:9-12)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Jonah 1:3 — Running from God

No one can truly escape God's presence (Psalm 139:7-12), but we can try to run from His will. Disobedience always costs ("he paid the fare"), always takes us down, and often brings storms on others. Yet God pursues His runaway servants in love.

Jonah 1:4-16 — The Witness of a Disobedient Believer

The pagan sailors prayed while the prophet slept. They showed more concern for Jonah's life than he showed for Nineveh. Yet when Jonah finally confessed the truth about God, they came to fear and worship Him. God can work even through flawed servants, but the disobedient believer's witness is often an embarrassment.

Jonah 2:9 — Salvation Is of the LORD

This is the theme of the book and of the whole Bible. Jonah could not save himself from the sea; Nineveh could not save itself from judgment; the sailors could not save themselves from the storm. God alone saves, and He saves whom He will, even the most unlikely people (Titus 3:5).

Jonah 3:1-2 — The God of the Second Chance

God gave Jonah a second opportunity to obey. Failure need not be final. Moses, David, Peter and John Mark all received second chances. But the second chance is a call to obey this time.

Jonah 3:5-10 — True Repentance

Nineveh's repentance shows its marks: believing God's word, humbling themselves, crying out to Him, and turning from their evil ways and violence. God responded to their changed lives with mercy. Repentance is not just sorrow, but turning (Acts 26:20).

Jonah 4:1-11 — The Heart of God and the Heart of His Servant

Jonah knew God's character perfectly well and still resented it. He loved mercy for himself and judgment for his enemies. God's patient questions expose every heart that cares more about personal comfort than the eternal destiny of people. God's compassion reaches to the ignorant, the wicked and even the animals. The unanswered question invites every reader to align his heart with God's.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Jonah

1. God's Sovereignty over Creation

Wind, sea, fish, plant, worm and sun all obey Him (1:4, 17; 2:10; 4:6-8).

2. God's Compassion for All Nations

God cares for Gentiles as well as Israel, even for Israel's enemies (4:11; Genesis 12:3).

3. Salvation Is God's Work

"Salvation is of the LORD" (2:9).

4. The Futility of Running from God

No one can escape His presence or His purposes (1:3-4; Psalm 139:7-10).

5. God's Discipline and Restoration of His Servants

God pursued, disciplined and restored His disobedient prophet (1-3).

6. The Power of Repentance

God responds to genuine repentance with mercy (3:10; Jeremiah 18:7-8).

7. God's Unchanging Character

He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger and abundant in kindness (4:2; Exodus 34:6).

8. The Danger of a Narrow, Selfish Heart

God's servants can resent His grace toward others (4:1-3; Luke 15:25-32).

9. The Value of Every Soul

God values every person, and even the animals He created (4:11).

10. The Sign of Resurrection

Jonah's deliverance points to the death and resurrection of Christ (Matthew 12:40).

Part Seven: Connections — How Jonah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Jonah in the New Testament

Jonah	New Testament	Connection
1:17; 2:10 (three days in the fish)	Matthew 12:39-40; 16:4; Luke 11:29-30	The sign of the prophet Jonas: Christ's resurrection
3:5-10 (Nineveh repents)	Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32	The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment
1:4-16 (the storm and the sleeping prophet)	Mark 4:35-41	Jesus asleep in the storm; the sea calmed
1:3 (Joppa); the Gentiles	Acts 10:5-48; 11:18	Peter, son of Jonah, at Joppa, sent to the Gentiles
Matthew 16:17	Simon Bar-jona	Peter, "son of Jonah"
2:9 (salvation is of the LORD)	Matthew 1:21; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9	Salvation in Jesus alone
3:1-2 (the second call)	John 21:15-19	Peter recommissioned after failure
3:4 (preaching God's message)	Romans 10:14-15	How shall they hear without a preacher?
3:10 (God relents for the repentant)	2 Peter 3:9; Romans 2:4	Not willing that any should perish
4:1-3 (anger at God's mercy to others)	Luke 15:25-32; Matthew 20:1-15	The elder brother; the envious workers
4:11 (God's compassion for the city)	Matthew 9:36; Luke 19:41; 1 Timothy 2:4	Christ's compassion for the multitudes
God's heart for the nations	Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8	The Great Commission

Jonah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Nineveh built by Nimrod (10:11-12); God's promise to bless all families of the earth (12:3); God sees the wickedness of a city (18:20-21)
Exodus	"The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness" (34:6; Jonah 4:2)
Numbers	Moses asks to die rather than continue (11:15)
Joshua	Gath-hepher in Zebulun (19:13)

Book	Link
1 Kings	Elijah's despair: "it is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life" (19:4; Jonah 4:3)
2 Kings	Jonah's earlier prophecy for Jeroboam II (14:25); Assyria's destruction of Israel (17); Sennacherib returns to Nineveh (19:36)
Psalms	No escape from God's presence (139:7-12); sailors in a storm cry to the LORD (107:23-30); the waters and billows (42:7; 69:1-2); "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD" (3:8)
Proverbs	The lot and the LORD's decision (16:33)
Isaiah	Israel as a light to the Gentiles (42:6; 49:6)
Jeremiah	God relents when a nation repents (18:7-10)
Ezekiel	God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (18:23; 33:11)
Joel	"Who knoweth if he will return and repent" (2:13-14; Jonah 3:9; 4:2)
Nahum	The later destruction of Nineveh (1-3)
Zephaniah	Nineveh made desolate (2:13-15)
Malachi	God's name great among the Gentiles (1:11)

Themes That Run from Jonah Through Scripture

Theme	In Jonah	Developed	Fulfilled
God's mercy to the Gentiles	1:16; 3:10; 4:11	Isaiah 49:6; Psalm 67	Acts 10-11; Romans 15:9-12; Ephesians 2:11-22
Death and resurrection on the third day	1:17; 2:10	Hosea 6:2	Matthew 12:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4
Salvation by God alone	2:9	Psalm 3:8; Isaiah 43:11	Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9
Repentance and God's relenting	3:5-10	Jeremiah 18:7-8; Joel 2:12-14	Luke 15:7, 10; Acts 11:18
God's compassion	4:2, 11	Exodus 34:6; Psalm 145:8-9	Matthew 9:36; 2 Peter 3:9
The reluctant messenger	1; 4	Exodus 3-4; Jeremiah 1:6	Acts 10:14; Romans 10:14-15

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **You cannot outrun God** (1:3).
- **Disobedience always costs, and always leads down** (1:3, 5; 2:6).
- **Your disobedience can bring storms on others** (1:4, 12).
- **Don't sleep while others perish** (1:5-6).
- **Live consistently with what you confess about God** (1:9).
- **God can bring good even out of His servants' failures** (1:16).
- **Pray from the depths; God hears** (2:1-2).
- **Remember the LORD when your soul faints** (2:7).
- **Idols rob you of God's mercy** (2:8).
- **Give thanks before the deliverance comes** (2:9).
- **Salvation is God's work, not yours** (2:9).
- **Accept God's second chance and obey** (3:1-3).
- **Preach the message God gives, not your own** (3:2).
- **No one is beyond the reach of repentance** (3:5-10).
- **Repentance means turning from evil** (3:8, 10).
- **Rejoice when God shows mercy to others** (4:1).
- **Examine whether your anger is justified** (4:4, 9).
- **Care more for people than for your own comfort** (4:10-11).
- **Share God's compassion for the lost, even your enemies** (4:11; Matthew 5:44).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD
1:9	I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.
1:17	Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.
2:2	I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me
2:7	When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD
2:9	But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.
3:1	And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time
3:5	So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast
3:10	And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil
4:2	Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness
4:11	And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city

Conclusion

Jonah is the story of a prophet who ran from God and a God who would not let him go. Called to warn the cruel city of Nineveh, Jonah fled the other way because he knew God was gracious and might forgive his enemies. God sent a storm, and pagan sailors came to fear the LORD; He prepared a great fish, and from its belly Jonah learned that "Salvation is of the LORD." Given a second chance, Jonah preached a single sentence, and the whole city, from king to beggar, believed God and turned from violence, and God spared them. But the prophet sat angry outside the city, more upset over a withered plant than over 120,000 souls, and the book ends with God's question still hanging in the air. Jesus took up this story as the sign of His own death and resurrection: as Jonah was three days in the fish, so the Son of man would be three days in the heart of the earth. A greater than Jonah has come, not running from the lost but running toward them, not angry at mercy but dying to provide it, and calling every nation to repent and believe.

> *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*
>
> **Jonah 4:11**

Micah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Micah of Moresheth • Date: c. 735-700 BC • Chapters: 7

> *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*
>
> **Micah 5:2**

Part One: Introduction to Micah

The Prophet

Micah was "the Morasthite" (1:1), from Moresheth-gath (1:14), a small farming town in the lowlands (Shephelah) of Judah, about 25 miles south-west of Jerusalem near the Philistine border. His name means "Who is like the LORD?", and he ends his book with the great question, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?" (7:18). A country prophet, he spoke for the ordinary farmers and families who were being exploited by the powerful in the cities.

Date and Setting

Micah prophesied "in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1), roughly 740-690 BC. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, who ministered in Jerusalem's royal court, and of Hosea and Amos in the north. His message concerned "Samaria and Jerusalem" (1:1), the capitals of both kingdoms. He lived through the rise of Assyria, the fall of Samaria (722 BC), and Sennacherib's invasion of Judah (701 BC), when the Assyrians captured 46 fortified cities of Judah, including towns in Micah's own region such as Lachish.

King of Judah	Reign	Character
Jotham	750-732 BC	Did right, but the people still acted corruptly (2 Kings 15:34-35)
Ahaz	735-715 BC	Very wicked; idolatry and child sacrifice (2 Kings 16)
Hezekiah	715-686 BC	Godly reformer; responded to Micah's preaching (Jeremiah 26:18-19)

A century later, when Jeremiah was on trial for prophesying the temple's destruction, certain elders recalled that Micah had prophesied, "Zion shall be plowed like a field" (Micah 3:12), and that King Hezekiah, instead of killing him, "fear[ed] the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil" (Jeremiah 26:18-19). Micah's preaching helped bring about Hezekiah's reforms.

Purpose and Theme

Micah condemned the sins of Israel and Judah, especially the injustice of their leaders, the greed of the rich, and the lies of false prophets, and announced that judgment would fall on Samaria and Jerusalem. But he also proclaimed a glorious hope: a remnant would be gathered, Zion would be exalted above all nations, the nations would come to learn God's ways, and a Ruler would come from tiny Bethlehem whose origins are from eternity. The book is built on three messages, each beginning with "Hear" and each moving from judgment to hope.

> *But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*
>
> **Micah 5:2**

> *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*
>
> **Micah 6:8**

Micah and Isaiah

Micah and Isaiah preached at the same time and share several themes and even passages:

Shared Theme	Micah	Isaiah
The mountain of the LORD's house exalted; swords into plowshares	4:1-3	2:2-4
The Messiah's birth	5:2-3	7:14; 9:6
The Assyrian advance toward Jerusalem	1:10-16	10:28-32
Corrupt leaders who love bribes	3:9-11	1:23
True religion: justice and mercy	6:6-8	1:11-17
The Ruler who brings peace	5:4-5	9:6-7
The exile to Babylon foretold	4:10	39:6-7
God who pardons and forgets sin	7:18-19	43:25; 44:22

Outline of Micah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. First Message: "Hear, all ye people"	1-2	Judgment on both kingdoms; the remnant gathered
The coming judgment on Samaria and Judah	1	The LORD comes down; lament over the towns
Woe to the oppressors and false prophets	2:1-11	Coveting fields and houses
The Breaker and the King lead the remnant	2:12-13	Hope
II. Second Message: "Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob"	3-5	Corrupt leaders; the coming kingdom and King
Wicked rulers, priests and prophets	3	"Zion shall be plowed as a field"
The mountain of the LORD in the last days	4	Swords into plowshares
The Ruler from Bethlehem	5	"Whose goings forth have been from everlasting"
III. Third Message: "Hear ye now what the LORD saith"	6-7	God's case; the prophet's hope
The LORD's controversy	6:1-8	"What doth the LORD require of thee?"
Judgment on the dishonest city	6:9-16	Wicked balances
The prophet's lament and confidence	7:1-13	"When I fall, I shall arise"
Prayer and praise	7:14-20	"Who is a God like unto thee?"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: First Message (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — The LORD Comes Down

> *Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.*
>
> **Micah 1:2**

God is pictured coming down from His heavenly temple to judge: "the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire" (1:3-4). The cause: "For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?" (1:5). The capital cities, the centres of power, were the sources of the nations' corruption.

Samaria would become "as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof" (1:6). Its idols would be beaten to pieces (1:7). This was fulfilled when Assyria destroyed Samaria in 722 BC. Micah grieved deeply: "Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked" (1:8). "For her wound is incurable; for it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem" (1:9). The same Assyrian invader would sweep into Judah to the very gates of Jerusalem, as Sennacherib did in 701 BC.

In verses 10-16, Micah laments over the towns of his home region using wordplays on their names, as the enemy advances: "Declare ye it not at Gath" (compare David's lament, 2 Samuel 1:20); "in the house of Aphrah [dust] roll thyself in the dust"; Saphir ("beauty") would go in shame; Zaanan ("going out") would not go out; Maroth ("bitterness") waited for good in vain; Lachish was told to harness the chariot, for "she is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion" (1:13); Achzib ("deceit") would prove a lie to Israel's kings (1:14). Lachish fell to Sennacherib in 701 BC, as his palace reliefs vividly show. "Make thee bald... for they are gone into captivity from thee" (1:16).

Chapter 2 — Woe to the Oppressors

> *Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.*
>
> **Micah 2:1-2**

The rich lay awake planning to seize the land of small farmers, and carried out their plans at dawn because they had the power to do so. In Israel, the family land was a God-given inheritance (Leviticus 25:23; 1 Kings 21:3). God would devise a disaster against them in turn, and their stolen fields would be divided among the conquerors (2:3-5).

The false prophets told Micah, "Prophesy ye not" (2:6). God answered, "do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" (2:7). The people robbed peaceful travellers of their garments and drove widows and children from their homes (2:8-9). "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted" (2:10). The kind of prophet they wanted was one who would promise them wine and strong drink: "he shall even be the prophet of this people" (2:11). People love preachers who tell them what they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Then, suddenly, hope:

> *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold... The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.*
>
> **Micah 2:12-13**

God would gather His remnant like a shepherd. "The breaker" goes before them, breaking open the way out of captivity, and their King, the LORD Himself, leads them. Christ is the Shepherd who "goeth before them" (John 10:4) and "the captain of their salvation" (Hebrews 2:10), who broke the bonds of sin and death.

Section II: Second Message (Chapters 3-5)

Chapter 3 — Corrupt Leaders

> *Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment? Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; Who also eat the flesh of my people*
>
> **Micah 3:1-3**

The rulers, who should have upheld justice, were devouring the people like butchers. When disaster came, God would not answer their cries (3:4).

The false prophets "make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him" (3:5): they promised peace to those who fed them and declared war on those who did not. Darkness would fall on them; they would have no vision and no answer from God (3:6-7). In contrast, Micah declared:

> *But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.*
>
> **Micah 3:8**

A true prophet is empowered by God's Spirit to confront sin honestly. Micah summed up the corruption: "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us" (3:11). Everyone was for sale, yet they assumed God was on their side. The result:

> *Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.*
>
> **Micah 3:12**

This was fulfilled when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC, and again when Rome destroyed it in AD 70. Hezekiah's repentance at Micah's preaching delayed the judgment for over a century (Jeremiah 26:18-19).

Chapter 4 — The Mountain of the LORD

From the ploughed ruins of Zion, Micah looks forward to its future glory:

> *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*
>
> **Micah 4:1-2**

"And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (4:3-4). This passage, also found in Isaiah 2:2-4, describes the peace of the Messiah's kingdom. The gospel began going out from Jerusalem at Pentecost (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8); the full reign of peace awaits Christ's return. Meanwhile, God's people commit themselves: "we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever" (4:5).

God would gather the lame, the outcast and the afflicted, make them a strong nation, "and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever" (4:6-7). "And thou, O tower of the flock [Migdal Eder]... unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion" (4:8). The tower of the flock was near Bethlehem (Genesis 35:19-21), where shepherds watched the flocks; Jewish tradition associated it with the coming of the Messiah.

Before then, however, Jerusalem would suffer: "thou shalt go even to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies" (4:10). Remarkably, Micah named Babylon as the place of exile over a century before it happened, at a time when Assyria, not Babylon, was the great power. And he foretold the return from Babylon as well. The nations gathered against Zion did not know God's plan; He would gather them "as the sheaves into the floor" for judgment (4:11-13).

Chapter 5 — The Ruler from Bethlehem

"Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (5:1). Israel's ruler would be humiliated, a picture fulfilled when Jesus, the true Judge of Israel, was struck on the face and head (Matthew 26:67; 27:30). Then comes one of the most precise prophecies in the Old Testament:

> *But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*
>
> **Micah 5:2**

Bethlehem Ephratah (distinguishing it from another Bethlehem in Zebulun) was David's hometown (1 Samuel 16:1; Ruth 4:11), small and insignificant. From it would come a Ruler, the Son of David, yet one whose "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." He would be born in time, but His existence is eternal. When the wise men asked where the King of the Jews would be born, the chief priests and scribes answered by quoting this verse (Matthew 2:4-6). Even the common people knew "that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem" (John 7:42). God moved the Roman emperor to order a census so that Mary and Joseph would be in Bethlehem when Jesus was born (Luke 2:1-7).

"Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth" (5:3): Israel would be given over until the Messiah's birth (compare Isaiah 7:14; Revelation 12:5).

> *And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be the peace*
>
> **Micah 5:4-5**

The Ruler would shepherd His people in God's strength, and His greatness would reach the whole world. "This man shall be the peace": He does not merely bring peace; He is our peace (Ephesians 2:14; Isaiah 9:6). When the Assyrian invades, God would raise up enough leaders ("seven shepherds, and eight principal men") to defeat him (5:5-6). The remnant of Jacob would be among the nations "as a dew from the LORD" (blessing) and "as a lion" (strength) (5:7-9). God would purge His people of horses, chariots and fortresses (false security), and of witchcraft, soothsayers, idols and groves (false religion) (5:10-14), and execute vengeance on disobedient nations (5:15).

Section III: Third Message (Chapters 6-7)

Chapter 6 — What Does the LORD Require?

God summons Israel to court, with the mountains as jury: "Hear ye now what the LORD saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice" (6:1-2). Then God asks His people a heartbreaking question:

> *O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.*
>
> **Micah 6:3-4**

He reminded them how He turned Balaam's curse into blessing (Numbers 22-24) and led them from Shittim to Gilgal across the Jordan (6:5; Joshua 3-4), "that ye may know the righteousness of the LORD." Israel's response is a series of questions about how to please God:

> *Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*
>
> **Micah 6:6-7**

The questions escalate: more sacrifices, extravagant offerings, even child sacrifice. They thought God could be bought. God's answer:

> *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*
>
> **Micah 6:8**

God had already revealed what He wants: justice in dealing with others, steadfast love and kindness, and a humble walk with Him (compare Deuteronomy 10:12-13; 1 Samuel 15:22; Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:24). Jesus called these "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matthew 23:23). This verse does not teach salvation by good works; no sinner can perfectly meet this standard. Rather, it describes the life God desires, a life made possible through the One who gave Himself for our transgressions. The question "shall I give my firstborn for my transgression?" is answered in the gospel: God gave His own firstborn and only Son for our sins (John 3:16; Romans 8:32).

God's voice then cried to the city about its dishonesty: "the treasures of wickedness," "the scant measure," "wicked balances," "the bag of deceitful weights" (6:9-11). "The rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies" (6:12). Therefore they would eat but not be satisfied, sow but not reap, tread olives but not use the oil (6:13-15; Leviticus 26:26; Haggai 1:6). They followed "the statutes of Omri... and all the works of the house of Ahab" (6:16), the most wicked dynasty of the north.

Chapter 7 — The Prophet's Hope

Micah lamented the moral collapse of society. He was like a man searching a vineyard after the harvest and finding no fruit (7:1): "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men" (7:2). Officials and judges demanded bribes, and the powerful conspired together (7:3). Even trust within the family had broken down:

> *Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide... For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*
>
> **Micah 7:5-6**

Jesus quoted this to warn that following Him would divide even families (Matthew 10:35-36; Luke 12:53). In the darkness, Micah turned to God:

> *Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.*
>
> **Micah 7:7-9**

Speaking for the nation, Micah accepted God's discipline as deserved, and trusted that God would vindicate His people and bring them into the light. The enemy who mocked, "Where is the LORD thy God?" would be put to shame (7:10). The walls would be rebuilt and people would come from Assyria and Egypt and from sea to sea (7:11-12).

Micah prayed, "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage" (7:14), and God answered, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things" (7:15). The nations would see and be ashamed, lick the dust like a serpent, and come trembling to the LORD (7:16-17). Then the book ends with one of the most beautiful passages of praise in the Bible, playing on Micah's own name:

> *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*
>
> **Micah 7:18-20**

No other god forgives. The LORD pardons, passes over, does not hold anger for ever, delights in mercy, has compassion, conquers our sins, and throws them into the deepest sea, out of reach and out of mind. And He keeps His ancient promises to Abraham and Jacob. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, praised God for fulfilling this very promise in the coming of Christ: "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham" (Luke 1:72-73).

Part Three: Christ in Micah

Prophecies of Christ

Micah	Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
2:13	The Breaker goes before the remnant; their King leads them	Christ the Shepherd who goes before His sheep; the captain of salvation (John 10:4; Hebrews 2:10)
4:1-3	The nations stream to God's mountain; the word goes out from Jerusalem	The gospel preached from Jerusalem to all nations (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8); Christ's future reign of peace (Isaiah 9:7)
4:7	The LORD reigns in Mount Zion for ever	Christ's everlasting kingdom (Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15)
5:1	The Judge of Israel smitten on the cheek with a rod	Jesus struck on the face and head (Matthew 26:67; 27:30; Mark 15:19)
5:2	The Ruler born in Bethlehem Ephratah	Jesus born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-7; John 7:42)
5:2	His goings forth from everlasting	The eternal Son (John 1:1-2; 8:58; Colossians 1:17)
5:3	Israel given up until she who travails brings forth	The birth of the Messiah (Isaiah 7:14; Galatians 4:4; Revelation 12:5)
5:4	He shall feed (shepherd) His flock in the strength of the LORD	The Good Shepherd (Matthew 2:6; John 10:11)
5:4	Great unto the ends of the earth	Every knee shall bow (Philippians 2:9-11)
5:5	"This man shall be the peace"	"He is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14; Isaiah 9:6)
6:7	"Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression?"	God gave His only Son for our sins (John 3:16; Romans 8:32)
7:6	A man's enemies are those of his own house	Quoted by Jesus (Matthew 10:35-36)
7:19	Sins cast into the depths of the sea	Forgiveness through Christ's blood (Hebrews 8:12; 1 John 1:7)
7:20	The mercy to Abraham performed	Fulfilled in Christ's coming (Luke 1:54-55, 72-73)

The Ruler from Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 is one of the clearest prophecies identifying the Messiah. It names the town of His birth seven centuries in advance; identifies Him as a Ruler from David's line; declares His eternal pre-existence; and links Him with the Shepherd who would feed God's flock. Of all the towns in Judah, God chose one of the smallest. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Micah	Fulfillment
Samaria made a heap, its stones poured into the valley	1:6-7	Destroyed by Assyria, 722 BC (2 Kings 17:5-6)
The invader reaches Judah and the gate of Jerusalem	1:9-16	Sennacherib's invasion, 701 BC; Lachish captured (2 Kings 18:13-17)
Zion plowed as a field; Jerusalem in heaps	3:12	Destroyed by Babylon, 586 BC; delayed by Hezekiah's repentance (Jeremiah 26:18-19); destroyed again AD 70
Judah taken to Babylon	4:10	The Babylonian exile, 605-586 BC
Redeemed from Babylon	4:10	The return under Cyrus, 538 BC (Ezra 1)
The Judge of Israel smitten on the cheek	5:1	Jesus struck before His crucifixion (Matthew 27:30)
The Ruler born in Bethlehem	5:2	Jesus' birth (Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-7)
The word of the LORD from Jerusalem	4:2	The gospel preached from Jerusalem (Acts 2)
Families divided	7:6	Applied by Jesus to discipleship (Matthew 10:35-36)
The remnant gathered	2:12; 4:6-7	Partly in the return from exile; fully in the future
The nations flowing to Zion; universal peace	4:1-4	Begun through the gospel; completed at Christ's reign

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Micah 2:1-2 — Sins Planned in the Night

The oppressors planned evil in bed and carried it out at dawn, simply because they had the power. Sin often starts in the imagination and is carried out when opportunity arises (James 1:14-15). Power is a responsibility, not a licence.

Micah 3:8 — Full of Power by the Spirit

Micah stood apart from the paid prophets because he was filled with God's Spirit and courage to name sin. Faithful ministry requires spiritual power, a sense of justice, and the courage to tell people the truth about their sin (Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:2).

Micah 3:11 — Religion for Sale

Judges, priests and prophets all worked for money, yet claimed God's presence. Using religion for profit while trusting in false security is a serious danger in every age (1 Timothy 6:5; 1 Peter 5:2).

Micah 4:1-4 — The Coming Kingdom of Peace

The vision of nations learning God's ways, swords turned into plowshares, and every family secure under its own vine and fig tree describes the peace only Christ's reign can bring. Human efforts at lasting world peace fail; God's kingdom will succeed.

Micah 5:2 — Little Bethlehem

God chose an insignificant town for the birth of the eternal King. He delights to use small things for great purposes. The prophecy also reveals Christ's two natures: born in time as a man of David's line, yet existing from everlasting as God.

Micah 6:6-8 — What God Requires

God is not impressed by extravagant religious gifts. He wants people who act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Him. These three summarise how to relate to others (justice and mercy) and to God (humility). No one can achieve this perfectly; we need the grace of the One who gave His firstborn for our transgression. But those who are saved by grace are called to live this way (Ephesians 2:10).

Micah 7:7-9 — Hope in the Darkness

When society is collapsing and even families are divided, the believer looks to the LORD, waits for Him, and trusts Him to hear. "When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me." Even under God's discipline, the believer can trust Him to bring him into the light.

Micah 7:18-20 — Who Is a God Like Thee?

These verses describe God's forgiveness in seven ways: He pardons iniquity, passes by transgression, does not retain anger, delights in mercy, has compassion, subdues iniquities, and casts all sins into the depths of the sea. And He is faithful to His promises. This is the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Micah

1. God Judges Injustice

He holds the powerful accountable for oppressing the poor and stealing their inheritance (2:1-2; 3:1-3; 6:10-12).

2. Leaders Bear Special Responsibility

Rulers, priests and prophets who corrupt justice and truth bring judgment on the whole nation (3:9-12).

3. False Prophets Tell People What They Want to Hear

They cry "Peace" for pay and oppose true messengers (2:6, 11; 3:5).

4. True Religion Is Justice, Mercy and Humility

Not ritual or costly gifts, but a right life before God (6:6-8).

5. God's Faithfulness to His People

He reminds them of His past acts of redemption (6:3-5) and keeps His promises to Abraham and Jacob (7:20).

6. The Remnant Will Be Gathered

God will gather and restore a remnant (2:12-13; 4:6-7; 5:7-8).

7. The Messiah from Bethlehem

An eternal Ruler will be born in Bethlehem, shepherd His people, and be their peace (5:2-5).

8. The Kingdom of Peace

In the last days, the nations will come to God's mountain and war will cease (4:1-4).

9. Hope in the Darkness

God's people can wait for Him, rise after falling, and see His light (7:7-9).

10. God's Incomparable Forgiveness

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?" (7:18-19).

Part Seven: Connections — How Micah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Micah in the New Testament

Micah	New Testament	Connection
2:12-13 (the Breaker and Shepherd)	John 10:4, 11; Hebrews 2:10	The Good Shepherd goes before the sheep
3:5, 11 (prophets for pay)	1 Timothy 6:5; 2 Peter 2:1-3	False teachers motivated by gain
4:1-2 (the word from Jerusalem)	Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 2	Beginning at Jerusalem
4:3 (peace among nations)	Luke 2:14; Revelation 21:4	Peace on earth; no more sorrow
5:1 (smitten on the cheek)	Matthew 26:67; 27:30; Mark 15:19	Jesus struck
5:2 (Bethlehem)	Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-7; John 7:42	The birthplace of Christ
5:2 (from everlasting)	John 1:1-2; 8:58; Colossians 1:17	The eternal Word
5:3 (she which travaileth)	Revelation 12:2, 5	The woman bringing forth the ruler of nations
5:4 (He shall feed His flock)	Matthew 2:6; John 10:11; 1 Peter 2:25	The Shepherd of souls
5:5 (this man shall be the peace)	Ephesians 2:14; Romans 5:1	He is our peace
6:6-7 (offering the firstborn)	John 3:16; Romans 8:32	God gave His Son
6:8 (justice, mercy, humility)	Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; James 1:27	The weightier matters of the law
7:6 (a man's enemies in his own house)	Matthew 10:35-36; Luke 12:53	Families divided over Christ
7:7 (waiting for the God of salvation)	Romans 8:25; Titus 2:13	Waiting with hope
7:8 (light in darkness)	John 8:12; 1 John 1:5	Christ the light
7:18-19 (sins cast into the sea)	Hebrews 8:12; 10:17; 1 John 1:7-9	Sins remembered no more
7:20 (the mercy to Abraham)	Luke 1:54-55, 72-73	The oath to Abraham fulfilled in Christ

Micah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Rachel buried on the way to Ephrath, Bethlehem; the tower of Edar (35:19-21; Micah 4:8; 5:2); Abraham's offering of his son (22; Micah 6:7); the oath to Abraham (22:16-18; Micah 7:20)
Exodus	The Exodus and redemption from slavery (12-14; Micah 6:4; 7:15); "Who is like unto thee, O LORD" (15:11; Micah 7:18); "The LORD... merciful and gracious... forgiving iniquity" (34:6-7)
Leviticus	The land as God's inheritance (25:23); eating without being satisfied (26:26; Micah 6:14)
Numbers	Balak and Balaam (22-24; Micah 6:5)
Deuteronomy	"What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear... to walk... to love... to serve" (10:12-13; Micah 6:8); just weights (25:13-16; Micah 6:11)
Joshua	From Shittim to Gilgal across the Jordan (3-4; Micah 6:5)
Ruth	Ephratah and Bethlehem (4:11)
1 Samuel	David from Bethlehem (16-17); obedience better than sacrifice (15:22)
2 Samuel	"Tell it not in Gath" (1:20; Micah 1:10); the covenant with David (7:12-16)
1 Kings	Naboth's vineyard stolen (21; Micah 2:2); every man under his vine and fig tree (4:25; Micah 4:4); Omri and Ahab (16:25-33; Micah 6:16)
2 Kings	Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (15-20); the fall of Samaria (17); Sennacherib's invasion (18-19)
2 Chronicles	Hezekiah's reforms (29-31)
Psalms	God casting sins far away (103:12; Micah 7:19)
Isaiah	The mountain of the LORD's house (2:2-4); the virgin's son (7:14); the child born, the Prince of Peace (9:6-7); Babylon (39:6-7); sins blotted out (43:25)
Jeremiah	Micah's prophecy recalled at Jeremiah's trial (26:18-19)
Hosea	Mercy, not sacrifice (6:6)
Joel	Swords into plowshares reversed (3:10)
Amos	Justice like a mighty stream (5:24)
Haggai	Sowing without reaping (1:6; Micah 6:15)
Zechariah	Every man under his vine and fig tree (3:10); nations seeking the LORD in Jerusalem (8:20-23); the smitten Shepherd (13:7)

Themes That Run from Micah Through Scripture

Theme	In Micah	Developed	Fulfilled
The Ruler from Bethlehem	5:2	1 Samuel 16; Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-11
The eternal Messiah	5:2	Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 110:1	John 1:1; 8:58; Hebrews 13:8

Theme	In Micah	Developed	Fulfilled
The Shepherd-King	2:13; 5:4; 7:14	Ezekiel 34:23	John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20
The kingdom of peace	4:1-4; 5:5	Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:7	Ephesians 2:14; Revelation 21-22
Justice, mercy and humility	6:8	Deuteronomy 10:12; Hosea 6:6	Matthew 23:23; James 1:27
The remnant gathered	2:12; 4:6-7	Isaiah 10:20-22	Romans 11:5, 26
God's forgiveness	7:18-19	Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 38:17	Hebrews 10:17; 1 John 1:9
God's covenant faithfulness to Abraham	7:20	Genesis 22:16-18	Luke 1:72-73; Galatians 3:14

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Remember that God sees what happens in the halls of power** (1:5).
- **Grieve over the sins of your nation** (1:8).
- **Don't use your power to take what belongs to others** (2:1-2).
- **Beware of preachers who only say what you want to hear** (2:11).
- **Follow Christ, the Breaker who leads His people out** (2:13).
- **Leaders: love good and hate evil** (3:2).
- **Ask God to fill you with His Spirit and courage** (3:8).
- **Never sell truth or ministry for money** (3:11).
- **Don't assume God is with you while you live in sin** (3:11).
- **Walk in the name of the LORD for ever** (4:5).
- **Don't despise small beginnings; God chose Bethlehem** (5:2).
- **Find your peace in Christ** (5:5).
- **Remember what God has done for you** (6:3-5).
- **You cannot buy God's favour** (6:6-7).
- **Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God** (6:8).
- **Be honest in business** (6:10-11).
- **Look to the LORD and wait for Him in dark times** (7:7).
- **When you fall, rise again in God's strength** (7:8).
- **Accept God's discipline humbly** (7:9).
- **Rejoice that God casts your sins into the depths of the sea** (7:19).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2:13	The breaker is come up before them... and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.
3:8	But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might
4:2	For the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
4:3	They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks
5:2	But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah... out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.
5:5	And this man shall be the peace
6:8	He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?
7:7	Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.
7:8	When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.
7:18	Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity... because he delighteth in mercy.
7:19	And thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Conclusion

Micah, a country prophet whose name asks "Who is like the LORD?", spoke for the oppressed farmers of Judah against the powerful who stole their land, the judges who took bribes, the priests who taught for hire, and the prophets who cried "Peace" for pay. He saw judgment coming on Samaria and Jerusalem, and announced that Zion would be ploughed like a field, a message that moved King Hezekiah to repentance. Yet Micah also saw beyond the ruins: the mountain of the LORD exalted, the nations streaming to learn His ways, swords beaten into plowshares, and a Ruler coming forth from little Bethlehem, whose goings forth are from everlasting, who would shepherd His flock and be their peace. He told God's people what the LORD requires: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God. And he ended with praise for the God who pardons iniquity, delights in mercy, and casts all our sins into the depths of the sea. That God came to us in Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, struck on the cheek, the firstborn Son given for our transgression, who is our peace.

> *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*
>
> **Micah 7:18**

Nahum

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Nahum the Elkoshite • Date: c. 660-630 BC • Chapters: 3

> *The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*
>
> **Nahum 1:7**

Part One: Introduction to Nahum

The Prophet

Nahum, whose name means "comfort" or "comforter," is called "the Elkoshite" (1:1). The location of Elkosh is unknown. Suggestions include a village in Galilee (Capernaum means "village of Nahum"), a town in southern Judah, or Al-Qosh near the site of Nineveh in modern Iraq. Nothing else is known about him. His name fits his message: the fall of the cruel Assyrian Empire would bring comfort to God's oppressed people.

Date

Nahum refers to the fall of "populous No" (No-Amon, the great Egyptian city of Thebes) as a past event (3:8-10). The Assyrians destroyed Thebes in 663 BC. He foretells the fall of Nineveh as still future, and Nineveh fell in 612 BC. So Nahum prophesied between 663 and 612 BC, probably during the reign of the wicked King Manasseh or early in the reign of Josiah. He was a contemporary of Zephaniah, who also foretold Nineveh's desolation (Zephaniah 2:13-15).

The Sequel to Jonah

About 150 years earlier, Nineveh had repented at Jonah's preaching and God had spared it (Jonah 3:10). But that repentance did not last. Assyria returned to its violence and became the most brutal empire of the ancient world:

- It destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and deported its people (722 BC; 2 Kings 17).
- Sennacherib invaded Judah, captured 46 fortified cities, besieged Jerusalem and blasphemed the God of Israel (701 BC; 2 Kings 18-19).
- It took Judah's king Manasseh captive with hooks (2 Chronicles 33:11).
- Assyrian kings boasted in their own inscriptions of impaling, flaying, burning and mutilating their enemies and piling up their heads.

Jonah showed God's mercy to the repentant; Nahum shows God's justice on the unrepentant. Both books are rooted in the same revelation of God's character to Moses: "The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:6-7).

Jonah	Nahum
About 760 BC	About 650 BC
Nineveh repents	Nineveh has returned to its wickedness
God's mercy: "a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger" (Jonah 4:2)	God's justice: "slow to anger... and will not at all acquit the wicked" (Nahum 1:3)
Nineveh spared	Nineveh's destruction announced

Jonah	Nahum
The prophet reluctant to preach mercy	The prophet announcing comfort to the oppressed
Ends with a question about God's compassion (4:11)	Ends with a question about Nineveh's endless wickedness (3:19)

The Fall of Nineveh

At the height of its power, Nineveh was the largest city in the world, with walls said to be wide enough for chariots, protected by moats and the Tigris and Khosr rivers. Its fall seemed impossible. Yet in 612 BC a coalition of Babylonians under Nabopolassar and Medes under Cyaxares besieged and destroyed it. The Babylonian Chronicle records the siege, the capture and the vast plunder taken. The ancient Greek historian Diodorus Siculus records that a flood of the river broke down part of the wall, allowing the attackers in, and that the defenders had been feasting and drinking. Archaeologists have found thick layers of ash in the ruins. So complete was the destruction that within two centuries the site was forgotten; the Greek general Xenophon passed it in 401 BC without recognising it as Nineveh. Its ruins were not identified until the excavations of the nineteenth century.

Purpose and Theme

Nahum announces the certain destruction of Nineveh as God's just judgment on its cruelty and pride, and brings comfort to Judah, which had suffered under Assyria's yoke. Its central theme is the character of God as the righteous Judge who avenges His people, and as a stronghold for those who trust Him.

> *The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked*
>
> **Nahum 1:3**

> *The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*
>
> **Nahum 1:7**

> *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!*
>
> **Nahum 1:15**

Outline of Nahum

Chapter	Theme	Focus
1	The Judge: God's character and verdict	Who God is; Nineveh's doom and Judah's comfort
2	The Judgment: the fall of Nineveh described	The siege, the flood, the plunder, the lion's den
3	The Justice: the reasons for Nineveh's fall	The bloody city, the harlot, the lesson of Thebes, no healing

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — The Judge and His Verdict

The Character of God (1:1-8)

"The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite" (1:1). A "burden" is a weighty message of judgment. Before describing Nineveh's fall, Nahum describes the God who will bring it about. Verses 2-8 form a partial acrostic poem, following the Hebrew alphabet:

> *God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.*
>
> **Nahum 1:2**

God's "jealousy" is His zeal to protect His honour and His people, like a husband's rightful protectiveness (Exodus 20:5; 34:14). His vengeance is not petty revenge but the righteous judgment of the Ruler of the universe against evil (Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19).

> *The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.*
>
> **Nahum 1:3**

God's patience is not weakness. He had been slow to anger with Nineveh for over a century, but His patience has a limit, and He is powerful enough to judge. Creation trembles before Him: He rebukes the sea and dries it up, Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon wither, the mountains quake and the hills melt (1:4-5).

> *Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.*
>
> **Nahum 1:6**

And yet, in the midst of this description of wrath:

> *The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*
>
> **Nahum 1:7**

The same power that destroys His enemies protects His people. God is a refuge, a fortress, for those who trust Him, and He knows them personally (Psalm 46:1; John 10:14; 2 Timothy 2:19). "But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies" (1:8), a prophecy that matches the historical accounts of the flood that breached Nineveh's walls.

Nineveh's Doom (1:9-14)

"What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time" (1:9). This time there would be no reprieve. "While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry" (1:10), matching the tradition that Nineveh's defenders were drinking when the city fell. "There is one come out of thee, that imagineth evil against the LORD, a wicked counsellor" (1:11), probably Sennacherib, who plotted against Jerusalem and mocked the LORD (2 Kings 18:28-35).

To Judah God promised: "Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more. For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder" (1:12-13). To Nineveh's king: "no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make thy grave; for thou art vile" (1:14). Sennacherib himself had been assassinated by his own sons while worshipping in the house of his god Nisroch (2 Kings 19:37), and the Assyrian royal line would soon come to an end.

Good Tidings for Judah (1:15)

> *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.*
>
> **Nahum 1:15**

Messengers would run across the mountains with the news that the oppressor was destroyed. Judah could worship freely again. Isaiah used almost the same words for the news of God's salvation (Isaiah 52:7), and Paul applied them to the preaching of the gospel: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15).

Chapter 2 — The Fall of Nineveh

The Attack (2:1-5)

"He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily" (2:1). With irony Nahum calls Nineveh to prepare its defences, which would be useless. "For the LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel" (2:2): God would restore the glory of His people whom Assyria had plundered.

The attackers' shields are red and the warriors dressed in scarlet (2:3). The scene is vivid:

> *The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.*
>
> **Nahum 2:4**

The verse describes the chaos of chariot warfare in the city's streets, the bronze and polished metal flashing like torches. (Some have applied this verse to modern traffic, but its meaning in context is the ancient battle for Nineveh.) The defenders stumble as they rush to the wall (2:5).

The Flood and the Fall (2:6-10)

> *The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.*
>
> **Nahum 2:6**

The rivers that protected Nineveh became the means of its destruction. Ancient accounts describe a flood breaking down part of the walls; the river gates or dams may also have been opened to flood the city. "Huzzab" (2:7), probably a title for the queen or a word meaning "it is decreed," is led away captive while her maids mourn like doves. "But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back" (2:8): the people pour out like water from a breached pool, and no one turns back to defend the city.

> *Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture. She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth*
>
> **Nahum 2:9-10**

Nineveh had grown rich by plundering other nations; now it was plundered. The Babylonian Chronicle records that "great quantities of spoil" were carried off.

The Lions' Den Destroyed (2:11-13)

> *Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid? The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.*
>
> **Nahum 2:11-12**

The lion was a symbol of Assyrian royal power; Assyrian palace reliefs famously show kings hunting lions. Assyria had been like a lion that tore its victims and filled its den with prey from the nations. Now the den would be empty.

> *Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.*
>
> **Nahum 2:13**

"Behold, I am against thee" is the most terrifying sentence any nation could hear. The Assyrian messengers who had once shouted threats and blasphemies outside Jerusalem's walls (2 Kings 18:17-35; 19:9-13) would be silenced for ever.

Chapter 3 — Why Nineveh Fell

The Bloody City (3:1-3)

> *Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not*
>
> **Nahum 3:1**

Nineveh was built on bloodshed, deception and plunder. Nahum then paints the final battle in rapid, breathless images:

> *The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses, and of the jumping chariots. The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses*
>
> **Nahum 3:2-3**

The violence Nineveh inflicted on others now fell on Nineveh.

The Harlot and Sorceress (3:4-7)

"Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts" (3:4). Nineveh is pictured as a seductive prostitute and sorceress who lured nations with promises of wealth and alliance and then enslaved them. Revelation uses the same imagery for "Babylon the great," the final world system, a harlot who corrupts the nations with her sorceries (Revelation 17:1-5; 18:3, 23). God would expose her shame before the nations (3:5-6). "All they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" (3:7). No one would mourn the city that had caused so much mourning.

The Lesson of Thebes (3:8-10)

> *Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?*
>
> **Nahum 3:8**

No-Amon (Thebes) was the great capital of Upper Egypt, protected by the Nile and supported by powerful allies, Ethiopia, Egypt, Put and Lubim (3:9). Yet Assyria itself had destroyed it in 663 BC, carrying its people captive and dashing its children to pieces (3:10). If Thebes could fall to Assyria, Nineveh could fall too. No city is invincible against God's judgment.

Hopeless Defences (3:11-17)

Nineveh too would stagger like a drunkard and be "hid" (3:11), a word fulfilled when the city disappeared so completely that its location was forgotten. Its fortresses were like fig trees with ripe figs: shake them, and they fall into the eater's mouth (3:12). Its soldiers would lose courage, its gates would stand wide open, and fire would devour its bars (3:13). Nahum mockingly tells the city to store water for the siege and to make bricks to repair the walls, but the fire would consume it anyway (3:14-15). Its merchants had multiplied like stars, and its officials like swarms of locusts, but like locusts they would fly away when the sun rose (3:16-17).

No Healing (3:18-19)

> *Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?*
>
> **Nahum 3:18-19**

The leaders were asleep (or dead), the people scattered with no one to gather them. Nineveh's wound was fatal. The whole world, having suffered under its cruelty, would clap for joy at the news. The book ends with a question, like Jonah: "upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?" Everyone had suffered from Assyria; no one would weep. Within three years of Nineveh's fall, the Assyrian Empire was gone for ever.

Part Three: Christ in Nahum

The Bringer of Good Tidings

"Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" (1:15). The news of Nineveh's fall pointed forward to the greatest good news of all: the defeat of sin, death and Satan through Jesus Christ. Christ "came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Ephesians 2:17), and He sends His people with "the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15; Romans 10:15).

The Breaker of Bonds

"For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder" (1:13). Assyria's yoke on Judah pictures the bondage of sin. Christ came "to preach deliverance to the captives... to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18). "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).

The Stronghold and the Judge

Nahum	Picture or Theme	Fulfillment in Christ
1:2	The LORD who takes vengeance on His enemies	Christ will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 19:11-15)
1:3	Slow to anger, yet will not acquit the wicked	God's patience now; judgment through Christ later (2 Peter 3:9-10; Acts 17:30-31)
1:4	He rebukes the sea	Jesus rebuked the wind and the sea (Mark 4:39-41)
1:6	"Who can stand before his indignation?"	"The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:16-17); Christ bore that wrath for believers (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10)
1:7	A stronghold in the day of trouble; He knows those who trust Him	Christ our refuge (Hebrews 6:18); "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19; John 10:14)
1:11	The wicked counsellor who plots against the LORD	The rulers who plotted against the LORD's Anointed (Psalm 2:1-2; Acts 4:25-28)
1:13	The yoke broken and the bonds burst	Liberty in Christ (Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:1; Matthew 11:28-30)
1:15	The feet of him who brings good tidings and publishes peace	The gospel of peace (Romans 10:15; Ephesians 2:17; 6:15)
3:4	The harlot and mistress of witchcrafts judged	Babylon the great judged by Christ (Revelation 17-18)
3:19	A wound with no healing for the unrepentant	Christ heals the repentant: "with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24)

Wrath and Refuge

Nahum shows both sides of God's character that meet at the cross. God's wrath against sin is real and terrible: "who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?" (1:6). Yet "the LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble" (1:7). At Calvary, Christ endured the wrath of God for sinners so that He could become their stronghold. Those who reject Him face Nineveh's end; those who trust Him find refuge.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Nahum	Fulfillment
Nineveh will be destroyed	1:8-9, 14; 2:13; 3:7	Captured and destroyed by the Babylonians and Medes, 612 BC
"An overrunning flood" will make an utter end	1:8	Ancient accounts record a flood that breached the walls
"The gates of the rivers shall be opened"	2:6	The rivers and moats used in the city's fall
Defenders drunken when devoured	1:10; 3:11	Diodorus records the Assyrians feasting and drinking before the fall
The city plundered of silver and gold	2:9	The Babylonian Chronicle records great spoil taken
The city burned	2:13; 3:13, 15	Thick ash layers found in Nineveh's ruins
The gates thrown open to the enemy	3:13	The attackers entered the city
"Affliction shall not rise up the second time"	1:9	Assyria never recovered; the empire ended by 609 BC
"Thou shalt be hid"	3:11	The site was forgotten for over two thousand years until rediscovered in the 1800s
Assyria's yoke broken off Judah	1:13, 15	Judah was freed from Assyrian domination
No healing of the wound	3:19	Assyria disappeared permanently as a power

The accuracy of Nahum's prophecy is so striking that some critics have argued it must have been written after the event. But Nahum's reference to the fall of Thebes (663 BC) as a recent example, and the absence of any reference to the Babylonians by name, fit a date decades before 612 BC.

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Nahum 1:2-3 — God's Justice and Patience

God is jealous, avenging and wrathful toward His enemies, yet slow to anger. His patience gives time for repentance (Romans 2:4), but it is not indifference. He "will not at all acquit the wicked." Those who mistake His patience for weakness, as Nineveh did after Jonah, store up wrath for themselves (Romans 2:5; Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Nahum 1:7 — A Stronghold in the Day of Trouble

In the middle of a chapter about God's terrifying wrath stands this precious promise. God's power, which makes mountains quake, is a fortress for those who trust Him. He knows them, not merely as facts but as His own. The same God is a terror to His enemies and a refuge to His people (Psalm 9:9; 46:1; Proverbs 18:10).

Nahum 1:15 — The Feet of the Messenger

The news of the oppressor's defeat brought freedom to worship. The gospel announces the defeat of the believer's greatest enemies: sin, death and the devil (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15). Those who carry this news have "beautiful feet."

Nahum 2:13 — "Behold, I Am Against Thee"

No power on earth can stand when God sets Himself against it. Nineveh, the superpower of its age, fell in a single campaign. Nations and individuals should fear having God as their opponent, and seek to have Him as their Friend (Romans 8:31).

Nahum 3:8-10 — The Lesson of History

Nineveh had destroyed Thebes, a city just as strong, yet failed to learn that it too could fall. Those who ignore the lessons of history, and of God's judgments on others, repeat them (1 Corinthians 10:11-12).

Nahum 3:19 — Wickedness Without Remedy

Nineveh's wound had no healing because it had abandoned the repentance it once showed. Persistent, unrepentant wickedness eventually brings judgment "without remedy" (Proverbs 29:1; 2 Chronicles 36:16). Yet for those who repent, there is healing through Christ.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Nahum

1. God Is the Righteous Judge of Nations

He holds even the greatest empires accountable for their cruelty and pride (1:2; 2:13; 3:1-7).

2. God's Patience Has Limits

He is slow to anger, but He will not acquit the wicked for ever (1:3).

3. God Is Sovereign over Creation

Seas, mountains, storms and floods obey Him (1:3-6, 8).

4. God Is a Refuge for His People

"The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble" (1:7).

5. God Avenges His People

He breaks the oppressor's yoke and brings good tidings to the afflicted (1:12-15).

6. Violence and Exploitation Bring Judgment

The bloody city full of lies and robbery received what it gave (3:1-4; Galatians 6:7).

7. No Power Is Invincible Before God

Nineveh's walls, rivers, armies and wealth could not save it (2:1-10; 3:8-17).

8. Past Repentance Does Not Cover Present Rebellion

Nineveh's repentance in Jonah's day did not protect it when it returned to its sins (Ezekiel 18:24).

9. God's Word Is Certain

Every detail of Nineveh's fall came to pass.

Part Seven: Connections — How Nahum Links to the Rest of the Bible

Nahum in the New Testament

Nahum	New Testament	Connection
1:2 (vengeance belongs to the LORD)	Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30-31	"Vengeance is mine; I will repay"
1:2, 6 (wrath and fire)	2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Hebrews 12:29	Our God is a consuming fire
1:3 (slow to anger)	Romans 2:4-5; 2 Peter 3:9	God's longsuffering leads to repentance
1:4 (rebuking the sea)	Mark 4:39-41	Jesus rebukes the wind and sea
1:6 (who can stand?)	Revelation 6:16-17	The wrath of the Lamb
1:7 (a stronghold; He knows His own)	2 Timothy 2:19; John 10:14; Hebrews 6:18	The Lord knows them that are His
1:13 (breaking the yoke)	Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:1; Matthew 11:28-30	Liberty in Christ
1:15 (beautiful feet; good tidings of peace)	Romans 10:15; Ephesians 2:17; 6:15; Acts 10:36	The gospel of peace
3:1, 4 (the bloody city; the harlot and sorceress)	Revelation 17:1-6; 18:2-3, 23-24	Babylon the great judged
3:7, 19 (no one mourns; all clap)	Revelation 18:9-20	The fall of Babylon; heaven rejoices
3:19 (wickedness reaped)	Galatians 6:7	Whatsoever a man soweth

Nahum in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Nineveh built by Nimrod (10:11-12)
Exodus	"I the LORD thy God am a jealous God" (20:5); "merciful and gracious... will by no means clear the guilty" (34:6-7; Nahum 1:3)
Deuteronomy	"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence" (32:35, 41-43)
2 Kings	Assyria's tribute demands (15:19, 29); Israel destroyed by Assyria (17); Sennacherib's invasion, Rabshakeh's threats, the angel's deliverance, and Sennacherib's murder in the house of Nisroch (18-19)
2 Chronicles	Manasseh taken captive by the Assyrians (33:11)

Book	Link
Psalms	God our refuge and strength (46:1); the LORD a refuge in times of trouble (9:9); God's coming in storm and earthquake (18:7-15; 97:2-5)
Isaiah	Assyria the rod of God's anger, punished for its pride (10:5-19); "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings" (52:7); the Assyrian broken (14:24-27; 37:21-38)
Jeremiah	The punishment of No (Thebes) (46:25)
Ezekiel	Assyria as a mighty cedar cut down; Assyria in the pit (31; 32:22-23)
Hosea	God as a lion against His enemies (13:7-8)
Jonah	Nineveh's earlier repentance and God's mercy (3-4)
Micah	Nations trembling before the LORD (7:16-17)
Habakkuk	God's majesty in judgment (3)
Zephaniah	Nineveh made a desolation, a place for beasts (2:13-15)

Themes That Run from Nahum Through Scripture

Theme	In Nahum	Developed	Fulfilled
The justice and patience of God	1:2-3	Exodus 34:6-7; Jonah 4:2	Romans 2:4-5; 2 Peter 3:9-10
God as refuge	1:7	Psalm 46:1; Proverbs 18:10	Hebrews 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:19
Good tidings of peace	1:15	Isaiah 52:7	Romans 10:15; Ephesians 2:17
Freedom from oppression	1:13	Isaiah 10:27	Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:1
The fall of the proud world power	2-3	Isaiah 13-14; Daniel 2:44	Revelation 17-18
The harlot city	3:4	Isaiah 23:15-17	Revelation 17:1-6
Reaping what is sown	3:1-7, 19	Obadiah 15	Galatians 6:7; Revelation 18:6

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Don't mistake God's patience for indifference** (1:3).
- **Fear God's power and justice** (1:2-6).
- **Run to the LORD, your stronghold, in trouble** (1:7).
- **Take comfort that God knows those who trust Him** (1:7).
- **God can break any yoke that oppresses you** (1:13).
- **Carry the good tidings of peace to others** (1:15).
- **Keep your vows and worship faithfully when God delivers you** (1:15).
- **No human defences can stand when God is against you** (2:1-10; 2:13).
- **Wealth gained by exploitation will be lost** (2:9).
- **Lies, violence and robbery bring judgment** (3:1).
- **Learn from the judgments God has brought on others** (3:8-10).
- **Past spiritual experiences do not excuse present sin** (Jonah 3; Nahum 3).
- **Seek healing in Christ before the wound becomes incurable** (3:19; Isaiah 53:5).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2	God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth... the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries
1:3	The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked
1:6	Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?
1:7	The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.
1:13	For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder.
1:15	Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!
2:13	Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts
3:1	Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery

Conclusion

Nahum is the sequel to Jonah. A century and a half after Nineveh repented and was spared, the city had returned to its cruelty, crushing Israel, ravaging Judah, and boasting of its atrocities. Nahum, whose name means "comfort," announced that the God who is slow to anger "will not at all acquit the wicked." The proud capital with its rivers, walls and limitless treasure would be flooded, plundered, burned and hidden from the earth, and the whole world would clap its hands at the news. In 612 BC it happened just as he said. Yet in the middle of this book of judgment shines a promise: "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." And on the mountains run messengers with good tidings of peace. That message finds its fullest meaning in Jesus Christ, who bore God's wrath against sin, broke the yoke of our bondage, and sends His people to carry the gospel of peace, so that all who trust Him may find refuge from the day of wrath.

> *The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*
>
> **Nahum 1:7**

Habakkuk

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Habakkuk • Date: c. 609-605 BC • Chapters: 3

> *But the just shall live by his faith.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:4**

Part One: Introduction to Habakkuk

The Prophet

Habakkuk is called simply "Habakkuk the prophet" (1:1; 3:1). His name probably means "embrace" or "one who embraces." Some have seen this as fitting: he wrestled with God and finally embraced Him in faith. The musical note at the end of the book, "To the chief singer on my stringed instruments" (3:19), and the musical terms in chapter 3 suggest he may have been connected with the temple musicians, perhaps a Levite. Nothing else is known of his life.

Date and Setting

Habakkuk wrote when the Chaldeans (Babylonians) were rising to power but had not yet invaded Judah: God says, "I will work a work in your days... I raise up the Chaldeans" (1:5-6). Babylon became the dominant power after defeating Assyria and Egypt, especially at the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC. Judah itself was full of violence, injustice and lawlessness (1:2-4), which fits the reign of the wicked King Jehoiakim (609-598 BC) after the death of godly Josiah. So Habakkuk probably prophesied around 609-605 BC. His contemporaries included Jeremiah and Zephaniah.

A Different Kind of Prophecy

Most prophets spoke God's word to the people. Habakkuk instead records a conversation between the prophet and God. He brings his honest questions and complaints to God, receives God's answers, and finally responds in a prayer of worship and trust. The book moves:

- from **questioning** (chapter 1) to **waiting** (chapter 2) to **worship** (chapter 3);
- from "**How long?**" and "**Why?**" (1:2-3) to "**Yet I will rejoice in the LORD**" (3:18);
- from a man who cannot understand God's ways to a man who trusts God whatever happens.

Purpose and Theme

Habakkuk wrestles with the problem of evil and the justice of God: Why does God allow wickedness to go unpunished? And how can a holy God use a nation more wicked than His own people to punish them? God's answer is that He is in control, that the wicked will certainly be judged in His time, and that "the just shall live by his faith" (2:4). Faith trusts God's character and promises when His ways are not understood and circumstances are dark. This verse became one of the foundations of the New Testament gospel and of the Protestant Reformation.

> *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:4**

> *Although the fig tree shall not blossom... Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:17-18**

The Dialogue

Dialogue Stage	Habakkuk	Content
Habakkuk's first question	1:2-4	"How long?... Why?" Why does God tolerate violence and injustice in Judah?
God's first answer	1:5-11	"I raise up the Chaldeans" to judge Judah
Habakkuk's second question	1:12-2:1	How can a holy God use the wicked Babylonians to punish people more righteous than they?
God's second answer	2:2-20	Write the vision and wait; the proud will fall; the just shall live by faith; five woes on Babylon; "the LORD is in his holy temple"
Habakkuk's response	3:1-19	A prayer: remembering God's mighty acts, trembling, and rejoicing in God though everything fails

Outline of Habakkuk

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Prophet's Questions	1:1-2:1	Faith troubled
First complaint: injustice in Judah	1:1-4	"How long shall I cry?"
God's answer: the Chaldeans	1:5-11	"I will work a work in your days"
Second complaint: a holy God using the wicked	1:12-2:1	"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil"
II. God's Answer	2:2-20	Faith taught
The vision and the call to wait	2:2-3	"Though it tarry, wait for it"
The proud and the just	2:4-5	"The just shall live by his faith"
Five woes on the oppressor	2:6-20	"The LORD is in his holy temple"
III. The Prophet's Prayer	3	Faith triumphant
Plea for revival	3:1-2	"In wrath remember mercy"
God's glory in history	3:3-15	The God of the Exodus and conquest
Trust and joy	3:16-19	"Yet I will rejoice in the LORD"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — The Prophet's Questions

The First Complaint: Why Is God Silent? (1:1-4)

> *O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.*
>
> **Habakkuk 1:2-3**

Habakkuk looked at his own nation and saw violence, destruction, strife, and the collapse of justice: "Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth" (1:4). He had prayed and prayed, and it seemed God was not listening or acting. This is the honest cry of many believers in every age (Psalm 13:1-2; 22:1-2; Revelation 6:10). Scripture does not condemn such questions when they are brought to God in faith.

God's First Answer: The Chaldeans Are Coming (1:5-11)

> *Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs.*
>
> **Habakkuk 1:5-6**

God was not inactive. He was about to do something astonishing: raise up Babylon to judge Judah. The Babylonians were "terrible and dreadful," a law to themselves (1:7). Their horses were "swifter than the leopards," fiercer than wolves at evening; their cavalry flew like eagles to devour (1:8). They came for violence and gathered captives "as the sand" (1:9). They mocked kings, laughed at fortresses, heaped up earth ramps and took them (1:10). But their pride would be their downfall: "he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god" (1:11). They would worship their own might.

Paul quoted 1:5 in his sermon at Pisidian Antioch, warning those who rejected the gospel: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe" (Acts 13:40-41). The greatest "work" God would do was the salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ.

The Second Complaint: How Can a Holy God Use the Wicked? (1:12-2:1)

God's answer created a bigger problem. Habakkuk began by affirming what he knew about God:

> *Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.*

> **Habakkuk 1:12**

God is eternal, holy and faithful to His covenant ("we shall not die": His people would not be wiped out). Habakkuk accepted that Babylon was God's instrument of correction. But:

> *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?*
>
> **Habakkuk 1:13**

How could God use a nation more wicked than Judah? The Babylonians treated people like fish, catching them in nets and dragging them away, and then worshipping their nets, the military power that made them rich (1:14-16). "Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?" (1:17). Would this go on for ever?

Having asked his question, Habakkuk took his stand like a watchman on a city wall to wait for God's answer:

> *I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:1**

He did not walk away from God in his confusion; he waited for God to speak.

Chapter 2 — God's Answer

Write the Vision and Wait (2:2-3)

> *And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:2-3**

God's answer was to be written clearly so that anyone could read it and carry the message. Its fulfillment was certain, though it would come at God's appointed time, not Habakkuk's. "Though it tarry, wait for it." God's delays are not denials. Hebrews applies this verse to the second coming of Christ: "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37).

The Proud and the Just (2:4-5)

> *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:4**

Here are two kinds of people. The proud (Babylon, and every proud sinner) are puffed up and not upright; they will not survive God's judgment. The righteous will live by faith: by trusting God, and by

faithfully holding on to Him and His word. The Hebrew word for faith (emunah) includes both trust and faithfulness. In the coming storm of judgment, the righteous would survive not by their own strength but by trusting God.

This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament, each time emphasising a different word:

New Testament	Emphasis	Meaning
Romans 1:17	"The just"	The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel; those declared righteous by God are those who believe
Galatians 3:11	"Shall live by faith"	No one is justified by the law; righteousness and life come through faith, not works
Hebrews 10:38	"Shall live by faith" (persevering)	Believers must keep trusting and not draw back while waiting for Christ's return

Martin Luther's study of Romans 1:17, quoting Habakkuk, helped spark the Protestant Reformation and its recovery of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Habakkuk 2:4 stands with Genesis 15:6 ("he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness") as a foundation of the gospel.

The proud man is like a drunkard, restless and never satisfied, enlarging his appetite "as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations" (2:5).

Five Woes on the Oppressor (2:6-20)

God answered Habakkuk's second question: Babylon would not go unpunished. The nations it had oppressed would one day sing a taunt song over it, pronouncing five woes:

Woe	Habakkuk	Babylon's Sin	Its Judgment
1	2:6-8	Plundering nations; growing rich on what is not theirs	The plundered nations will plunder Babylon
2	2:9-11	Building a secure house by unjust gain; setting its nest on high	Shame; "the stone shall cry out of the wall"
3	2:12-14	Building a city with blood and iniquity	Their labour comes to nothing; God's glory will fill the earth
4	2:15-17	Making neighbours drunk to shame them; violence against lands and animals	They will drink the cup of the LORD's wrath
5	2:18-20	Idolatry: trusting dumb idols of wood and stone	The idols are lifeless; "the LORD is in his holy temple"

Woe 1 (2:6-8): "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!" (2:6). Plunder is like loading oneself with heavy mud. "Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee" (2:8).

Woe 2 (2:9-11): "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!" (2:9). Babylon tried to make itself secure through ill-gotten wealth, but its very buildings would testify against it: "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it" (2:11). Jesus said that if His disciples were

silent, "the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40).

Woe 3 (2:12-14): "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!" (2:12). Empires built on bloodshed are destined for the fire: "the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity" (2:13). In contrast to Babylon's passing glory stands God's eternal purpose:

> *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:14**

One day, not Babylon's glory but God's glory will fill the whole earth (Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 11:9). This is the goal of history, realised in the kingdom of Christ (Revelation 11:15; 21:23).

Woe 4 (2:15-17): "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink... and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!" (2:15). Babylon exploited and humiliated other nations. "The cup of the LORD'S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory" (2:16). It would drink the cup of God's wrath (Jeremiah 25:15-27). It would also be judged for its violence against Lebanon's forests and animals (2:17).

Woe 5 (2:18-20): "What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it... to make dumb idols?" (2:18). "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it" (2:19). In contrast to the silent idols:

> *But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:20**

The idols are silent because they are dead; the earth must be silent before the living God because He reigns (Psalm 11:4; Zephaniah 1:7; Zechariah 2:13). Habakkuk had complained that God was silent (1:13); now he learns that he must be silent before God. God is on His throne, and He will act.

Chapter 3 — The Prophet's Prayer

A Plea for Revival (3:1-2)

"A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth" (3:1), probably a musical term for an intense, emotional song.

> *O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:2**

Habakkuk no longer argued. Having heard God's answer, he trembled, and he prayed. He asked God to renew His mighty works in their own time, as He had in the past, and to remember mercy even while executing judgment. This is the prayer of every believer who longs for revival (Psalm 85:6).

God's Glory in History (3:3-15)

Habakkuk then described a magnificent vision of God coming in power, drawing on the great events of Israel's history: the Exodus, Sinai, the wilderness journey and the conquest.

> *God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:3-4**

Teman and Paran are the regions south of Israel, near Sinai, where God revealed Himself to Israel (Deuteronomy 33:2; Judges 5:4-5). Rays of light ("horns") flashed from His hand. Pestilence went before Him (3:5). "He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting" (3:6). The tents of Cushan and Midian trembled (3:7).

Was God angry with the rivers and the sea, that He rode on "chariots of salvation"? (3:8). The mountains trembled, the deep roared (3:10). "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation" (3:11), recalling Joshua's long day (Joshua 10:12-13). God marched through the land in indignation and threshed the nations (3:12). And why?

> *Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:13**

God's acts of judgment were for the salvation of His people and of His "anointed" (Messiah). He crushed the head of the wicked, an echo of the first promise that the woman's Seed would bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). "Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, through the heap of great waters" (3:15), recalling the Red Sea (Exodus 14-15). The God who did all this in the past can be trusted for the future.

Trust and Joy (3:16-19)

> *When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops.*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:16**

Habakkuk was shaken by the vision of God's power and the coming invasion. Yet he resolved to wait quietly for the day of trouble. Then come some of the greatest words of faith in Scripture:

> *Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.*
>
> **Habakkuk 3:17-19**

In an agricultural society, the loss of figs, grapes, olives, grain, sheep and cattle meant total economic ruin and famine. Habakkuk knew the Babylonian invasion might bring exactly that. Yet he declared he would rejoice, not in his circumstances, but "in the LORD," "the God of my salvation." God would be his strength and make him sure-footed like a deer on the mountain heights (2 Samuel 22:34; Psalm 18:33), able to stand secure on dangerous ground. The man who began with "How long?" ends with "Yet I will rejoice." His circumstances had not changed; his perspective had. Faith had triumphed.

Part Three: Christ in Habakkuk

The Just Shall Live by Faith

The heart of Habakkuk is the heart of the gospel. Sinners are not made right with God by their own works, which can never meet God's holy standard (1:13), but by faith in the One God has provided. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Galatians 3:11). Christ is the object of saving faith: "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe" (Romans 3:22).

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Habakkuk	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:5	God will do a work that people will not believe	The work of salvation through Christ, rejected by many (Acts 13:38-41)
1:13	God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil"	On the cross, as Christ bore our sin, He cried, "why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
2:3	"Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come"	"He that shall come will come, and will not tarry": Christ's return (Hebrews 10:37)
2:4	"The just shall live by his faith"	Justification by faith in Christ (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38)
2:11	The stones crying out	Jesus: "the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40)
2:14	The earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD	The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6); Christ's universal reign (Revelation 11:15; 21:23)
2:20	"The LORD is in his holy temple"	Christ, the true temple (John 2:19-21); enthroned in heaven (Hebrews 8:1-2)
3:2	"In wrath remember mercy"	At the cross, God's wrath against sin and His mercy to sinners met (Romans 3:25-26)
3:13	"Salvation with thine anointed"; wounding the head of the wicked	Christ the Anointed (Messiah) crushed the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14)
3:18	"The God of my salvation"	Jesus, whose name means "the LORD is salvation" (Matthew 1:21; Luke 2:30)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Habakkuk	Fulfillment
God will raise up the Chaldeans	1:6	Babylon rose to dominance under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar (626-605 BC)
They will sweep through the land, swift and terrible	1:6-10	Babylon defeated Egypt at Carchemish (605 BC) and conquered the region
They will take Judah's people captive like sand	1:9	The deportations of 605, 597 and 586 BC (2 Kings 24-25)
They will deride kings and take fortified cities	1:10	Jerusalem's kings humiliated; Jerusalem captured (586 BC)
Babylon will be plundered by the nations it plundered	2:8	Babylon conquered by the Medes and Persians (539 BC)
Babylon's drunken pride judged	2:5, 15-16	Belshazzar's feast on the night Babylon fell (Daniel 5)
Babylon's idols powerless	2:18-19	Babylon's gods could not save it (Isaiah 46:1-2; Jeremiah 50:2)
The vision will surely come at its appointed time	2:3	Every part of the vision came to pass
The just shall live by faith	2:4	Revealed fully in the gospel (Romans 1:17)
The earth filled with the knowledge of God's glory	2:14	Begun through the spread of the gospel; to be completed in Christ's kingdom

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Habakkuk 1:2-4 — Honest Questions

Habakkuk did not pretend to understand when he did not. He brought his confusion directly to God. God did not rebuke him for asking but answered him. Believers may bring their honest questions to God, as long as they come in faith and are willing to listen to His answer (Psalm 62:8; James 1:5).

Habakkuk 1:12-13 — Reasoning from What We Know

When Habakkuk could not understand God's plan, he started from what he knew about God's character: eternal, holy, faithful, pure. When circumstances are confusing, believers can anchor themselves in God's unchanging nature (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).

Habakkuk 2:1-3 — Waiting on God

Habakkuk positioned himself to listen, like a watchman on the tower. God told him to write the vision and wait, because it would surely come at the appointed time. God's timing is perfect, even when it seems slow (2 Peter 3:8-9; Isaiah 40:31).

Habakkuk 2:4 — The Just Shall Live by Faith

This verse contrasts the proud, self-reliant person with the righteous one who trusts God. It teaches that righteousness before God comes through faith, and that the righteous continue to live by faithful trust in God through every trial. It is the theme of Romans, Galatians and Hebrews 11.

Habakkuk 2:14 — The Glory of God Filling the Earth

In a world where Babylon's glory seemed to fill the earth, God revealed that His glory would one day fill it completely. This is the ultimate goal of God's plan and the hope of every believer (Isaiah 11:9; Revelation 21:23).

Habakkuk 2:20 — Silence Before the LORD

The idols are dumb; the LORD is enthroned. The proper response to the living God is reverent silence, submission and trust. Habakkuk moved from complaining that God was silent to falling silent before God.

Habakkuk 3:17-19 — Joy When Everything Fails

This is faith at its highest: joy in God Himself, not in His gifts. When every source of security is gone, the believer still has the LORD, his salvation and his strength. God does not always remove the hardship, but He gives "hinds' feet" to walk securely on the high and dangerous places (Philippians 4:4, 11-13; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Habakkuk

1. God Hears Honest Questions

He answers those who bring their struggles to Him in faith (1:2-2:3).

2. God Is Sovereign over Nations

He raises up Babylon and will bring Babylon down (1:6; 2:8, 16).

3. God Is Holy

He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil" (1:13), and He will judge all sin.

4. God's Timing Is Perfect

The vision will come at the appointed time; we must wait for it (2:3).

5. The Proud Will Fall

"His soul which is lifted up is not upright in him" (2:4); pride, greed, violence, exploitation and idolatry bring woe (2:6-19).

6. The Just Shall Live by Faith

Righteousness and life come through faith in God (2:4).

7. God's Glory Will Fill the Earth

His purposes will triumph over every human empire (2:14).

8. Idols Are Worthless; God Is Enthroned

"The LORD is in his holy temple" (2:18-20).

9. Remembering God's Past Works Strengthens Faith

Habakkuk's prayer recalls the Exodus and conquest (3:3-15).

10. Joy in God Above All

Faith rejoices in God even when every earthly blessing is lost (3:17-19).

Part Seven: Connections — How Habakkuk Links to the Rest of the Bible

Habakkuk in the New Testament

Habakkuk	New Testament	Connection
1:2 (how long?)	Revelation 6:10	The martyrs cry, "How long, O Lord?"
1:5 (a work you will not believe)	Acts 13:40-41	Paul's warning to those who reject the gospel
1:12-13 (God's holiness)	1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 1:5	God is holy; in Him is no darkness
2:1-3 (waiting for the vision)	James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 3:9	Patient waiting; the Lord is not slack
2:3 (though it tarry)	Hebrews 10:37	Christ's coming will not tarry
2:4 (the just shall live by faith)	Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38-39	Justification by faith; persevering faith
2:4 (the proud)	James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5	God resists the proud
2:9 (covetousness)	Luke 12:15; Colossians 3:5	Beware of covetousness, which is idolatry
2:11 (the stones cry out)	Luke 19:40	The stones would cry out
2:14 (the earth filled with God's glory)	2 Corinthians 4:6; Revelation 11:15; 21:23	The glory of God in Christ; the kingdom of Christ
2:15-16 (the cup of wrath)	Revelation 14:10; 16:19; 18:6	Babylon drinks the cup of God's wrath
2:18-19 (dumb idols)	1 Corinthians 8:4; 12:2	An idol is nothing; dumb idols
2:20 (silence before the LORD)	Revelation 8:1	Silence in heaven
3:2 (wrath and mercy)	Romans 3:25-26	God just and the justifier
3:13 (wounding the head of the wicked)	Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14	Christ's victory over Satan
3:17-18 (rejoicing in loss)	Philippians 4:4, 11-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18	Rejoice always; contentment in every state

Habakkuk in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The serpent's head to be bruised (3:15; Habakkuk 3:13); Abraham believed and it was counted for righteousness (15:6; Habakkuk 2:4)
Exodus	The Red Sea crossing (14-15; Habakkuk 3:8, 15); God's glory at Sinai (19; Habakkuk 3:3-6)
Numbers	"All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD" (14:21; Habakkuk 2:14)
Deuteronomy	"The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir... he shined forth from mount Paran" (33:2; Habakkuk 3:3)
Joshua	The sun and moon stood still (10:12-13; Habakkuk 3:11)
Judges	The earth trembled and the mountains melted before the LORD (5:4-5)
2 Samuel	"He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places" (22:34)
2 Kings	Jehoiakim's evil reign and Babylon's invasion (23:36-24:7)
Job	Wrestling with God's ways
Psalms	"How long, O LORD?" (13:1); the prosperity of the wicked (73); the waters saw God and were afraid (77:16-20); "Wilt thou not revive us again?" (85:6); "The LORD is in his holy temple" (11:4); hinds' feet (18:33)
Isaiah	The earth full of the knowledge of the LORD (11:9); the watchman and Babylon's fall (21:6-9); the folly of idols (44:9-20); they that wait upon the LORD (40:31)
Jeremiah	Woe to him that builds his house by unrighteousness (22:13); the cup of wrath (25:15-29); Babylon's judgment (50-51)
Daniel	The fall of Babylon on the night of Belshazzar's feast (5)
Micah	Building Zion with blood (3:10; Habakkuk 2:12)
Zephaniah	"Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD" (1:7)
Zechariah	"Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD" (2:13)

Themes That Run from Habakkuk Through Scripture

Theme	In Habakkuk	Developed	Fulfilled
Living by faith	2:4	Genesis 15:6	Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38-11:40
The problem of evil and God's justice	1:2-4, 13	Job; Psalm 73	Romans 3:25-26; Revelation 15:3-4
Waiting for God's appointed time	2:3	Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 40:31	Hebrews 10:37; James 5:7-8
The fall of Babylon	2:6-17	Isaiah 13-14; Jeremiah 50-51; Daniel 5	Revelation 17-18

Theme	In Habakkuk	Developed	Fulfilled
The knowledge of God's glory filling the earth	2:14	Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 11:9	2 Corinthians 4:6; Revelation 21:23
God's victory over the serpent	3:13	Genesis 3:15	Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10
Joy in God above circumstances	3:17-19	Psalm 73:25-26	Philippians 4:4, 11-13

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Bring your honest questions to God** (1:2-4).
- **Remember God is working even when He seems silent** (1:5).
- **When confused, reason from what you know about God** (1:12).
- **Don't run from God with your doubts; wait for His answer** (2:1).
- **Write down and treasure God's word** (2:2).
- **God's timing is perfect; wait for it** (2:3).
- **Live by faith, not by pride or sight** (2:4; 2 Corinthians 5:7).
- **Don't build your life on unjust gain** (2:6-12).
- **Remember that every human empire will pass, but God's glory will fill the earth** (2:14).
- **Turn from every idol** (2:18-19).
- **Be silent before the LORD** (2:20).
- **Pray for revival and mercy** (3:2).
- **Strengthen your faith by remembering God's past works** (3:3-15).
- **Rest in God in the day of trouble** (3:16).
- **Rejoice in the LORD even when everything else fails** (3:17-18).
- **Let God be your strength on the high places** (3:19).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2	O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!
1:13	Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity
2:1	I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me
2:3	Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.
2:4	The just shall live by his faith.
2:14	For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.
2:20	But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.
3:2	O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years... in wrath remember mercy.
3:17-18	Although the fig tree shall not blossom... Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.
3:19	The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet

Conclusion

Habakkuk is the journey of a troubled believer from doubt to faith. He looked at the violence and injustice in Judah and cried, "How long? Why?" God answered that He would send the Babylonians, which only raised a harder question: how could a holy God use people even more wicked? Habakkuk climbed his watchtower and waited, and God answered: write the vision; it will surely come; the proud will fall, Babylon will drink the cup of wrath, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God's glory, and "the just shall live by his faith." The LORD is in His holy temple; let all the earth be silent. Habakkuk's questions gave way to prayer, his prayer to a vision of God's power, and his fear to joy: though every fig tree, vine, field and flock should fail, "yet I will rejoice in the LORD." That faith finds its object in Jesus Christ, through whom sinners are made righteous by faith, who will surely come and not tarry, and through whom the glory of God will one day cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

> *The just shall live by his faith.*
>
> **Habakkuk 2:4**

Zephaniah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Zephaniah, descendant of Hezekiah • Date: c. 640-620 BC • Chapters: 3

> *The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:17**

Part One: Introduction to Zephaniah

The Prophet

Zephaniah's name means "the LORD hides" or "the LORD treasures," fitting for a prophet who urged God's people to seek Him so that they might "be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (2:3). He traces his family back four generations: "the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah" (1:1). No other prophet gives such a long genealogy, and the reason is probably that his great-great-grandfather Hizkiah was King Hezekiah. If so, Zephaniah was of royal blood, a distant relative of King Josiah, which may explain his familiarity with the court and his sharp words to the princes (1:8; 3:3).

Date and Setting

Zephaniah prophesied "in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah" (1:1), who reigned 640-609 BC. Josiah came to the throne at eight years old, after the long, wicked reign of his grandfather Manasseh and the brief reign of his father Amon (2 Kings 21). Idolatry was everywhere: Baal worship, astrology, worship of the stars on the rooftops, and the mixing of the LORD's name with pagan gods (1:4-5). Zephaniah's condemnation of these practices suggests he preached before or during the early stages of Josiah's great reformation (622 BC), and his preaching may have helped to stir it (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chronicles 34). He foretold the fall of Nineveh (2:13-15), which happened in 612 BC. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah (who began in 627 BC), Nahum and Habakkuk.

Theme: The Great Day of the LORD

Zephaniah's message centres on "the day of the LORD," mentioned or described more often in this short book than in any other prophet. He describes it as a day of universal judgment, on Judah, on the surrounding nations, and on the whole earth, followed by the purification of a remnant and the joyful restoration of God's people. His description of that day (1:14-18) inspired the famous medieval Latin hymn "Dies Irae" ("Day of Wrath").

> *The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly... That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:14-15**

Yet the book ends with one of the most tender pictures of God's love in Scripture:

> *The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:17**

The Movement of the Book

Movement	Zephaniah	Focus
Universal judgment announced	1:2-3	All creation swept away
Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem	1:4-18	Idolatry, complacency, the great day of the LORD
A call to repent	2:1-3	"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth"
Judgment on the surrounding nations	2:4-15	West, east, south and north
Judgment on Jerusalem's leaders	3:1-8	The city that would not listen
Purification and restoration	3:9-13	A pure language; a humble remnant
Rejoicing	3:14-20	God sings over His people

Outline of Zephaniah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Day of the LORD on Judah	1:1-2:3	Judgment and the call to seek God
Universal judgment	1:1-3	"I will utterly consume all things"
Judah's sins	1:4-13	Idolatry, syncretism, complacency
The great day described	1:14-18	"A day of wrath"
The call to repentance	2:1-3	"It may be ye shall be hid"
II. The Day of the LORD on the Nations	2:4-15	Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, Assyria
III. The Day of the LORD on Jerusalem and Its Restoration	3	Judgment, then joy
The rebellious city	3:1-8	"She obeyed not the voice"
The nations and the remnant purified	3:9-13	"A pure language"
The song of salvation	3:14-20	"He will joy over thee with singing"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — The Great Day of the LORD

Universal Judgment (1:1-3)

> *I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:2-3**

The list reverses the order of creation in Genesis 1 (man, beasts, birds, fish). Sin threatens to undo God's creation. The "stumblingblocks" are the idols that caused people to fall.

Judah's Sins (1:4-13)

God would stretch out His hand against Judah and Jerusalem, and cut off:

- **"The remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests"** (1:4): the remaining Baal worship and its idolatrous priests (the Chemarim, whom Josiah later removed, 2 Kings 23:5).
- **"Them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops"** (1:5): astrology and star worship on the flat roofs (2 Kings 23:12; Jeremiah 19:13).
- **"Them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham"** (1:5): those who mixed the worship of the LORD with Molech (Milcom), the Ammonite god. Divided loyalty is as offensive to God as open idolatry (1 Kings 18:21; Matthew 6:24).
- **"Them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him"** (1:6): backsliders and the indifferent.

> *Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:7**

In a terrible reversal, Judah itself was the sacrifice, and the invading nations were the invited guests (compare Revelation 19:17-18). God would punish the princes and the king's sons who wore foreign clothing (adopting pagan customs) (1:8), those who leaped over the threshold in superstition (1:9; compare 1 Samuel 5:5), and those who filled their masters' houses with violence and deceit (1:9). There would be wailing from the Fish Gate, the Second Quarter and the hills, and in the merchants' district (1:10-11).

> *And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:12**

God would search Jerusalem with lamps, so that no one could hide. "Settled on their lees" describes wine left undisturbed so long that it becomes thick and sour; it pictures people grown complacent and spiritually sluggish. They were practical atheists who believed God would do nothing, good or bad. Their wealth would be plundered; they would build houses and plant vineyards but not enjoy them (1:13; Deuteronomy 28:30, 39).

The Day Described (1:14-18)

> *The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:14-16**

Like hammer blows, the description piles up phrase after phrase. Even the mighty would cry bitterly. People would grope like the blind "because they have sinned against the LORD" (1:17).

> *Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:18**

Money cannot buy escape from God's judgment (Proverbs 11:4; Ezekiel 7:19). This prophecy was fulfilled first when Babylon destroyed Judah (586 BC), and it looks forward to the final Day of the Lord at the end of history (2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:15-17).

Chapter 2 — The Call to Seek God and the Judgment of the Nations

Seek the LORD (2:1-3)

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you" (2:1-2). There was still time to repent, but it was running out.

> *Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.*
>
> **Zephaniah 2:3**

The humble, who had obeyed God, were urged to keep seeking Him, His righteousness and humility. The promise was not a guarantee but a hope: "it may be ye shall be hid." God shelters those who seek Him (Psalm 27:5; Isaiah 26:20). The prophet's name, "the LORD hides," echoes this promise. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

Judgment on the Nations (2:4-15)

God's judgment would fall on the nations around Judah, in every direction:

Nation	Direction	Zephaniah	Sin	Judgment
Philistia (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron)	West	2:4-7	Long enmity against Israel	Cities desolate; their coast given to the remnant of Judah for pasture
Moab and Ammon	East	2:8-11	Reproaching and threatening God's people; pride	Like Sodom and Gomorrah, a land of nettles and salt pits for ever
Ethiopia (Cush)	South	2:12	(Representing the far south, including Egypt)	Slain by God's sword
Assyria (Nineveh)	North	2:13-15	Pride and self-sufficiency	Nineveh made a desolate wilderness for wild animals

Philistia (2:4-7). "Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation" (2:4). Their coastland would become pastures for shepherds, "And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah... for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity" (2:7). The Babylonian Chronicle records Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Ashkelon in 604 BC, and the Philistines disappeared as a people.

Moab and Ammon (2:8-11). They had taunted God's people and boasted against their land (2:8). "Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation" (2:9), a fitting end for the descendants of Lot, who had fled from Sodom (Genesis 19:36-38). "This shall they have for their pride" (2:10). Then a glimpse of God's ultimate purpose: "The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen" (2:11). God will starve the false gods of worship, and people everywhere will turn to Him.

Ethiopia (2:12). "Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword." Cush, at the southern edge of the known world, represented the farthest nations.

Assyria (2:13-15). "And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness" (2:13). Flocks and wild animals would lie in its ruins, and owls and bitterns would nest in its carved columns (2:14).

> *This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.*
>
> **Zephaniah 2:15**

Nineveh claimed for itself words that belong only to God: "I am, and there is none beside me" (compare Isaiah 45:5-6, 18). Babylon later said the same (Isaiah 47:8), as does the final Babylon of Revelation: "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Revelation 18:7). Nineveh fell in 612 BC, within a few decades of Zephaniah's prophecy, and its ruins became a desolate mound.

Chapter 3 — Judgment and Joy

The Rebellious City (3:1-8)

Having condemned the nations, Zephaniah turned back to Jerusalem itself:

> *Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:1-2**

Four failures summarise Jerusalem's spiritual state: it would not listen to God, would not accept discipline, would not trust Him, and would not draw near to Him in worship. Every class of leader had failed:

- **Princes** were "roaring lions," devouring the people (3:3).
- **Judges** were "evening wolves," so greedy they left nothing until morning (3:3).
- **Prophets** were "light and treacherous persons," frivolous and faithless (3:4).
- **Priests** "polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (3:4).

(Compare Ezekiel 22:25-28, which makes the same charges.) Yet God Himself was faithful among them:

> *The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:5**

Every day God showed His justice, but the unjust felt no shame. God had cut off other nations as a warning, hoping Jerusalem would learn, "but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings" (3:6-7). So God called the faithful to wait for the day when He would gather the nations for judgment, and "all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy" (3:8).

A Pure Language and a Humble Remnant (3:9-13)

Then the book turns dramatically from judgment to restoration:

> *For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:9**

At Babel, God confused humanity's language because they united in rebellion (Genesis 11:1-9). Here God promises to purify the lips of the peoples so that they unite in worship. The fulfillment began at Pentecost, when people from many nations heard the gospel in their own languages and "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord" was saved (Acts 2:4-11, 21), and it will be completed when every nation worships God together (Revelation 7:9-10; Romans 15:6). "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering" (3:10). The gospel reached Ethiopia early through the Ethiopian official baptised by Philip (Acts 8:27-39).

God would remove the proud from Jerusalem, so that His people would no longer be ashamed (3:11). "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD" (3:12): the humble remnant who rely on God alone (Matthew 5:3; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

> *The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:13**

Revelation describes the redeemed who follow the Lamb in the same terms: "in their mouth was found no guile" (Revelation 14:5).

The Song of Salvation (3:14-20)

The book ends with a burst of joy:

> *Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:14-15**

The judgment of chapter 1 is removed; the enemies are gone; and the King of Israel, the LORD Himself, dwells among His people. "Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack" (3:16). Then comes one of the most beautiful verses in the Bible:

> *The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:17**

The book began with God's wrath against His people; it ends with God singing over them. He is mighty to save. He rejoices over them. He rests (or is quiet) in His love, satisfied and content. He sings over them as a joyful bridegroom over His bride (Isaiah 62:5) or a parent over a child. In most of Scripture, God's people sing to Him; here, God sings over His people.

God would gather those who mourned the loss of the feasts (3:18), deal with all their oppressors, save the lame, gather the outcasts, and give them praise and fame in every land where they had been shamed (3:19; Micah 4:6-7). "At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD" (3:20).

Part Three: Christ in Zephaniah

The King of Israel in the Midst

"The king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee" (3:15). When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds cried, "Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord" (John 12:13; compare Zechariah 9:9). Nathanael confessed Him: "thou art the King of Israel" (John 1:49). The LORD came to dwell among His people in the person of Jesus Christ, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23; John 1:14), and He will reign in the midst of His people for ever (Revelation 21:3).

The Singing Saviour

"He will rejoice over thee with joy... he will joy over thee with singing" (3:17). Jesus revealed the joy of God over the repentant: the shepherd who finds his lost sheep "layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing," and "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:5-7, 10). Hebrews applies Psalm 22:22 to Christ: "in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Hebrews 2:12). Christ endured the cross "for the joy that was set before him" (Hebrews 12:2).

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Zephaniah	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:7	The LORD's sacrifice and invited guests	Christ the true sacrifice (Hebrews 9:26); the marriage supper of the Lamb versus the supper of God's judgment (Revelation 19:7-9, 17-18)
1:12	God searching Jerusalem with lamps	God's searching judgment (Hebrews 4:13); Christ the seeker who lights a lamp to find the lost (Luke 15:8)
1:14-18	The great Day of the LORD	The day of the Lord Jesus Christ's return (1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10)
2:3	Hidden in the day of the LORD's anger	"Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3); delivered from the wrath to come (1 Thessalonians 1:10)
2:3	Seek meekness	Christ "meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29); "Blessed are the meek" (Matthew 5:5)
3:9	A pure language; all call on the name of the LORD	Pentecost and the gospel to all nations (Acts 2:4-21; Romans 10:13)
3:10	Worshippers from beyond Ethiopia	The Ethiopian believer (Acts 8:27-39); every nation (Revelation 7:9)
3:13	No deceitful tongue in their mouth	Christ, in whose mouth was no guile (1 Peter 2:22); His redeemed (Revelation 14:5)
3:15	The King of Israel, the LORD, in the midst	Jesus, the King of Israel (John 1:49; 12:13); God dwelling with men (Revelation 21:3)

Zephaniah	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
3:17	Mighty to save; rejoicing and singing over His people	Christ the Saviour who rejoices over the found (Luke 15; Hebrews 2:12)
3:19	Gathering the lame and the outcast	Christ gathering the scattered children of God (John 11:52; Luke 14:21)

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Zephaniah	Fulfillment
The remnant of Baal and the Chemarim cut off	1:4	Josiah removed the idolatrous priests and Baal worship (2 Kings 23:4-5)
Worship of the host of heaven on rooftops ended	1:5	Josiah destroyed the rooftop altars (2 Kings 23:12)
Judah and Jerusalem judged	1:4-18	Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, 586 BC
Houses built but not inhabited; vineyards planted but not drunk	1:13	The Babylonian conquest and exile
The Philistine cities desolate	2:4-6	Ashkelon destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (604 BC); the Philistines vanished
Moab and Ammon a perpetual desolation	2:8-9	Conquered by Babylon; both disappeared as nations
Nineveh made a desolation	2:13-15	Destroyed in 612 BC; its ruins became a mound
The remnant of Judah restored	2:7; 3:20	The return from Babylon (538 BC); fuller fulfillment future
A pure language; the nations calling on the LORD	3:9-10	Begun at Pentecost and in the spread of the gospel; to be completed in the future
The King of Israel in the midst	3:15	Fulfilled in Christ's coming; completed at His reign

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Zephaniah 1:5-6 — Divided Loyalty and Indifference

God condemned those who worshipped Him and also swore by Molech, and those who simply had stopped seeking Him. Mixing true faith with worldly idols, and drifting into spiritual indifference, are as dangerous as open rebellion (Revelation 3:15-16).

Zephaniah 1:12 — Settled on Their Lees

The complacent believed God was irrelevant: He would do neither good nor evil. Such practical atheism is common in comfortable times. God searches with lamps; no one can hide behind respectability or indifference (Luke 12:19-20).

Zephaniah 1:14-18 — The Day of Wrath

This is one of the most solemn descriptions of judgment in Scripture. It reminds us that God's patience will one day end, and that money, strength and status will be useless. It calls every reader to be ready (2 Peter 3:10-12).

Zephaniah 2:3 — Seek the LORD

In the face of coming judgment, God's call is to seek Him, His righteousness and humility. Those who do may be "hid" in the day of His anger. Believers in Christ are hidden in Him (Colossians 3:3).

Zephaniah 3:1-2 — Four Marks of a Rebellious Heart

Not listening to God's voice, not receiving correction, not trusting in the LORD, and not drawing near to Him: these four marks describe spiritual decline in any person or church. Their opposites are the marks of a healthy faith.

Zephaniah 3:9 — The Reversal of Babel

Sin divided humanity; grace reunites it. God's plan is to gather people of every language to worship Him with one voice, fulfilled through the gospel (Acts 2; Revelation 5:9).

Zephaniah 3:17 — God Sings Over His People

This verse reveals the heart of God toward those He has saved: strong to save, delighting in them, satisfied in His love, and rejoicing over them with singing. The same God whose wrath is described in chapter 1 delights in His redeemed people. The believer's security rests not on his love for God but on God's love for him.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Zephaniah

1. The Day of the LORD

God will judge all the earth, beginning with His own people (1:2-18; 3:8).

2. God Hates Idolatry and Divided Worship

Baal worship, astrology and mixing the LORD with other gods provoke His judgment (1:4-6).

3. Complacency Is Dangerous

Those "settled on their lees," who think God will do nothing, will be judged (1:12).

4. Wealth Cannot Save

Silver and gold are useless in the day of wrath (1:18).

5. Seeking God Is the Way of Refuge

The humble who seek the LORD may be hidden in His day (2:3).

6. God Judges the Nations

Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia and Assyria are all accountable to Him (2:4-15).

7. Pride Brings Desolation

Nineveh said, "I am, and there is none beside me," and became a ruin (2:15).

8. Leaders Are Accountable

Princes, judges, prophets and priests who betray their trust bring judgment (3:3-4).

9. God Is Just and Faithful

He does no iniquity and brings His justice to light every morning (3:5).

10. God Will Purify the Nations and a Remnant

He will give the peoples a pure language and leave a humble, truthful remnant (3:9-13).

11. God Rejoices Over His People

He will dwell among them, save them, and sing over them (3:14-17).

Part Seven: Connections — How Zephaniah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Zephaniah in the New Testament

Zephaniah	New Testament	Connection
1:7 (the sacrifice and the guests)	Revelation 19:17-18	The great supper of God
1:12 (searching with lamps)	Luke 15:8; Hebrews 4:13	The woman's lamp; all things naked before God
1:12-13 (complacency)	Luke 12:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:3	The rich fool; "Peace and safety"
1:14-18 (the great day)	1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10-12; Revelation 6:15-17	The day of the Lord
1:18 (silver and gold cannot deliver)	1 Timothy 6:17; James 5:1-3	The uncertainty of riches
2:3 (seek meekness)	Matthew 5:5; 11:29	The meek inherit the earth
2:3 (hid in the day of anger)	Colossians 3:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:10	Hid with Christ; delivered from wrath
2:15 (I am, and none beside me)	Revelation 18:7	Babylon's boast
3:2 (draw near to God)	James 4:8; Hebrews 10:22	Draw nigh to God
3:2 (receive correction)	Hebrews 12:5-11	The Father's chastening
3:9 (a pure language; calling on the LORD)	Acts 2:4-11, 21; Romans 10:13; 15:6	Pentecost; with one mouth glorify God
3:10 (from beyond Ethiopia)	Acts 8:27-39	The Ethiopian believer
3:13 (no deceitful tongue)	1 Peter 2:22; Revelation 14:5	No guile
3:15 (the King of Israel in the midst)	John 1:49; 12:13; Revelation 21:3	Jesus, the King of Israel; God with men
3:17 (God rejoicing and singing)	Luke 15:5-10, 22-24; Hebrews 2:12; 12:2	Joy in heaven; Christ singing in the church
3:19 (gathering the outcast)	John 10:16; 11:52; Luke 14:21	Gathering the scattered

Zephaniah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The order of creation reversed (1; Zephaniah 1:2-3); the confusion of languages at Babel (11:1-9; Zephaniah 3:9); Sodom and Gomorrah and the origin of Moab and Ammon (19)
Deuteronomy	Houses built and vineyards planted but not enjoyed (28:30, 39; Zephaniah 1:13)
1 Samuel	The custom of not treading on the threshold (5:5; Zephaniah 1:9)
2 Kings	Manasseh's and Amon's idolatry (21); Josiah's reforms: the Chemarim, rooftop altars and Milcom removed (22-23)
2 Chronicles	Josiah seeks God and purges Judah (34)
Psalms	Hidden in the day of trouble (27:5); "let the children of Zion be joyful in their King" (149:2)
Isaiah	The day of the LORD against the proud (2:10-22; 13:6-13); "great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee" (12:6); Babylon's boast, "I am, and none else beside me" (47:8); God rejoicing over His people as a bridegroom (62:5)
Jeremiah	Contemporary prophet to Judah; oracles against Moab and Ammon (48-49)
Ezekiel	The corrupt princes, priests and prophets (22:25-28; Zephaniah 3:3-4)
Joel	The day of the LORD, a day of darkness (2:1-2, 11)
Amos	The day of the LORD is darkness, not light (5:18-20)
Micah	Gathering the lame and the outcast (4:6-7; Zephaniah 3:19)
Nahum	The fall of Nineveh (1-3; Zephaniah 2:13-15)
Habakkuk	"Let all the earth keep silence before him" (2:20; Zephaniah 1:7)
Zechariah	"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee" (2:10); "Rejoice greatly... thy King cometh" (9:9)
Malachi	The day that shall burn as an oven (4:1)

Themes That Run from Zephaniah Through Scripture

Theme	In Zephaniah	Developed	Fulfilled
The Day of the LORD	1:7-18; 2:2-3; 3:8	Joel 2; Amos 5:18-20; Malachi 4	1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:17
Seeking God for refuge	2:3	Psalm 27:5; Isaiah 26:20	Colossians 3:3; Hebrews 6:18
The reversal of Babel	3:9	Genesis 11	Acts 2; Revelation 7:9-10
The humble remnant	3:12-13	Isaiah 10:20-22	Romans 11:5; Revelation 14:1-5
The King in the midst of His people	3:15, 17	Isaiah 12:6; Zechariah 2:10	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3

Theme	In Zephaniah	Developed	Fulfilled
God's joy over His people	3:17	Isaiah 62:5; Jeremiah 32:41	Luke 15; Hebrews 12:2
The proud city brought low	2:15	Isaiah 47	Revelation 18

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Remove every idol from your heart and home** (1:4).
- **Don't try to serve God and another master** (1:5).
- **Beware of drifting away or growing indifferent** (1:6).
- **Be silent and reverent before God** (1:7).
- **Don't adopt the customs of a godless culture** (1:8-9).
- **Guard against complacency; don't be settled on your lees** (1:12).
- **Remember that God sees and acts** (1:12).
- **Don't trust in money for security** (1:18).
- **Seek the LORD, righteousness and humility, while there is time** (2:2-3).
- **Pride always ends in ruin** (2:10, 15).
- **Listen to God's voice and receive His correction** (3:2).
- **Trust the LORD and draw near to Him** (3:2).
- **Remember that God is faithful every morning** (3:5).
- **Let your speech be pure and truthful** (3:9, 13).
- **Rejoice in the LORD who is in your midst** (3:14-15).
- **Don't let your hands grow slack in fear** (3:16).
- **Rest in the truth that God delights in you and sings over you** (3:17).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:7	Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand
1:12	I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees
1:14	The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly
1:18	Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath
2:3	Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth... seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.
3:2	She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.
3:9	For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD
3:15	The king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.
3:17	The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

Conclusion

Zephaniah, a prophet of royal blood in the days of young King Josiah, thundered the message of "the great day of the LORD." He condemned a Judah full of Baal worship, star worship on the rooftops, divided loyalty and complacent people who thought God would do nothing. He described a day of wrath and darkness when neither silver nor gold could save, and called the meek to seek the LORD that they might be hidden. He announced God's judgment on the nations in every direction, including proud Nineveh, which said, "I am, and there is none beside me." He exposed Jerusalem's corrupt princes, judges, prophets and priests. And then the book turned from wrath to song: God would give the nations a pure language to call on His name, leave a humble and truthful remnant, and dwell as King among His people. The LORD, mighty to save, would rejoice over them with singing. That King came in Jesus Christ, the Saviour who rejoices over every sinner who repents, who will return in the great day of the Lord, and who will dwell among His people for ever.

> *The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.*
>
> **Zephaniah 3:17**

Haggai

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Haggai • Date: 520 BC • Chapters: 2

> *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts*
>
> **Haggai 2:9**

Part One: Introduction to Haggai

The Prophet

Haggai's name means "festive" or "my feast," perhaps because he was born on a feast day. He is mentioned with his younger contemporary Zechariah as one of the two prophets who stirred up the returned exiles to rebuild the temple: "Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem... and with them were the prophets of God helping them" (Ezra 5:1-2). "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo" (Ezra 6:14). His question, "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?" (2:3), has led some to suggest he was an old man who remembered Solomon's temple before 586 BC, but this is uncertain.

The Historical Setting

Haggai is the first of the three post-exilic prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi), who ministered after the return from Babylon.

Event	Date	Reference
Cyrus' decree allows the Jews to return	538 BC	Ezra 1:1-4
About 50,000 return under Zerubbabel and Joshua	538-537 BC	Ezra 2
The altar rebuilt; the temple foundation laid	536 BC	Ezra 3
Opposition stops the work for about 16 years	536-520 BC	Ezra 4:1-5, 24
Haggai and Zechariah begin to prophesy	520 BC	Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1; Ezra 5:1
The work resumes	520 BC	Haggai 1:14-15; Ezra 5:2
The temple is completed and dedicated	516/515 BC	Ezra 6:15-18

After the foundation was laid with joy and weeping (Ezra 3:10-13), enemies discouraged the builders and the work stopped. Years passed. The people turned to building their own homes and farms, and told themselves, "The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built" (1:2). Meanwhile, they suffered drought, poor harvests and economic frustration, without realising why.

Four Dated Messages

Haggai is one of the most precisely dated books in the Bible. All four messages were given in 520 BC, "the second year of Darius the king" (Darius I of Persia), over less than four months:

Message	Haggai	Date (Approximate Modern Equivalent)	Theme
1	1:1-15	6th month, 1st day (late August 520 BC)	"Consider your ways"; build the house
2	2:1-9	7th month, 21st day (mid-October 520 BC)	"Be strong... I am with you"; the latter glory

Message	Haggai	Date (Approximate Modern Equivalent)	Theme
3	2:10-19	9th month, 24th day (mid-December 520 BC)	Holiness and defilement; "from this day will I bless you"
4	2:20-23	9th month, 24th day (mid-December 520 BC)	Zerubbabel, God's signet

The response was immediate: within 23 days of the first message, the work had begun again (1:15). The temple was completed about four and a half years later.

Purpose and Theme

Haggai called God's people to put God first. Their neglect of His house showed misplaced priorities, and their frustrations were God's discipline. When they obeyed, God promised His presence, His Spirit, future glory for the temple, and blessing. Key phrases include "Consider your ways" (1:5, 7; compare 2:15, 18), "I am with you" (1:13; 2:4), and "the LORD of hosts," which appears fourteen times in thirty-eight verses.

> *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.*
>
> **Haggai 1:4-5**

> *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace*
>
> **Haggai 2:9**

Outline of Haggai

Section	Verses	Theme
I. First Message: A Call to Build	1:1-15	Priorities
The excuse	1:1-2	"The time is not come"
The rebuke	1:3-11	"Consider your ways"
The response	1:12-15	Obedience; "I am with you"
II. Second Message: Encouragement	2:1-9	The latter glory
Discouragement	2:1-3	"As nothing" compared to the first
Encouragement	2:4-5	"Be strong... I am with you... my spirit remaineth"
Promise	2:6-9	"The desire of all nations shall come"
III. Third Message: Holiness and Blessing	2:10-19	Defilement spreads; blessing restored
IV. Fourth Message: Zerubbabel the Signet	2:20-23	God's chosen servant

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — Consider Your Ways

The Excuse (1:1-2)

"In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest" (1:1). The message went first to the civil and religious leaders. Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David through Jehoiachin (1 Chronicles 3:17-19; Matthew 1:12); Joshua was the high priest.

> *Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.*
>
> **Haggai 1:2**

Notice God calls them "this people," not "my people." They did not say they would never build, only that it was not the right time. Procrastination often disguises disobedience.

The Rebuke (1:3-11)

> *Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?*
>
> **Haggai 1:3-4**

"Cieled" means panelled, finished with fine wood. They had time and resources for their own comfortable homes, but not for God's house. King David had felt the opposite: "I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains" (2 Samuel 7:2). Then God told them to examine their lives:

> *Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*
>
> **Haggai 1:5-6**

Their work was frustrating and unproductive. Their food, drink and clothing never satisfied. Their income disappeared as if their purse had holes. These were the covenant curses God had warned of (Leviticus 26:20; Deuteronomy 28:38-40). When we put ourselves first, we never have enough.

> *Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Haggai 1:7-8**

The command was simple and practical: go, gather materials, build. God would take pleasure in it and be glorified. Then He explained their frustration directly:

> *Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.*
>
> **Haggai 1:9**

They hurried to their own projects while God's house lay in ruins. So God had withheld dew and rain, and called for a drought on the land, the grain, the wine, the oil, the people, the cattle and "all the labour of the hands" (1:10-11). Their hardships were not random but God's loving discipline to get their attention. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

The Response (1:12-15)

> *Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.*
>
> **Haggai 1:12**

Leaders and people alike responded with obedience and reverent fear. Few prophets saw such a quick and complete response. God immediately answered with a promise:

> *Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Haggai 1:13**

"And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel... and the spirit of Joshua... and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God" (1:14). God's Spirit gave them the desire and strength to work (Philippians 2:13). They began "in the four and twentieth day of the sixth month" (1:15), just 23 days after Haggai's first message.

Chapter 2 — The Latter Glory, Holiness, and the Signet

Discouragement (2:1-3)

About seven weeks later, on the 21st day of the seventh month, the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people would have remembered Solomon's dedication of the first temple at the same feast (1 Kings 8:2), discouragement set in:

> *Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?*
>
> **Haggai 2:3**

The older people remembered the splendour of Solomon's temple, with its gold and cedar, and the new building looked poor by comparison (Ezra 3:12). Comparison with the past can drain zeal for the present.

Encouragement (2:4-5)

> *Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.*
>
> **Haggai 2:4-5**

Three times God says "be strong," and then "work." The reason: "I am with you." The same Spirit who was with Israel at the Exodus was still among them (compare Joshua 1:6-9; Zechariah 4:6). The size of the building did not matter; the presence of God did.

The Promise of Greater Glory (2:6-9)

> *For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Haggai 2:6-9**

God would shake the whole created order and all nations. "The desire of all nations shall come" has traditionally been understood as a title of the Messiah, the One for whom all nations long, though many translate it "the desirable things" or "treasures" of all nations, which would flow into the temple (compare Isaiah 60:5-7). The silver and gold already belong to God (Psalm 50:10-12); He could adorn His house whenever He chose.

But the greater glory of the second temple would not be its gold. This temple, later greatly expanded by Herod, was the temple to which Jesus Christ came. As an infant He was presented there, and Simeon called Him "the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:22-32). As a boy He sat among the teachers there (Luke 2:46). As a man He taught there, cleansed it, and said, "in this place is one greater than the temple" (Matthew 12:6; John 2:13-17). God's glory, which had filled Solomon's temple in a cloud (1 Kings 8:10-11), came to the second temple in the person of His Son, "and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). "In this place will I give peace": Christ is our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

Hebrews quotes 2:6 and applies it to the final shaking at the end of the age: "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven... that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace" (Hebrews 12:26-28).

Holiness and Defilement (2:10-19)

On the 24th day of the ninth month, Haggai asked the priests two questions about the law:

- If someone carrying holy meat in the fold of his garment touches bread, stew, wine, oil or any food, does that food become holy? The priests answered, "No" (2:12).
- If someone made unclean by touching a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean? The priests answered, "It shall be unclean" (2:13; Numbers 19:11-13).

> *Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean.*
>
> **Haggai 2:14**

Holiness is not contagious, but defilement is. Being near holy things did not make the people holy; but their disobedience made everything they touched, even their offerings, unclean. Simply working on the temple or offering sacrifices could not make them right with God; their hearts must be right. Only God can make the unclean clean. In the New Testament, Jesus reversed this pattern: when He touched a leper, the leper did not make Jesus unclean, but Jesus made the leper clean (Mark 1:40-42).

"And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward" (2:15). Before they began to build, their harvests had failed: they expected twenty measures and found ten; they came for fifty vessels of wine and found twenty; God struck their crops with blight, mildew and hail, "yet ye turned not to me" (2:16-17; Amos 4:9). Now, though the seed was still in the barn and the trees had not yet borne fruit, God made a promise:

> *From this day will I bless you.*
>
> **Haggai 2:19**

The blessing would begin the day they obeyed, before any visible evidence appeared. They were to trust God's word.

Zerubbabel, God's Signet (2:20-23)

On the same day, Haggai received a second message for Zerubbabel personally:

> *I will shake the heavens and the earth; And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen... In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Haggai 2:21-23**

A signet ring was a king's seal, a symbol of authority and identity, carefully kept and highly valued. Zerubbabel's grandfather Jehoiachin (Coniah) had been told, "though Coniah... were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence" (Jeremiah 22:24). Now God reversed that judgment: the royal line of David, apparently cast off, was chosen again. Zerubbabel himself never became king, but through him the line of David continued to Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:12-16; Luke 3:27). The promise that God would overthrow the kingdoms of the nations and exalt His chosen servant points to Christ, the

ultimate Son of David, God's chosen Servant (Isaiah 42:1), who bears God's seal (John 6:27) and whose kingdom will replace all others (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 11:15).

Part Three: Christ in Haggai

The Desire of All Nations

Christians have long sung of Christ as "the desire of nations," drawing on Haggai 2:7. Whether the phrase refers directly to the Messiah or to the treasures of the nations, the promise that God would fill the second temple with glory was fulfilled when the Lord Jesus came to it. Malachi foretold, "the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple" (Malachi 3:1). The glory of the latter house was greater because the Son of God Himself walked in its courts.

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Haggai	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:8	Build the house; "I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified"	Christ builds His church, God's spiritual house (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5)
1:13; 2:4	"I am with you"	"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20)
2:5	"My spirit remaineth among you"	The Comforter "shall be in you" (John 14:16-17)
2:6-7, 21-22	God will shake the heavens, the earth and all nations	The final shaking and the unshakeable kingdom (Hebrews 12:26-28); the kingdoms of this world become Christ's (Revelation 11:15)
2:7	"The desire of all nations shall come"	Christ, the hope of all nations (Luke 2:30-32; Romans 15:12)
2:7, 9	The house filled with glory; greater glory than the former	Christ in the temple (Luke 2:22-32, 46; John 1:14; Matthew 12:6)
2:9	"In this place will I give peace"	Christ our peace (Ephesians 2:14; John 14:27; 20:19-21)
2:11-14	Holiness cannot be transferred by contact, but defilement can	Christ's touch makes the unclean clean (Mark 1:40-42; Hebrews 9:13-14)
2:23	Zerubbabel, God's chosen servant and signet	Christ, the Son of David, God's chosen Servant, sealed by the Father (Matthew 1:12-16; Isaiah 42:1; John 6:27)

Joshua and Zerubbabel

Haggai addresses two leaders: Zerubbabel the governor, of David's royal line, and Joshua the high priest. Zechariah, preaching at the same time, saw a crown placed on the head of Joshua as a picture of "the BRANCH," who would "build the temple of the LORD... and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zechariah 6:11-13). The offices of king and priest, held by two men in Haggai's day, are united in one Person, Jesus Christ, whose name is the Greek form of Joshua, and who is the Son of David and our High Priest (Hebrews 7:1-3; 8:1).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy or Promise	Haggai	Fulfillment
The LORD will stir up the people to build	1:14	The work resumed within 23 days (1:15; Ezra 5:1-2)
God will be with them in the work	1:13; 2:4	The temple was completed despite renewed opposition (Ezra 5:3-6:15)
The temple completed	1:8	Finished in the sixth year of Darius, 515 BC (Ezra 6:15)
Blessing from the day of obedience	2:19	God's blessing on the land (compare Zechariah 8:9-13)
The silver and gold belong to God	2:8	Persian kings funded the temple (Ezra 6:8-10; 7:15-22)
The glory of the latter house greater than the former	2:9	Christ came to the second temple (Luke 2; John 2)
Peace given in this place	2:9	Christ, the Prince of Peace, ministered there (Ephesians 2:14)
The thrones of kingdoms overthrown	2:22	Persia, Greece and Rome fell in turn (Daniel 2); final fulfillment at Christ's return
Zerubbabel made a signet	2:23	The royal line restored and continued to Christ (Matthew 1:12-16)
The final shaking of heaven and earth	2:6, 21	Still future (Hebrews 12:26-28)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Haggai 1:2-4 — Misplaced Priorities

The people said it was not the time to build God's house, yet they found time to panel their own homes. Believers today can make the same mistake, investing time, money and energy in personal comfort while God's work is neglected. The question "Is it time for you...?" challenges every Christian's priorities.

Haggai 1:5-11 — Consider Your Ways

God invited His people to look honestly at their lives and notice the pattern: much effort, little result; constant consumption, no satisfaction; income that vanished. When we neglect God, nothing satisfies. God sometimes uses frustration and lack to call us back to Him (Hebrews 12:5-11). The solution was not to work harder at their own projects, but to put God first.

Haggai 1:12-14 — Obedience and God's Presence

The people obeyed at once, and God responded with the simplest and greatest promise: "I am with you." Then He stirred up their spirits to work. God provides both the presence and the motivation for the work He commands.

Haggai 2:3-5 — Overcoming Discouragement

The new temple seemed like nothing compared to the old. God's answer was not to deny the difference, but to remind them of His presence and His Spirit. What matters is not the size or splendour of the work, but whether God is in it. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10).

Haggai 2:6-9 — The Greater Glory

God promised a glory far beyond gold and silver: His own presence in the person of the Messiah, and peace. Christ's coming to the second temple made it more glorious than Solomon's. The final shaking of all things will leave only God's unshakeable kingdom.

Haggai 2:10-19 — Holiness Is Not Contagious

Religious activity cannot make an unholy heart holy, but sin defiles everything it touches. The people's work on the temple could not cleanse them; only genuine obedience and God's grace could. And once they obeyed, God promised blessing from that very day, even before the harvest proved it.

Haggai 2:23 — The Signet Restored

God reversed the judgment on Jehoiachin's line and chose Zerubbabel as His signet, preserving the line of David for the coming Messiah. God's promises survive even His judgments.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Haggai

1. Put God First

God's house and work should take priority over personal comfort (1:2-4; Matthew 6:33).

2. Procrastination Is Disobedience

"The time is not come" was an excuse for neglecting God's command (1:2).

3. God Uses Hardship to Discipline

Drought and failed harvests were God's call to repentance (1:6, 9-11; 2:16-17).

4. Consider Your Ways

God calls His people to honest self-examination (1:5, 7; 2:15, 18).

5. Obedience Brings God's Presence and Blessing

"I am with you"; "from this day will I bless you" (1:13; 2:19).

6. God Stirs Up His People

He gives the desire and strength to do His work (1:14).

7. Be Strong and Work

Discouragement is overcome by God's presence and Spirit (2:4-5).

8. God Owns All Resources

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine" (2:8).

9. Holiness Comes from God, Not from Contact

Religious activity cannot cleanse a defiled heart (2:11-14).

10. God's Glory and Peace Will Fill His House

Through the Messiah, the latter glory exceeds the former (2:7-9).

11. God Keeps His Promises to David

The chosen signet points to Christ, whose kingdom will overthrow all others (2:21-23).

Part Seven: Connections — How Haggai Links to the Rest of the Bible

Haggai in the New Testament

Haggai	New Testament	Connection
1:2-9 (putting God's house first)	Matthew 6:33	Seek ye first the kingdom of God
1:6 (wages in a bag with holes)	Luke 12:16-21; Matthew 6:19-20	Treasure that does not last
1:8 (build the house)	Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5	Building God's spiritual house
1:13; 2:4 (I am with you)	Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5	"I will never leave thee"
1:14 (God stirs the spirit)	Philippians 2:13	God works in you to will and to do
2:4 (be strong and work)	1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13	Be stedfast; quit you like men
2:5 (my spirit remaineth)	John 14:16-17	The Spirit abides with you
2:6-7 (shaking heaven and earth)	Hebrews 12:26-28	The unshakeable kingdom
2:7, 9 (glory in the latter house)	Luke 2:22-32, 46; John 1:14; 2:13-22; Matthew 12:6	Christ in the temple
2:9 (peace in this place)	Ephesians 2:14; John 14:27	Christ our peace
2:11-14 (holiness and defilement)	Mark 1:40-42; Hebrews 9:13-14	Christ makes the unclean clean
2:22 (the thrones of kingdoms overthrown)	Revelation 11:15; 19:11-16	The kingdoms of this world become Christ's
2:23 (Zerubbabel the signet)	Matthew 1:12-13; Luke 3:27; John 6:27	Zorobabel in Christ's genealogy; sealed by the Father

Haggai in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	God dwelling among His people (25:8; 29:45-46); the glory filling the tabernacle (40:34-35); God's Spirit with Israel at the Exodus (Haggai 2:5)
Leviticus	Labour spent in vain as a covenant curse (26:20)
Numbers	Uncleanness from touching a dead body (19:11-13; Haggai 2:13)

Book	Link
Deuteronomy	Sowing much and gathering little; drought and blight (28:22-24, 38-40)
2 Samuel	David: "I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains" (7:2)
1 Kings	The glory filling Solomon's temple at the Feast of Tabernacles (8:2, 10-11)
1 Chronicles	Zerubbabel in David's line (3:17-19)
Ezra	The return, the foundation, the opposition, Haggai and Zechariah's preaching, and the completion of the temple (1-6; especially 3:10-13; 4:24; 5:1-2; 6:14-15)
Psalms	"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof" (24:1); "every beast of the forest is mine" (50:10-12)
Proverbs	"Honour the LORD with thy substance... So shall thy barns be filled" (3:9-10)
Isaiah	The wealth of the nations brought to God's house (60:5-7, 13); God's chosen Servant (42:1)
Jeremiah	Coniah plucked off like a signet (22:24; reversed in Haggai 2:23)
Ezekiel	The glory returning to the temple (43:1-5)
Daniel	The kingdoms of the world overthrown by God's kingdom (2:44)
Amos	Blight and mildew, "yet have ye not returned unto me" (4:9; Haggai 2:17)
Zechariah	The contemporary prophet; "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit"; Zerubbabel will finish the temple; "the day of small things" (4:6-10); the crowning of Joshua and the BRANCH (6:11-13); blessing from the day of the foundation (8:9-13)
Malachi	"The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple" (3:1)

Themes That Run from Haggai Through Scripture

Theme	In Haggai	Developed	Fulfilled
God's house	1:2-9; 2:3-9	2 Samuel 7; Ezra 1-6	John 2:19-21; Ephesians 2:20-22; Revelation 21:22
Priorities: God first	1:4-9	Proverbs 3:9-10	Matthew 6:33
God's presence with His people	1:13; 2:4-5	Exodus 33:14; Joshua 1:9	Matthew 1:23; 28:20
The greater glory	2:7-9	Ezekiel 43; Malachi 3:1	Luke 2:32; John 1:14
The shaking of heaven and earth	2:6, 21	Isaiah 13:13; Joel 3:16	Hebrews 12:26-28; Revelation 6:12-14
The chosen Son of David	2:23	2 Samuel 7:12-16; Jeremiah 22:24	Matthew 1:1, 12-16; Luke 1:32-33
Holiness and cleansing	2:11-14	Leviticus 11-15; Numbers 19	Mark 1:40-42; Hebrews 9:13-14; 1 John 1:7

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Don't say "the time is not come" when God has spoken** (1:2).
- **Check whether your comfort comes before God's work** (1:4).
- **Consider your ways honestly** (1:5, 7).
- **When nothing satisfies, ask whether God is first** (1:6, 9).
- **Obey promptly** (1:12, 14-15).
- **Fear the LORD with reverence** (1:12).
- **Rest in God's promise: "I am with you"** (1:13; 2:4).
- **Ask God to stir up your spirit for His work** (1:14).
- **Don't let comparisons with the past discourage you** (2:3).
- **Be strong, and work** (2:4).
- **Remember that God's Spirit remains with His people** (2:5).
- **Trust God to provide for His work; the silver and gold are His** (2:8).
- **Look for the true glory: Christ's presence, not outward splendour** (2:9).
- **Religious activity cannot cleanse an unclean heart** (2:14).
- **Expect God's blessing from the day you obey** (2:19).
- **God keeps His promises, even after judgment** (2:23).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:4	Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?
1:5	Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.
1:6	He that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.
1:8	Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.
1:13	I am with you, saith the LORD.
2:4	Yet now be strong... and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts
2:7	And the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.
2:8	The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.
2:9	The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former... and in this place will I give peace
2:19	From this day will I bless you.

Conclusion

Haggai, the first prophet after the exile, preached four short messages in 520 BC to a discouraged people who had stopped building God's house and started building their own. "Is it time for you... to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Consider your ways." Their failed harvests and empty purses were God's call to put Him first. Within 23 days, governor, high priest and people were back at work, strengthened by the promise "I am with you." When the old men wept over a temple that seemed like nothing, God told them to be strong and work, for His Spirit remained among them, and promised that the glory of this latter house would be greater than the former, for He would shake the nations and fill it with glory and peace. He taught them that holiness is not caught by contact, and promised blessing from the day they obeyed. And He chose Zerubbabel, heir of David, as His signet. Those promises were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the desire of nations, who came to that very temple, who gives peace, who builds His church as God's living house, and whose kingdom alone will stand when heaven and earth are shaken.

> *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Haggai 2:9**

Zechariah

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Zechariah son of Berechiah • Date: c. 520-480 BC • Chapters: 14

> *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass*
>
> **Zechariah 9:9**

Part One: Introduction to Zechariah

The Prophet

Zechariah, whose name means "the LORD remembers," was "the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet" (1:1). Ezra calls him "the son of Iddo" (Ezra 5:1; 6:14), using the name of his better-known grandfather. Iddo was the head of one of the priestly families that returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, and Zechariah later became head of that family (Nehemiah 12:4, 16). So Zechariah was both a priest and a prophet. He was young when he began (an angel calls him "this young man," 2:4). He started prophesying in the eighth month of the second year of Darius (520 BC), just two months after Haggai, and together they encouraged the returned exiles to finish rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14).

Date and Composition

Chapters 1-8 are dated between 520 and 518 BC (1:1, 7; 7:1). Chapters 9-14 are undated and may come from later in Zechariah's ministry, perhaps after 480 BC; they mention the rise of Greece (9:13). Some critics divide the book between different authors, but Jewish and Christian tradition, and the New Testament's use of the whole book, treat it as one prophet's work.

The Most Messianic of the Minor Prophets

Zechariah is the longest of the Minor Prophets and contains more prophecies of the Messiah than any of them. It foretells His humble entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, His being pierced, His being smitten as the Shepherd while the sheep scatter, the fountain opened for sin, and His return to the Mount of Olives to reign as King over all the earth. The Gospel writers quote Zechariah repeatedly in describing the last week of Jesus' life. Because of its visions and its focus on the end times, it has been called "the Apocalypse of the Old Testament," and Revelation draws on it frequently.

Purpose and Theme

Zechariah encouraged a small, discouraged community to complete the temple by showing them God's great purposes for Jerusalem and the world. God remembered His people; He had returned to Jerusalem with mercy; He would cleanse them, defeat their enemies, send their King, and one day reign over all the earth. The book calls for repentance (1:3), justice and mercy (7:9-10; 8:16-17), and confidence in God's Spirit rather than human power (4:6).

> *Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Zechariah 1:3**

> *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Zechariah 4:6**

> *And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*
>
> **Zechariah 14:9**

The Eight Night Visions

In one night, on the 24th day of the eleventh month of 520 BC (1:7), Zechariah saw eight visions, each explained by an angel:

Vision	Zechariah	What He Saw	Meaning
1	1:7-17	A man on a red horse among myrtle trees, with other horsemen	God sees His people's affliction and returns to Jerusalem with mercy; the temple will be built
2	1:18-21	Four horns and four carpenters (smiths)	The powers that scattered Judah will themselves be cast down
3	2:1-13	A man with a measuring line	Jerusalem will overflow its walls; God will be a wall of fire around it and the glory within it
4	3:1-10	Joshua the high priest in filthy garments, accused by Satan	God removes His people's sin and clothes them in clean garments; the BRANCH is coming
5	4:1-14	A golden lampstand fed by two olive trees	God's work is done "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit"; Zerubbabel will finish the temple
6	5:1-4	A huge flying scroll	God's curse on thieves and false swearers
7	5:5-11	A woman called Wickedness in a measuring basket, carried to Shinar	Sin removed from the land to Babylon
8	6:1-8	Four chariots from between bronze mountains	God's sovereign judgment going out over the whole earth

Outline of Zechariah

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Call to Repentance	1:1-6	"Turn ye unto me"
II. Eight Night Visions	1:7-6:8	God's purposes for Jerusalem
III. The Crowning of Joshua	6:9-15	The BRANCH: priest and king
IV. Fasting and Feasting	7-8	True religion; Jerusalem's future joy
V. The First Burden: The Rejected Shepherd-King	9-11	The King comes; the Shepherd is rejected
The King's coming	9	"Thy King cometh... riding upon an ass"
The LORD's care for His flock	10	Restoration and gathering
The rejected Shepherd	11	Thirty pieces of silver
VI. The Second Burden: The Reigning King	12-14	Israel's repentance and the LORD's reign

Section	Chapters	Theme
Jerusalem delivered; the pierced One mourned	12	"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced"
The fountain and the smitten Shepherd	13	"Smite the shepherd"
The Day of the LORD and the King over all the earth	14	"His feet shall stand... upon the mount of Olives"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Call to Repentance (Chapter 1:1-6)

Chapter 1:1-6 — Turn Ye unto Me

"The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers" (1:2).

> *Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Zechariah 1:3**

"Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried... but they did not hear" (1:4). Their fathers were gone, and so were the prophets, but God's words had overtaken them exactly as He had said (1:5-6). God's word outlasts both those who speak it and those who reject it. Repentance is the foundation of everything that follows (James 4:8).

Section II: The Eight Night Visions (Chapters 1:7-6:8)

Vision 1: The Horseman Among the Myrtles (1:7-17)

Zechariah saw "a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom" (a shady valley), with red, speckled and white horses behind him (1:8). They had patrolled the earth and reported, "behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest" (1:11): the nations were at ease while Jerusalem lay in ruins. Then "the angel of the LORD" interceded:

> *O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?*
>
> **Zechariah 1:12**

"The angel of the LORD" in the Old Testament is often identified with God Himself (Genesis 16:7-13; Exodus 3:2-6), and many see Him as the pre-incarnate Christ, here interceding for His people as He does in heaven now (Hebrews 7:25). The LORD answered "with good words and comfortable words" (1:13): "I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease" (1:14-15). "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it... My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (1:16-17).

Vision 2: Four Horns and Four Carpenters (1:18-21)

Zechariah saw four horns, "the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" (1:19). Horns symbolise power; these were the nations that had crushed God's people (compare Daniel 7-8). Then he saw four carpenters (craftsmen or smiths), who came "to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles" (1:21). For every power that rises against God's people, God has an instrument to bring it down.

Vision 3: The Measuring Line (2:1-13)

A man with a measuring line went to measure Jerusalem (2:1-2). But an angel said Jerusalem would be "inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein" (2:4): it would be too large for walls.

> *For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.*
>
> **Zechariah 2:5**

God Himself would be their protection and their glory. He called the exiles still in Babylon to flee and return (2:6-7), "for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye" (2:8): to harm God's people is to strike at the pupil of His eye. Then the speaker says, "ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me" (2:9, 11): the LORD sends the LORD, a hint of the distinct persons of the Godhead.

> *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people*
>
> **Zechariah 2:10-11**

God would come to dwell among His people, and the nations would join them. This was fulfilled in part when Christ came and "dwelt among us" (John 1:14) and the Gentiles were brought into God's people, and will be fully fulfilled when "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3). "Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation" (2:13).

Vision 4: Joshua the High Priest Cleansed (3:1-10)

This is one of the clearest pictures of salvation in the Old Testament.

> *And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*
>
> **Zechariah 3:1-2**

Joshua represented the whole nation before God. Satan, "the accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10), stood ready to accuse. The LORD did not deny Joshua's guilt; He rebuked Satan on the basis of His own choice and grace: Joshua was "a brand plucked out of the fire," rescued from the judgment of exile (Amos 4:11; Jude 9, 23).

> *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*
>
> **Zechariah 3:3-4**

The high priest's garments, which should have been pure, were filthy with sin (Isaiah 64:6). God removed them, took away his iniquity, and clothed him in clean, festive robes and a clean turban (3:5). This is justification: God takes away our sin and clothes us in His righteousness (Isaiah 61:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:33-34). Joshua did nothing but stand there; God did it all.

God then charged Joshua to walk in His ways (3:6-7), and promised: "behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH" (3:8), the Messiah from David's line (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5). "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes... and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day" (3:9). The stone points to Christ, the chief cornerstone (Psalm 118:22; 1 Peter 2:6); Revelation shows the Lamb "having seven horns and seven eyes" (Revelation 5:6). And sin would be removed "in one day," fulfilled at the cross, where Christ "offered one sacrifice for sins for ever" (Hebrews 10:12-14). The result: peace and security, "every man under the vine and under the fig tree" (3:10).

Vision 5: The Golden Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees (4:1-14)

Zechariah saw a golden lampstand with a bowl on top, seven lamps, and seven pipes to each lamp, with two olive trees beside it supplying oil directly (4:2-3, 12). The lamp burned without any human effort to refill it. The angel explained:

> *This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Zechariah 4:6**

God's work is accomplished not by human strength, armies or resources, but by His Holy Spirit, symbolised by the oil. "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it" (4:7). Mountains of opposition would be levelled, and the final stone of the temple would be set in place amid shouts of "Grace!"

> *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it... For who hath despised the day of small things?*
>
> **Zechariah 4:9-10**

The temple was indeed completed in 515 BC (Ezra 6:15). God's work may begin small, but it must not be despised. The two olive trees are "the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (4:14), probably Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the governor. Revelation uses this imagery for the two witnesses (Revelation 11:3-4).

Vision 6: The Flying Scroll (5:1-4)

Zechariah saw a flying scroll twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide (about 30 by 15 feet, the size of the porch of Solomon's temple). "This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth" (5:3) against those who steal and those who swear falsely, sins against neighbour and against God. It would enter their houses and consume them (5:4). God's law cannot be escaped; restoration of the temple required the removal of sin from the people.

Vision 7: The Woman in the Ephah (5:5-11)

An ephah (a measuring basket for grain) appeared, with a lead cover. Inside sat a woman: "This is wickedness" (5:7-8). The angel thrust her back in and shut the lid. Two women with wings like a stork carried the basket away "to build it an house in the land of Shinar" (5:9-11), that is, Babylon. Sin, perhaps especially commercial dishonesty and idolatry, would be removed from God's land and taken back to its proper home in Babylon, the centre of rebellion since the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:2). Revelation shows the final judgment of "Babylon the great" (Revelation 17-18).

Vision 8: The Four Chariots (6:1-8)

Four chariots with red, black, white and grisled (dappled) horses came out from between two mountains of brass (bronze) (6:1-3). They were "the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth" (6:5), sent through the whole earth. Those that went north "have quieted my spirit in the north country" (6:8), meaning God's judgment on Babylon was accomplished. The visions began with horsemen reporting that the earth was at rest while Jerusalem suffered (1:11); they end with God's chariots going out in sovereign judgment over all the earth. Compare the four horsemen of Revelation 6:1-8.

Section III: The Crowning of Joshua (Chapter 6:9-15)

God told Zechariah to collect silver and gold from returned exiles, make crowns, "and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest" (6:11). This was remarkable: priests did not wear royal crowns. It was a prophetic sign:

> *Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*
>
> **Zechariah 6:12-13**

In Israel the offices of king (from Judah) and priest (from Levi) were always kept separate; King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for trying to burn incense (2 Chronicles 26:16-21). But the coming BRANCH would be both King and Priest, uniting the two offices in perfect harmony ("the counsel of peace shall be between them both"). Joshua's name is the Hebrew form of Jesus. Jesus Christ is "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," the king-priest (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:1-3), seated as High Priest "on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1). He builds the true temple, His church (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20-22). "And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD" (6:15): Gentiles would share in building God's house (Ephesians 2:13).

Section IV: Fasting and Feasting (Chapters 7-8)

Chapter 7 — Empty Fasting and True Religion

In the fourth year of Darius (518 BC), a delegation from Bethel asked the priests and prophets whether they should continue fasting in the fifth month, as they had for seventy years, mourning the destruction of the temple (7:1-3). God's answer probed their hearts:

> *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?*
>
> **Zechariah 7:5-6**

Their fasting had been about themselves, not God. What God had always wanted, the former prophets had preached:

> *Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.*
>
> **Zechariah 7:9-10**

But their fathers "refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears... Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone" (7:11-12). Therefore God scattered them "with a whirlwind among all the nations" (7:14). Ritual without righteousness had brought the exile; the returned community must not repeat it.

Chapter 8 — Jerusalem's Future Joy

In ten promises, each beginning "Thus saith the LORD of hosts," God described Jerusalem's coming restoration:

- "I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy" (8:2).
- "I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain" (8:3).
- "There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem... And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (8:4-5): a picture of peace and security for every generation.
- "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes?" (8:6). Nothing is too hard for God.
- He would gather His people from east and west, "and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness" (8:7-8).
- "Let your hands be strong" (8:9, 13). God would reverse their fortunes: "as ye were a curse among the heathen... so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing" (8:13).
- "These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (8:16; Ephesians 4:25).
- The four fasts commemorating Jerusalem's fall, in the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months (the breach of the wall, the burning of the temple, the murder of Gedaliah, and the beginning of the

siege), "shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace" (8:19).

- Many peoples and strong nations would come to seek the LORD in Jerusalem (8:20-22).

> *In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*
>
> **Zechariah 8:23**

The nations would be drawn to God through His people. Through the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, and His Jewish apostles, the gospel went out to every nation (Acts 1:8; John 4:22: "salvation is of the Jews").

Section V: The First Burden — The Rejected Shepherd-King (Chapters 9-11)

Chapter 9 — The Coming King

Judgment on the nations around Israel (9:1-8). "The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus" (9:1). The oracle moves south through Hamath, Tyre and Sidon, then to the Philistine cities of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and Ashdod (9:1-7). This exactly traces the route of Alexander the Great's conquest in 332 BC, when he took Damascus and Sidon, besieged and destroyed the island city of Tyre (9:3-4), and captured Gaza. Yet God promised, "I will encamp about mine house because of the army" (9:8), and Alexander passed by Jerusalem without destroying it. (The Jewish historian Josephus records a tradition that Alexander honoured the city.) Even the Philistines would have a remnant that belonged to God (9:7).

The King on a donkey (9:9-10). In stark contrast to the proud conqueror on his war horse comes another King:

> *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*
>
> **Zechariah 9:9**

This King is righteous, brings salvation, and is humble, riding not a war horse but a donkey, an animal of peace (compare Genesis 49:10-11, where the ruler from Judah binds his donkey's colt to the vine). Five centuries later Jesus deliberately fulfilled this prophecy, sending His disciples for a donkey and its colt and riding into Jerusalem as the crowds cried "Hosanna to the son of David" (Matthew 21:1-11; John 12:12-16). "He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (9:10; Psalm 72:8).

Prisoners of hope (9:11-17). "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water" (9:11). God's covenant, sealed in blood, frees His captives; the blood of the new covenant was shed by Christ (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 13:20).

> *Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee*
>
> **Zechariah 9:12**

God's people are not hopeless prisoners but "prisoners of hope." He would raise up the sons of Zion "against thy sons, O Greece" (9:13), fulfilled in the Maccabean victories over the Greek Seleucid rulers in the second century BC. The LORD would appear over His people and defend them (9:14-15). "For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!" (9:17).

Chapter 10 — The LORD Cares for His Flock

"Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain" (10:1): ask God, not idols, for blessing. The idols and diviners had led the people astray, "therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd" (10:2; compare Matthew 9:36). God's anger was against the false shepherds; He would care for His flock and make Judah "as his goodly horse in the battle" (10:3).

> *Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.*
>
> **Zechariah 10:4**

From Judah would come leaders, and ultimately the Messiah: the cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:20), the nail or tent peg on which everything hangs secure (Isaiah 22:23), and the battle bow, the conqueror. ("Oppressor" here means ruler.) God would strengthen Judah and save Joseph (the northern tribes), "for I have mercy upon them" (10:6). "I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them" (10:8). He would sow them among the nations, and they would remember Him in far countries and return (10:9), brought back from Egypt and Assyria (10:10), passing through the sea of affliction as at the Exodus (10:11). "And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name" (10:12).

Chapter 11 — The Rejected Shepherd

This chapter is one of the most dramatic in the prophets. "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars" (11:1): a lament over coming devastation and the shepherds who would wail (11:1-3).

God told Zechariah to act out the role of a shepherd: "Feed the flock of the slaughter" (11:4). The flock was being exploited by owners who killed them without guilt and sellers who said, "Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich" (11:5). Zechariah took two staffs, which he named "Beauty" (Favour or Grace) and "Bands" (Union), and fed the flock (11:7). "Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me" (11:8): the leaders rejected the shepherd, and he rejected them. He broke the staff Beauty, signifying the end of God's covenant of protection (11:10). The poor of the flock, who were watching, "knew that it was the word of the LORD" (11:11).

Then the shepherd asked for his wages:

> *And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.*
>
> **Zechariah 11:12-13**

Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave gored by an ox (Exodus 21:32), an insult. God sarcastically called it "a goodly price that I was prised at of them": the people's valuation of the shepherd was their valuation of God Himself. The fulfillment in the New Testament is precise: Judas agreed to betray Jesus for "thirty pieces of silver" (Matthew 26:15); in remorse he "cast down the pieces of silver in the temple," and the priests used the money to buy "the potter's field" (Matthew 27:3-10). Matthew attributes the prophecy to "Jeremy the prophet," probably because he combines Zechariah's words with Jeremiah's prophecies about the potter and the purchase of a field (Jeremiah 18-19; 32:6-9), naming the more prominent prophet, as was common practice (compare Mark 1:2-3, which combines Malachi and Isaiah under Isaiah's name).

Zechariah then broke the second staff, Bands, "that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel" (11:14): the nation would be torn by internal division, as it was in the bitter factional fighting during the Roman siege of AD 70. Finally God told him to take the equipment of "a foolish shepherd" (11:15), representing a worthless shepherd who would not care for the flock but devour it (11:16). "Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock!" (11:17). Having rejected the Good Shepherd, Israel would receive a false one. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). Many see here a picture of the coming Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Section VI: The Second Burden — The Reigning King (Chapters 12-14)

Chapter 12 — Jerusalem Delivered; the Pierced One Mourned

"The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (12:1). The Creator Himself makes the promise. "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about... And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (12:2-3). The nations would gather against Jerusalem, but God would strike their horses with blindness and their riders with madness (12:4), make Judah's leaders like a fire among wood (12:6), and defend Jerusalem, so that "he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them" (12:8). "I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem" (12:9). Then comes one of the most remarkable verses in the Old Testament:

> *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

> **Zechariah 12:10**

The LORD Himself is speaking: "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Yet in the next phrase they mourn "for him." The One who is pierced is God, yet distinct; this points to the incarnation and the crucifixion of the Son of God. When the soldier pierced Jesus' side, John wrote, "And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced" (John 19:37). Revelation applies it to His return: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Revelation 1:7). The verse foretells a future national repentance of Israel, when God pours out a spirit of grace and they recognise their Messiah (Romans 11:26-27).

The mourning would be as great as "the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon" (12:11), the nation's grief at the death of godly King Josiah at Megiddo (2 Chronicles 35:22-25). Every family would mourn apart, each person in personal repentance, from the royal house of David and Nathan to the priestly house of Levi and Shimei (12:12-14).

Chapter 13 — The Fountain and the Smitten Shepherd

> *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*
>
> **Zechariah 13:1**

After the mourning comes cleansing. The fountain flows from the One who was pierced. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7); He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5). The hymn "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood" draws on this verse.

God would remove idols and false prophets from the land (13:2). False prophecy would be so shameful that parents would condemn their own children who prophesied lies (13:3; Deuteronomy 13:6-9), and false prophets would deny their calling: "I am no prophet, I am an husbandman" (13:4-5). "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (13:6). In context this refers to the false prophet's wounds, perhaps self-inflicted in pagan rituals (1 Kings 18:28), or received in discipline. Many Christians have applied the words to Christ's wounds, though the context points primarily to the false prophet. The next verse, however, clearly speaks of the true Shepherd:

> *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.*
>
> **Zechariah 13:7**

God calls the Shepherd "the man that is my fellow," His equal, His companion. It is God Himself who commands the sword to strike Him: Christ was "smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:4, 10). On the night of His arrest, Jesus quoted this verse: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (Matthew 26:31). And "all the disciples forsook him, and fled" (Matthew 26:56).

Two thirds of the land would be cut off, but the third part would be refined like silver and tested like gold: "they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (13:8-9; compare 1 Peter 1:7; Hosea 2:23).

Chapter 14 — The Day of the LORD and the King over All the Earth

The book closes with a vision of the final Day of the LORD. All nations gather against Jerusalem; the city is taken and half its people go into captivity (14:1-2). Then:

> *Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley*
>
> **Zechariah 14:3-4**

The LORD Himself, with feet, stands on the Mount of Olives. When Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives, angels said, "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11-12). The mountain will split, and the people will flee through the new valley as they fled from the earthquake in Uzziah's days (14:5; Amos 1:1). "And the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee" (14:5): Christ returns with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14; Revelation 19:14).

That day will be unique, neither clearly day nor night, "but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light" (14:6-7; Revelation 21:25; 22:5). "Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be" (14:8; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Revelation 22:1).

> *And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*
>
> **Zechariah 14:9**

The confession of Israel, "The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4), will be acknowledged by the whole world. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). The land will be levelled and Jerusalem lifted up and "safely inhabited" (14:10-11). The armies that fought against Jerusalem will be struck by a terrible plague: their flesh, eyes and tongues consumed while they stand (14:12), panic among them (14:13), and their wealth gathered (14:14).

Then "every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (14:16). Nations that refuse will receive no rain (14:17-19). Everything will be holy: "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" (14:20), the very inscription once worn only on the high priest's turban (Exodus 28:36). Even ordinary cooking pots in Jerusalem will be holy (14:21). "And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite [trader] in the house of the LORD of hosts" (14:21): no more profiteering in God's house, as Jesus demanded when He drove out the traders: "make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (John 2:16).

Part Three: Christ in Zechariah

The Life of Christ in Zechariah

Zechariah foretells the Messiah's person and work in remarkable detail, especially the events of His final week:

Zechariah	Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:12; 3:1-2	The Angel of the LORD intercedes for Jerusalem and rebukes Satan	Christ our Intercessor and Advocate (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1; Jude 9)
2:8-11	The LORD sent by the LORD to dwell among His people	The Son sent by the Father (John 1:14; 3:17)
3:4	Filthy garments removed; iniquity taken away; clean garments given	Justification through Christ's righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 61:10)
3:8; 6:12	"My servant the BRANCH"	Christ, the Branch of David (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5)
3:9	The stone with seven eyes; iniquity removed in one day	The chief cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6); the Lamb with seven eyes (Revelation 5:6); one sacrifice for ever (Hebrews 10:12-14)
4:7	The headstone brought forth with cries of "Grace, grace"	Christ the headstone of the corner (Psalm 118:22; Matthew 21:42)
6:12-13	The BRANCH builds the temple and is a priest upon His throne	Christ the King-Priest who builds His church (Hebrews 7-8; Matthew 16:18)
9:9	The King comes, just, having salvation, lowly, riding on a donkey	The triumphal entry (Matthew 21:1-11; John 12:12-16)
9:10	He speaks peace to the nations; His dominion to the ends of the earth	The gospel of peace to all nations (Ephesians 2:17); Christ's universal reign (Revelation 11:15)
9:11	Prisoners freed by the blood of the covenant	The blood of the new covenant (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 13:20)
10:4	The cornerstone, the nail, the battle bow	Christ the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20) and conqueror (Revelation 19:11)
11:4-14	The Good Shepherd rejected by the flock's leaders	Christ the Good Shepherd rejected (John 10:11; Matthew 26:3-4)
11:12	Valued at thirty pieces of silver	Judas paid thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15)
11:13	The silver cast to the potter in the house of the LORD	The money thrown into the temple; the potter's field bought (Matthew 27:3-10)
11:16-17	The idol shepherd who abandons the flock	The Antichrist received in his own name (John 5:43)
12:10	"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced"	Jesus pierced on the cross (John 19:34, 37); Israel's future mourning (Revelation 1:7)
13:1	A fountain opened for sin and uncleanness	Cleansing in Christ's blood (1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5)

Zechariah	Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
13:7	The Shepherd, God's fellow, smitten; the sheep scattered	Jesus arrested; the disciples flee (Matthew 26:31, 56)
14:4	His feet on the Mount of Olives	Christ's return to Olivet (Acts 1:11-12)
14:5	The LORD comes with all His saints	Christ returns with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14)
14:9	King over all the earth	King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16)
14:21	No more traders in the house of the LORD	Christ cleanses the temple (John 2:13-16)

The Deity of the Messiah in Zechariah

Zechariah repeatedly hints that the coming One is God Himself:

- "The LORD of hosts hath sent me" (2:9, 11): the LORD sent by the LORD.
- "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced... and they shall mourn for him" (12:10): God speaks of Himself as pierced.
- "The man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts" (13:7): the Shepherd is God's equal.
- "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives... and the LORD my God shall come" (14:4-5): the LORD comes in bodily form.

These verses find their explanation in the incarnation: the Word who was God "was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14).

The King-Priest

Zechariah 6:12-13 unites the offices of king and priest in the BRANCH. Jesus is both: the Son of David who reigns (Luke 1:32-33) and the High Priest who offered Himself and intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:24-27). He is "a priest upon his throne."

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Zechariah	Fulfillment
The temple will be built	1:16; 4:9; 6:15	Completed under Zerubbabel, 515 BC (Ezra 6:15)
The powers that scattered Judah judged	1:18-21	Babylon and later empires fell
Wickedness carried to Babylon	5:5-11	Babylon later the symbol of the world system (Revelation 17-18)
Judgment on Damascus, Tyre, Sidon and Philistia, in that order	9:1-7	Alexander the Great's campaign, 332 BC
Tyre's wealth cast into the sea and the city burned	9:3-4	Alexander's destruction of Tyre, 332 BC
Jerusalem protected from the conqueror	9:8	Alexander passed by Jerusalem without destroying it
Zion's sons against the sons of Greece	9:13	The Maccabean victories over the Seleucid Greeks (167-160 BC)
The King riding on a donkey	9:9	Jesus' triumphal entry (Matthew 21:1-11)
Thirty pieces of silver	11:12	Judas' payment (Matthew 26:15)
The silver cast to the potter in the house of the LORD	11:13	Matthew 27:3-10
The brotherhood broken	11:14	Internal division in Judea leading up to and during AD 70
The pierced One	12:10	The crucifixion (John 19:37); Israel's future mourning still to come
The Shepherd smitten; the sheep scattered	13:7	Jesus' arrest; the disciples fled (Matthew 26:31, 56)
The nations seeking the LORD through the Jews	8:20-23	The gospel spread from Jerusalem to all nations (Acts 1:8)

Prophecies still awaiting fulfillment include Israel's national repentance (12:10-14), the cleansing of the land (13:1-2), the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem, the LORD's return to the Mount of Olives, the living waters, and His reign as King over all the earth (14).

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Zechariah 1:3 — Turn and He Will Turn

Restoration begins with returning to God. When His people turn to Him, He turns to them. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8).

Zechariah 3:1-5 — Clean Garments

Joshua stood accused and dirty before a holy God, and Satan was ready to condemn him. God silenced the accuser, removed the filthy garments, and clothed Joshua in clean ones. This is the gospel: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33).

Zechariah 4:6-10 — Not by Might, nor by Power

God's work is done by God's Spirit, not by human resources. Mountains of difficulty become plains. Small beginnings must not be despised. The headstone will be set with cries of "Grace, grace," because the whole work is by God's grace.

Zechariah 7:5-10 — Religion That Pleases God

God asked whether their fasting had really been for Him. Religious rituals can become self-centred. What God wants is justice, mercy, compassion, care for the vulnerable and a heart free of evil intentions toward others (Micah 6:8; James 1:27).

Zechariah 9:9 — The Humble King

The King comes riding not on a war horse but on a donkey: righteous, saving, humble. Jesus deliberately fulfilled this to show what kind of King He is (Matthew 11:29; Philippians 2:5-8). He came first in humility; He will come again in glory.

Zechariah 11:12-13 — Thirty Pieces of Silver

The price the leaders placed on the Shepherd revealed their contempt for God Himself. The detailed fulfillment in Judas' betrayal shows the precision of prophecy and the depth of Christ's humiliation.

Zechariah 12:10 — Looking on the Pierced One

True repentance comes when God pours out a spirit of grace and people see the One they pierced. Every believer has experienced this in some measure: recognising that our sins pierced Christ, and mourning, then finding cleansing in the fountain He opened (13:1).

Zechariah 13:7 — The Smitten Shepherd

God Himself struck the Shepherd who is His equal. The cross was not an accident but God's plan (Acts 2:23; Isaiah 53:10). The Shepherd was struck so the sheep could be saved, even though they scattered.

Zechariah 14:4, 9 — The Return of the King

History will end with the LORD standing on the Mount of Olives and reigning as King over all the earth. This is the blessed hope of the church (Titus 2:13; Acts 1:11).

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Zechariah

1. God Remembers His People

He is jealous for Jerusalem and returns to it with mercy (1:14-17; 8:2-3).

2. Repentance Is the Path to Restoration

"Turn ye unto me... and I will turn unto you" (1:3).

3. God Protects His People

He is a wall of fire around them; whoever touches them touches the apple of His eye (2:5, 8).

4. God Cleanses and Justifies the Guilty

He removes filthy garments and takes away iniquity (3:4, 9).

5. God's Work Is Done by His Spirit

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit" (4:6).

6. True Religion Is Justice and Mercy

God wants obedience, compassion and truth, not empty ritual (7:5-10; 8:16-17).

7. The Nations Will Seek the LORD

Many nations will join themselves to Him (2:11; 8:20-23; 14:16).

8. The Messiah Is King, Priest and Shepherd

The BRANCH, the humble King, the rejected and smitten Shepherd, and the pierced One (3:8; 6:12-13; 9:9; 11-13).

9. The Messiah Is Divine

The pierced One and the Shepherd are identified with God Himself (12:10; 13:7; 14:4).

10. Israel's Future Repentance and Cleansing

God will pour out a spirit of grace and open a fountain for sin (12:10-13:1).

11. The Day of the LORD and the Reign of Christ

The LORD will return, defeat the nations, and reign as King over all the earth (14).

12. Holiness Will Fill Everything

"HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" will be on the most ordinary things (14:20-21).

Part Seven: Connections — How Zechariah Links to the Rest of the Bible

Zechariah in the New Testament

Zechariah	New Testament	Connection
1:1 (Zacharias son of Barachias)	Matthew 23:35	Jesus names "Zacharias son of Barachias" slain between the temple and the altar (probably Zechariah son of Jehoiada, 2 Chronicles 24:20-22; the identification is debated)
1:3 (turn to God)	James 4:8	Draw nigh to God
1:8; 6:1-8 (coloured horses)	Revelation 6:1-8	The four horsemen
2:1-2 (measuring Jerusalem)	Revelation 11:1; 21:15	Measuring the temple and the city
2:10-11 (God dwelling among His people)	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3	God with us
3:1-2 (Satan the accuser rebuked)	Jude 9; Revelation 12:10	"The Lord rebuke thee"; the accuser cast down
3:2 (a brand plucked from the fire)	Jude 23	Pulling them out of the fire
3:9; 4:10 (seven eyes)	Revelation 5:6	The Lamb with seven eyes
4:2-3, 11-14 (lampstand and olive trees)	Revelation 1:12, 20; 11:4	The lampstands; the two witnesses
5:5-11 (wickedness to Babylon)	Revelation 17-18	Babylon the great
6:12-13 (the King-Priest)	Hebrews 7:1-3; 8:1	A priest upon His throne
8:16 (speak the truth)	Ephesians 4:25	Speak every man truth with his neighbour
8:23 (the nations follow the Jews)	John 4:22; Acts 1:8	Salvation is of the Jews
9:9 (the King on a donkey)	Matthew 21:4-5; John 12:14-15	The triumphal entry
9:11 (the blood of the covenant)	Luke 22:20; Hebrews 13:20	The new covenant in Christ's blood
10:2 (sheep without a shepherd)	Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34	Christ's compassion

Zechariah	New Testament	Connection
10:4 (the cornerstone)	Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6	Christ the cornerstone
11:4-17 (the good and worthless shepherds)	John 10:1-16; 5:43	The Good Shepherd; one coming in his own name
11:12-13 (thirty pieces; the potter)	Matthew 26:14-15; 27:3-10	Judas' betrayal; the potter's field
12:10 (the pierced One)	John 19:34-37; Revelation 1:7	They shall look on Him whom they pierced
13:1 (the fountain for sin)	1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5	Cleansed by His blood
13:7 (smite the shepherd)	Matthew 26:31, 56; Mark 14:27, 50	The disciples scattered
13:9 (refined like silver and gold)	1 Peter 1:6-7	Faith tried by fire
14:4 (the Mount of Olives)	Acts 1:9-12	He will come in like manner
14:5 (with all His saints)	1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14; Revelation 19:14	The Lord comes with His saints
14:7 (light at evening)	Revelation 21:25; 22:5	No night there
14:8 (living waters)	John 7:37-38; Revelation 22:1	The river of life
14:9 (King over all the earth)	Revelation 11:15; 19:16	King of kings
14:21 (no traders in God's house)	John 2:16	Not an house of merchandise

Zechariah in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Babel in Shinar (11:2; Zechariah 5:11); the ruler from Judah binding his donkey's colt (49:10-11; Zechariah 9:9)
Exodus	The price of a slave: thirty shekels (21:32; Zechariah 11:12); "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" on the high priest's turban (28:36; Zechariah 14:20)
Leviticus	The Feast of Tabernacles (23:33-43; Zechariah 14:16)
Deuteronomy	"The LORD our God is one LORD" (6:4; Zechariah 14:9); punishing false prophets (13:6-9; Zechariah 13:3)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David's house (7:12-16; Zechariah 12:8)
2 Kings	The dates of the fasts: the siege, the breach, the burning, Gedaliah's murder (25:1-4, 8, 25; Zechariah 7:3; 8:19)
2 Chronicles	The mourning for Josiah at Megiddo (35:22-25; Zechariah 12:11); Uzziah struck for acting as a priest (26:16-21)

Book	Link
Ezra	Zechariah and Haggai stir up the building of the temple (5:1-2; 6:14-15)
Nehemiah	Zechariah, head of Iddo's priestly family (12:4, 16)
Psalms	The stone the builders refused (118:22; Zechariah 4:7; 10:4); "from sea to sea" (72:8; Zechariah 9:10); the priest after the order of Melchizedek (110:4; Zechariah 6:13)
Isaiah	The Branch (4:2; 11:1); the cornerstone (28:16); the nail in a sure place (22:23); the pierced and smitten Servant (53:4-5, 10); the nations coming to Zion (60; 66:18-23)
Jeremiah	The righteous Branch (23:5; 33:15); the potter and the field (18-19; 32:6-9; Matthew 27:9); "this is his name... THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"
Ezekiel	Shepherds and the one Shepherd (34); one nation, one king (37:15-28; compare Zechariah 11:14); the river from the temple (47)
Daniel	The horns as kingdoms (7-8; Zechariah 1:18-21)
Hosea	"It is my people... The LORD is my God" (2:23; Zechariah 13:9)
Joel	The nations gathered and judged; a fountain from the LORD's house (3:2, 12, 18)
Amos	The earthquake in Uzziah's days (1:1; Zechariah 14:5); a brand plucked from the fire (4:11)
Micah	Every man under his vine and fig tree (4:4; Zechariah 3:10); nations seeking the LORD (4:2)
Haggai	The contemporary prophet; the temple, Zerubbabel and Joshua (1-2)
Malachi	The Lord coming to His temple (3:1-3)

Themes That Run from Zechariah Through Scripture

Theme	In Zechariah	Developed	Fulfilled
The BRANCH	3:8; 6:12	Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5	Matthew 1:1; Romans 15:12
The King-Priest	6:12-13	Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 7-8
The humble King	9:9	Genesis 49:10-11	Matthew 21:1-11
The rejected Shepherd	11:4-14; 13:7	Isaiah 53; Ezekiel 34	John 10; Matthew 26:31
The pierced One	12:10	Psalm 22:16; Isaiah 53:5	John 19:37; Revelation 1:7
The fountain for sin	13:1	Ezekiel 36:25	1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5
The return of the King	14:3-9	Daniel 7:13-14	Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16
The Spirit, not human power	4:6	Isaiah 31:1-3	Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5
God dwelling with His people	2:10-11; 8:3	Ezekiel 48:35	John 1:14; Revelation 21:3

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Turn to God, and He will turn to you** (1:3).
- **Learn from the past; don't repeat your fathers' sins** (1:4-6).
- **God sees when the world is at ease and His people suffer** (1:11-15).
- **God is your wall of fire and your glory** (2:5).
- **You are the apple of God's eye** (2:8).
- **Be silent before the LORD** (2:13).
- **Trust God to silence your accuser** (3:1-2).
- **Rejoice in the clean garments God gives** (3:4).
- **Do God's work by His Spirit, not your own strength** (4:6).
- **Don't despise the day of small things** (4:10).
- **Examine whether your religion is for God or for yourself** (7:5-6).
- **Show justice, mercy and compassion** (7:9-10).
- **Let your hands be strong** (8:9, 13).
- **Speak the truth and love peace** (8:16, 19).
- **Welcome the humble King** (9:9).
- **Be a prisoner of hope** (9:12).
- **Don't put a low price on Christ** (11:12-13).
- **Look on the One you pierced, and mourn for sin** (12:10).
- **Wash in the fountain opened for sin** (13:1).
- **Live in hope of the King's return** (14:4, 9).
- **Let "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" mark even the ordinary things of life** (14:20-21).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you
2:5	For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.
2:8	He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.
3:4	Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.
4:6	Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.
4:10	For who hath despised the day of small things?
9:9	Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass
9:12	Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope
12:10	They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him
13:1	In that day there shall be a fountain opened... for sin and for uncleanness.
13:7	Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered
14:4	And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives
14:9	And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Conclusion

Zechariah, a young priest and prophet whose name means "the LORD remembers," encouraged the small band of returned exiles to finish God's house by lifting their eyes to God's great purposes. In eight night visions he saw that God had returned to Jerusalem with mercy, would be a wall of fire around it, would remove His people's filthy garments and their sin in one day, and would complete His work "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit." He saw the high priest Joshua crowned as a sign of the BRANCH who would be both King and Priest. He called the people to true religion of justice and mercy, and promised that their fasts would become feasts and the nations would seek the LORD with them. Then his prophecy turned to the Messiah: the humble King riding on a donkey, the Good Shepherd valued at thirty pieces of silver, the pierced One on whom Israel will one day look and mourn, the fountain opened for sin, the smitten Shepherd who is God's own fellow, and finally the LORD whose feet will stand on the Mount of Olives as He comes with all His saints to be King over all the earth. Every one of these was fulfilled, or will be fulfilled, in Jesus Christ.

> *And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*
>
> **Zechariah 14:9**

Malachi

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Malachi • Date: c. 430 BC • Chapters: 4

> *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple*
>
> **Malachi 3:1**

Part One: Introduction to Malachi

The Prophet

Malachi means "my messenger." Some have suggested it is a title rather than a personal name (the Greek translation renders 1:1 "by the hand of his messenger"), but most interpreters take it as the prophet's name. Fittingly, the book itself announces the coming of God's "messenger" who will prepare the way for the Lord (3:1). Nothing else is known about Malachi. He was the last of the Old Testament prophets.

Date and Setting

Malachi does not date his book, but its contents place it about a century after the return from exile, around 433-420 BC:

- The temple had been rebuilt and sacrifices were being offered (1:7-10; 3:1, 10).
- Judah was ruled by a Persian "governor" (1:8).
- The sins Malachi condemns are the same ones Nehemiah confronted: corrupt priests, marriages to pagan women, divorce, and neglect of tithes (Nehemiah 13).

Many scholars believe Malachi prophesied during or shortly after Nehemiah's second term as governor, perhaps while Nehemiah was away in Persia (Nehemiah 13:6).

Shared Sin	Malachi	Nehemiah
Corrupt and careless priests	1:6-2:9	13:4-9, 28-29
Defiling the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites	2:4-8	13:29
Marriage to foreign women of pagan faith	2:11-12	13:23-27
Neglect of tithes; Levites unsupported	3:8-10	13:10-13
Oppression of the poor and the hireling	3:5	5:1-13

The excitement of the return had faded. The promised glory had not yet appeared. The people were spiritually cold, cynical and careless. They went through the motions of religion but questioned God's love and justice, offered Him their worst, and assumed He did not notice.

A Book of Disputes

Malachi is written as a series of debates. God makes a statement; the people object with a question ("Yet ye say, Wherein...?"); and God answers. These questions reveal hearts that had grown hard and self-justifying:

God's Charge	The People's Reply	Malachi
"I have loved you"	"Wherein hast thou loved us?"	1:2
"O priests, that despise my name"	"Wherein have we despised thy name?"	1:6
"Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar"	"Wherein have we polluted thee?"	1:7

God's Charge	The People's Reply	Malachi
"He regardeth not the offering any more"	"Wherefore?"	2:13-14
"Ye have wearied the LORD with your words"	"Wherein have we wearied him?"	2:17
"Return unto me, and I will return unto you"	"Wherein shall we return?"	3:7
"Ye have robbed me"	"Wherein have we robbed thee?"	3:8
"Your words have been stout against me"	"What have we spoken so much against thee?"	3:13

Purpose and Theme

Malachi calls a cold and careless people back to wholehearted love and honour for God. He reminds them of God's unchanging love (1:2; 3:6), exposes their half-hearted worship, broken marriages and robbery of God, and announces that the Lord Himself will suddenly come to His temple, preceded by His messenger, to refine His people and judge the wicked. The Old Testament closes with a promise: the Sun of righteousness will rise, and Elijah will come before the great day of the LORD.

> *I have loved you, saith the LORD.*
>
> **Malachi 1:2**

> *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*
>
> **Malachi 3:6**

> *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings*
>
> **Malachi 4:2**

Outline of Malachi

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. God's Love for Israel	1:1-5	"I have loved you"
II. The Sins of the Priests	1:6-2:9	Despising God's name
Polluted offerings	1:6-14	The blind, the lame and the sick
The broken covenant of Levi	2:1-9	"The priest's lips should keep knowledge"
III. The Sins of the People	2:10-3:15	Unfaithfulness to God and to one another
Marrying pagans and divorcing wives	2:10-16	"He hateth putting away"
Questioning God's justice	2:17	"Where is the God of judgment?"
The coming messenger and refiner	3:1-6	"The Lord... shall suddenly come to his temple"
Robbing God	3:7-12	Tithes and offerings
Speaking against God	3:13-15	"It is vain to serve God"

Section	Chapters	Theme
IV. The Faithful Remnant and the Day of the LORD	3:16-4:6	The book of remembrance; the Sun of righteousness; Elijah

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — God's Love and the Priests' Contempt

God's Love for Israel (1:1-5)

"The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi" (1:1). The first word God speaks is love:

> *I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.*
>
> **Malachi 1:2-3**

The people doubted God's love because their circumstances were hard. God pointed to His sovereign choice: He chose Jacob, not his twin brother Esau, before they were born (Genesis 25:23). "Hated" in this Hebrew comparison means "chose not to love in the same way" or "rejected," the language of choice rather than emotion (compare Genesis 29:30-31; Luke 14:26). Paul quotes this verse to show that salvation rests on God's free choice, "not of works, but of him that calleth" (Romans 9:11-13). The proof of God's love was Israel's restoration while Edom lay in ruins. Edom vowed to rebuild, but God said, "They shall build, but I will throw down" (1:4), and Edom has disappeared as a nation. "And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel" (1:5).

Despising God's Name (1:6-14)

> *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name.*
>
> **Malachi 1:6**

The priests asked, "Wherein have we despised thy name?" God answered: "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar... ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible" (1:7). They brought blind, lame and sick animals for sacrifice, though the law required perfect ones (Leviticus 22:20-22; Deuteronomy 15:21).

> *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Malachi 1:8**

They would never give such gifts to a human ruler, yet thought them good enough for God. God would rather the temple doors be shut than receive such worship: "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought?... I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand" (1:10). Then, in contrast, a remarkable prophecy:

> *For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Malachi 1:11**

While Israel's priests despised God's name, the Gentiles would one day honour it everywhere, not only in Jerusalem but "in every place." This is fulfilled as the gospel spreads to all nations and true worshippers worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:21-24), offering spiritual sacrifices of praise and lives given to God (Romans 12:1; 15:16; Hebrews 13:15).

The priests treated worship as tiresome: "Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it" (1:13). "But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen" (1:14). Giving God our leftovers while keeping the best for ourselves is deceit.

Chapter 2 — Unfaithful Priests and Unfaithful Husbands

The Covenant of Levi (2:1-9)

"And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear... I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings" (2:1-2). The priests' blessings on the people would become curses. God would spread the dung of their sacrifices on their faces (2:3), treating them like the refuse of the offerings. God reminded them of His covenant with Levi, the ideal priesthood (Numbers 25:12-13; Deuteronomy 33:8-11):

> *My covenant was with him of life and peace... The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Malachi 2:5-7**

This is God's picture of a faithful minister: reverence for God, true teaching, a godly walk, and turning people from sin. "But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law" (2:8). They showed partiality in applying God's law (2:9). Therefore God made them contemptible before all the people.

Faithless to Each Other and to God (2:10-16)

> *Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?*
>
> **Malachi 2:10**

Judah had "dealt treacherously" by marrying "the daughter of a strange god" (2:11), taking wives who worshipped other gods (Deuteronomy 7:3-4; Nehemiah 13:23-27). The men also wept at the altar because God no longer accepted their offerings, and asked, "Wherefore?" (2:13-14). God's answer:

> *Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away*
>
> **Malachi 2:14-16**

Men were divorcing the Jewish wives of their youth, apparently to marry younger pagan women. God declared that He had witnessed their marriage covenant, that marriage makes two "one" (Genesis 2:24), that one purpose of marriage is "a godly seed" (children raised to know God), and that He hates divorce ("putting away"). Their unfaithfulness to their wives was unfaithfulness to God, and it blocked their worship (compare 1 Peter 3:7). Jesus reaffirmed God's design for marriage: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-9).

Wearying God (2:17)

> *Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?*
>
> **Malachi 2:17**

The people complained that God seemed to approve of evildoers because He did not judge them at once. "Where is the God of judgment?" The next chapter answers: He is coming.

Chapter 3 — The Coming Messenger and the Call to Return

The Messenger and the Refiner (3:1-6)

> *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.*
>
> **Malachi 3:1**

Two messengers are promised: first, "my messenger" who prepares the way (compare Isaiah 40:3); then "the Lord," "the messenger of the covenant," who comes to His own temple. Jesus identified the first messenger as John the Baptist: "For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Matthew 11:10). Mark's Gospel begins by quoting this verse (Mark 1:2). The Lord who comes to "his temple" is God Himself; Jesus, as a baby, was brought to the temple (Luke 2:22-32), and as a man He came to it suddenly and cleansed it (John 2:13-17). He is the Mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 8:6; 12:24).

> *But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*
>
> **Malachi 3:2-3**

Those who asked for God's justice did not realise that His coming would test them too. Like a refiner melting silver to remove the dross, or a launderer scrubbing cloth with strong soap, He would purify His people. A refiner sits patiently over the fire, watching until he can see his own reflection in the silver. John the Baptist said of Christ, "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor" (Matthew 3:11-12).

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me" (3:5; compare James 5:4). Then a foundational statement:

> *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*
>
> **Malachi 3:6**

Israel had not been destroyed, not because they were faithful, but because God is unchanging and keeps His covenant promises. God's unchanging nature is the security of His people (Numbers 23:19; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8).

Robbing God (3:7-12)

"Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?" (3:7). God gave a specific answer:

> *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*
>
> **Malachi 3:8-9**

The law required a tenth of the produce to support the Levites and the work of God's house (Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:21-32). By withholding it, the people robbed God, and the Levites had abandoned the temple to work their fields (Nehemiah 13:10). Then God issued a challenge:

> *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*
>
> **Malachi 3:10**

This is the only place in Scripture where God invites His people to test Him in this way. He would restrain "the devourer" (locusts and crop disease) and the vines would bear fruit (3:11). "And all nations

shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land" (3:12). The New Testament teaches that Christians should give regularly, proportionately, generously and cheerfully to support God's work (1 Corinthians 9:13-14; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

Speaking Against God (3:13-15)

"Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance... And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered" (3:13-15). Cynics complained that serving God did not pay, while the wicked prospered (compare Psalm 73:2-14).

The Faithful Remnant and the Day of the LORD (3:16-4:6)

The Book of Remembrance (3:16-18)

In contrast to the cynics, there was a faithful remnant:

> *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*
>
> **Malachi 3:16-17**

While others grumbled, these believers encouraged one another (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25). God listened to their conversations and recorded their names. They would be His "jewels," His treasured possession (Exodus 19:5; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9). He would spare them as a father spares his son, and the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, which the cynics doubted, would become clear (3:18). God spares His children because He "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).

Chapter 4 — The Sun of Righteousness and Elijah

> *For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.*
>
> **Malachi 4:1**

The answer to "Where is the God of judgment?" (2:17) and "we call the proud happy" (3:15) is the coming Day of the LORD, when the proud will be burned up like stubble (2 Peter 3:7, 10). But for the faithful:

> *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*

Malachi 4:2

The same day that burns the wicked brings warmth, light and healing to those who fear God, like the sunrise after a long night. Their joy will be like young calves released from the stall, leaping in freedom. The "Sun of righteousness" is Christ. Zacharias praised God for "the dayspring from on high" who would "give light to them that sit in darkness" (Luke 1:78-79). Jesus is "the light of the world" (John 8:12), "the bright and morning star" (Revelation 22:16). Interestingly, the Hebrew word for "wings" (kanaph) also means the corners or borders of a garment (Numbers 15:38), and the Gospels record that those who touched the border of Jesus' garment were healed (Matthew 9:20-22; 14:36). The wicked will be trodden down like ashes (4:3).

The book closes with two final instructions:

> *Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*
>
> **Malachi 4:4-6**

First, look back: remember God's Word given through Moses. Second, look forward: God will send Elijah before the great day of the LORD. His ministry would bring repentance and restore families and the nation to God. The angel told Zacharias that his son John would go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). Jesus said of John, "if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (Matthew 11:14), and "Elias is come already, and they knew him not" (Matthew 17:11-13). John himself, asked if he was literally Elijah, said, "I am not" (John 1:21). Many Bible teachers believe John fulfilled the prophecy in spirit at Christ's first coming, and that there may be a further fulfillment before His second coming (compare Revelation 11:3-6).

In the Christian order of the Old Testament, the last word is "curse." The Old Testament ends with the threat of a curse and the promise of a Saviour. The New Testament ends: "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it" (Revelation 22:3). Christ "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13).

Part Three: Christ in Malachi

Pictures and Prophecies of Christ

Malachi	Picture or Prophecy	Fulfillment in Christ
1:2; 3:6	God's unchanging love	"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8); God's love shown in Christ (Romans 5:8)
1:11	God's name great among the Gentiles; pure offerings in every place	The gospel to all nations; worship in spirit and truth (Matthew 28:19; John 4:21-24; Hebrews 13:15)
2:5-7	The faithful Priest: the law of truth in His mouth, no iniquity on His lips, turning many from iniquity	Christ the holy High Priest (Hebrews 7:26); full of grace and truth (John 1:17); turning people from iniquity (Acts 3:26)
3:1	"My messenger" prepares the way	John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27)
3:1	The Lord comes suddenly to His temple	Jesus presented in the temple and cleansing it (Luke 2:22-32; John 2:13-17)
3:1	The Messenger of the covenant	Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24)
3:2-3	The refiner's fire and fullers' soap	Christ baptizing with the Holy Ghost and fire; purging His floor (Matthew 3:11-12)
3:3	Purifying the sons of Levi to offer righteous offerings	Believers made a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6)
3:17	God's jewels; sparing them as a son	A peculiar people (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9); God spared not His own Son (Romans 8:32)
4:1	The day burning as an oven	Christ's return in judgment (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Peter 3:10)
4:2	The Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings	The Dayspring from on high (Luke 1:78-79); the light of the world (John 8:12); healing by touching His garment's border (Matthew 9:20-22; 14:36)
4:5-6	Elijah sent before the day of the LORD	John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17; Matthew 11:14; 17:11-13)
4:6	The threat of a curse	Christ made a curse for us; "no more curse" (Galatians 3:13; Revelation 22:3)

From Malachi to Matthew

The Old Testament ends with a promise: God will send His messenger, the Lord will come to His temple, and Elijah will prepare the way. Then the prophetic voice fell silent for about four hundred years. During those years:

Period	Dates (approx.)	Events
Persian rule	539-332 BC	The Jews lived under Persian governors
Greek rule	332-167 BC	Alexander the Great conquered the region (332 BC); his empire divided; Egypt's Ptolemies and Syria's Seleucids ruled Judea in turn; the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek (the Septuagint)
The Maccabean revolt and Jewish independence	167-63 BC	Antiochus IV desecrated the temple (167 BC); the Maccabees revolted and cleansed it (164 BC); the Hasmonean dynasty ruled
Roman rule	63 BC onward	Pompey took Jerusalem (63 BC); Herod the Great, an Idumean, became king (37 BC) and rebuilt the temple

In these years synagogues spread, the Pharisees and Sadducees arose, and Jewish communities spread across the world, while the Greek language and Roman roads prepared the way for the gospel. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son" (Galatians 4:4). The New Testament opens exactly where Malachi left off: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Mark 1:1-2). The forerunner came in the spirit of Elijah, and the Lord came to His temple.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Prophecy	Malachi	Fulfillment
Edom's rebuilding thrown down	1:3-4	Edom displaced by the Nabataeans; the Edomites (Idumeans) disappeared after AD 70
God's name great among the Gentiles	1:11	The spread of the gospel and worship of God among all nations (Acts 10-28)
God's messenger prepares the way	3:1	John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2-4)
The Lord comes suddenly to His temple	3:1	Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:22-32; John 2:13-17)
The Refiner who purifies	3:2-3	Christ's ministry and the Spirit's work in believers; completed at His return
The Sun of righteousness rises	4:2	The coming of Christ, the light of the world (Luke 1:78-79)
Elijah before the great day	4:5-6	John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17; Matthew 17:12); possibly a further fulfillment before Christ's return
The day burning as an oven	4:1	Partly in the judgment of AD 70; completely at the final judgment (2 Peter 3:10)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Malachi 1:2 — "I Have Loved You"

God's first word to a cold and doubting people was love. His love is not based on our circumstances or deserving but on His free choice (Deuteronomy 7:7-8; Romans 9:11-13; 1 John 4:10). When we doubt His love, we should look at what He has done, above all at the cross (Romans 5:8).

Malachi 1:6-14 — Giving God Our Best

The priests offered God what they would never have dared to offer their governor. God deserves the honour due to a Father and the reverence due to a great King. Whether in worship, service or giving, believers should offer God their first and best, not their leftovers (Romans 12:1; Colossians 3:23).

Malachi 2:5-7 — The Faithful Minister

Reverence for God, true teaching, integrity of life, peace with God, and turning others from sin: this is God's pattern for every pastor and teacher (1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 3:1).

Malachi 2:13-16 — God Hates Divorce

God is a witness to every marriage covenant. Marriage makes two one, is meant to produce a godly heritage, and must be guarded with faithfulness. Treachery against a spouse disrupts fellowship with God. Jesus and Paul reaffirm the permanence of marriage (Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; Ephesians 5:25-33).

Malachi 3:1-3 — The Coming of the Lord

The people asked for God's justice; God replied that He would come Himself, and that His coming would be a refining fire. Christ came first to save and purify, and will come again to judge. The question "who may abide the day of his coming?" is answered only by His grace, which makes us able to stand (Jude 24).

Malachi 3:6 — The Unchanging God

God's people were spared because God does not change. His promises, love and character are utterly reliable. This is the anchor of every believer's hope (Hebrews 6:17-19; 13:8).

Malachi 3:8-12 — Robbing God

Withholding what belongs to God is robbery. God challenged His people to trust Him with their giving and see His provision. Generous, faithful giving is an act of worship and trust (2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Proverbs 3:9-10).

Malachi 3:16-17 — The Book of Remembrance

In a time of widespread cynicism, a few faithful believers encouraged one another, and God noticed, listened and recorded their names. No act of faithfulness is forgotten by God (Hebrews 6:10). They are His treasured jewels.

Malachi 4:2 — The Sun of Righteousness

After the long night of sin and the silent centuries, the Sun of righteousness rose in Jesus Christ, bringing light, healing and joy. To those who fear God, His coming is a sunrise; to the proud, a furnace.

Malachi 4:4-6 — Look Back and Look Forward

The Old Testament ends by pointing back to God's Word through Moses and forward to the coming of Elijah and the day of the LORD. It ends with a curse threatened and a Saviour promised. The New Testament opens with the fulfillment of that promise.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Malachi

1. God's Electing, Unchanging Love

"I have loved you"; "I am the LORD, I change not" (1:2; 3:6).

2. God Deserves Honour and Reverence

He is a Father and a great King (1:6, 14).

3. God Wants Our Best

Polluted, blemished offerings insult Him (1:7-8, 13-14).

4. Worship Will Spread to All Nations

His name will be great among the Gentiles (1:11).

5. Spiritual Leaders Are Accountable

Priests must teach truth, live faithfully and turn people from sin (2:1-9).

6. Marriage Is a Sacred Covenant

God witnesses it, makes the two one, seeks a godly seed, and hates divorce (2:14-16).

7. The Lord Will Come

His messenger will prepare the way, and He will come to refine and to judge (3:1-5).

8. Faithful Giving

Withholding tithes and offerings robs God; generous giving is met with blessing (3:8-12).

9. God Remembers the Faithful

He hears and records those who fear Him (3:16-17).

10. The Day of the LORD

It will burn the proud like stubble and bring healing to those who fear God (4:1-3).

11. Elijah the Forerunner

God would send His prophet to prepare the people (4:5-6).

Part Seven: Connections — How Malachi Links to the Rest of the Bible

Malachi in the New Testament

Malachi	New Testament	Connection
1:2-3 (Jacob loved, Esau hated)	Romans 9:10-13	God's sovereign choice
1:6 (if I be a father, where is mine honour?)	Matthew 6:9; 1 Peter 1:17	Our Father in heaven; pass the time in fear
1:8 (blemished offerings)	Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:27	A living sacrifice, holy and acceptable
1:11 (God's name great among the Gentiles)	John 4:21-24; Romans 15:9-16; Hebrews 13:15	Worship in spirit and truth; the offering of the Gentiles
2:6-7 (the true priest)	Hebrews 7:26; Acts 3:26	Christ, holy and harmless; turning people from iniquity
2:10 (one Father, one God)	1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6	One God and Father of all
2:11 (marrying the daughter of a strange god)	2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 7:39	Not unequally yoked; only in the Lord
2:14-16 (marriage and divorce)	Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Peter 3:7	What God has joined together
2:17 (where is the God of judgment?)	2 Peter 3:3-4, 9	"Where is the promise of his coming?"
3:1 (my messenger)	Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 1:76; 7:27	John the Baptist
3:1 (the Lord comes to His temple)	Luke 2:22-38; John 2:13-17	Jesus in the temple
3:1 (the messenger of the covenant)	Hebrews 8:6; 12:24	The Mediator of the new covenant
3:2-3 (refiner's fire)	Matthew 3:11-12; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Corinthians 3:13	Baptism with fire; faith tried by fire
3:5 (oppressing the hireling)	James 5:4	The wages of the labourers cry out
3:6 (I change not)	James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8	No variableness; the same for ever
3:8-10 (tithes and offerings)	Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8	Faithful, cheerful giving
3:16 (the book of remembrance)	Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 20:12	Names written in heaven

Malachi	New Testament	Connection
3:16 (they spake often one to another)	Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25	Exhort one another daily
3:17 (my jewels)	Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9	A peculiar people
4:1 (the day burning as an oven)	Matthew 3:12; 2 Peter 3:7, 10	Unquenchable fire; the elements melt
4:2 (the Sun of righteousness)	Luke 1:78-79; John 8:12; 2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16	The Dayspring; the light of the world; the morning star
4:5-6 (Elijah)	Matthew 11:14; 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17; John 1:21	John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah
4:6 (curse)	Galatians 3:13; Revelation 22:3	No more curse

Malachi in the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Jacob and Esau (25:23; 27; 36); "they shall be one flesh" (2:24; Malachi 2:15)
Exodus	God's peculiar treasure (19:5; Malachi 3:17); "merciful and gracious" (34:6)
Leviticus	Blemished animals forbidden (22:17-25); the tithe is the LORD's (27:30-32)
Numbers	The tithe for the Levites (18:21-32); the covenant of peace with Phinehas (25:10-13; Malachi 2:5); "God is not a man, that he should lie" (23:19); borders on garments (15:38)
Deuteronomy	No marriage with idolaters (7:3-4); blemished offerings forbidden (15:21); Levi's teaching role (33:8-11); the prophet like Moses (18:15-18)
1 Kings	Elijah the prophet (17-19)
2 Kings	Elijah taken to heaven (2:1-11)
2 Chronicles	Tithes brought in abundance under Hezekiah (31:4-10)
Ezra	Mixed marriages confessed and put away (9-10)
Nehemiah	The covenant to bring tithes (10:32-39); the reforms of chapter 13, addressing the same sins as Malachi
Psalms	"The LORD God is a sun and shield" (84:11); the prosperity of the wicked (73)
Isaiah	"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD" (40:3; Malachi 3:1); light rising on Zion (60:1-3)
Ezekiel	The faithful sons of Zadok (44:15-16)
Joel	"The great and the terrible day of the LORD" (2:31; Malachi 4:5)
Obadiah	Judgment on Edom (Malachi 1:3-4)
Zephaniah	The day of the LORD (1:14-18)
Haggai	"The desire of all nations shall come" and fill the temple with glory (2:7; Malachi 3:1)
Zechariah	Refining the remnant like silver and gold (13:9; Malachi 3:3)

Themes That Run from Malachi Through Scripture

Theme	In Malachi	Developed	Fulfilled
God's electing love	1:2-3	Deuteronomy 7:7-8	Romans 9:10-13; Ephesians 1:4-5
Worship among the nations	1:11	Psalm 67; Isaiah 66:18-23	John 4:21-24; Revelation 7:9-10
The forerunner	3:1; 4:5-6	Isaiah 40:3	Matthew 3:1-3; 11:10-14
The Lord coming to His temple	3:1	Haggai 2:7-9	Luke 2:22-32; John 2:13-22
The refiner's fire	3:2-3	Zechariah 13:9	Matthew 3:11-12; 1 Peter 1:7
The unchanging God	3:6	Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:27	James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8
The Sun of righteousness	4:2	Psalm 84:11; Isaiah 60:1-3	Luke 1:78-79; John 8:12; Revelation 22:16
From curse to blessing	4:6	Deuteronomy 28	Galatians 3:13; Revelation 22:3

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Never doubt God's love; look at what He has done** (1:2).
- **Honour God as Father and fear Him as King** (1:6).
- **Give God your best, not your leftovers** (1:8, 14).
- **Don't let worship become a weariness** (1:13).
- **Leaders: keep knowledge, teach truth and turn people from sin** (2:6-7).
- **Marry in the Lord** (2:11).
- **Be faithful to the wife or husband of your youth** (2:14-16).
- **Take heed to your spirit** (2:15-16).
- **Don't weary God by questioning His justice** (2:17).
- **Prepare for the Lord's coming** (3:1-2).
- **Welcome His refining work in your life** (3:3).
- **Rest in God's unchanging nature** (3:6).
- **Return to God, and He will return to you** (3:7).
- **Don't rob God; give faithfully and generously** (3:8-10).
- **Trust God to provide when you obey** (3:10).
- **Don't say serving God is vain** (3:14).
- **Speak often with other believers to encourage faith** (3:16).
- **Remember that God records your faithfulness** (3:16).
- **Fear God's name, and look for the Sun of righteousness** (4:2).
- **Remember God's Word** (4:4).
- **Seek reconciliation in families** (4:6).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2	I have loved you, saith the LORD.
1:6	If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?
1:11	From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles
2:7	For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth
2:16	For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away
3:1	Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple
3:6	For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.
3:10	Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse... and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven
3:16	Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it
3:17	And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels
4:2	But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings
4:5	Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD

Conclusion

Malachi, "my messenger," was the last voice of the Old Testament. A century after the return from exile, he found a people grown cold: priests offering blind and lame animals, men divorcing the wives of their youth to marry pagans, the nation robbing God of tithes, and cynics saying it was vain to serve Him. Through a series of disputes he answered their objections, beginning with God's simple declaration, "I have loved you," and resting on His unchanging nature: "I am the LORD, I change not." He promised that God's name would be great among the Gentiles, that God remembers those who fear Him and calls them His jewels, and that the Lord Himself, the Messenger of the covenant, would suddenly come to His temple, preceded by a messenger in the spirit of Elijah. For the proud, that day would burn like an oven; for those who fear God, the Sun of righteousness would rise with healing in His wings. Then heaven fell silent for four hundred years, until a voice cried in the wilderness, and the Lord came to His temple in the person of Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, who took the curse on Himself so that one day there will be no more curse.

> *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings*
>
> **Malachi 4:2**

The New Testament

The 27 books of the New Testament, from the birth of Christ to His promised return.

Matthew

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Matthew (Levi), the tax collector and apostle • Date: c. AD 50-65 • Chapters: 28

> *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*
>
> **Matthew 16:16**

Part One: Introduction to Matthew

The Gospel and the Gospels

The word "gospel" means "good news." The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, each tell the good news of Jesus Christ from a different angle. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the "Synoptic Gospels" ("seeing together") because they share much of the same material and order; John adds a great deal not found in the others. A traditional way of summarising their emphases is:

Gospel	Presents Jesus As	Main Audience	Key Emphasis
Matthew	The King, the Son of David	Jewish readers	Fulfilled prophecy; the kingdom of heaven
Mark	The Servant	Roman (Gentile) readers	Action; "straightway"; His deeds
Luke	The Son of Man	Greek (Gentile) readers	His perfect humanity; compassion for the outcast
John	The Son of God	All people	His deity; believing for eternal life

Matthew stands first in the New Testament because it forms a bridge from the Old: it begins with Abraham and David and shows, page after page, that Jesus fulfils the Law and the Prophets.

The Author

The early church unanimously attributed this Gospel to Matthew, also called Levi, the son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14). He was a "publican," a tax collector at Capernaum (9:9), hated by his fellow Jews as a collaborator with Rome and often as a cheat. When Jesus said, "Follow me," "he arose, and followed him" (9:9), and threw a great feast for Jesus with other tax collectors and sinners (9:10; Luke 5:29). He became one of the twelve apostles (10:3, where he humbly calls himself "Matthew the publican"). As a tax collector he would have been skilled in writing and record-keeping, and his Gospel is carefully organised. The early writer Papias (around AD 125) said that Matthew compiled the sayings of Jesus in the Hebrew (or Aramaic) language.

Date

Matthew was probably written between AD 50 and 70. Jesus' prophecy of the temple's destruction (24:1-2) is presented as still future, and the book assumes that the temple and its practices are still in place (5:23-24; 17:24-27; 23:16-22). Many conservative scholars date it in the AD 50s or 60s.

Purpose and Theme

Matthew was written to show that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, the King of the Jews, the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, who fulfils the Old Testament Scriptures and brings in the kingdom of heaven. It also calls His followers to a life of true righteousness and to make disciples of all nations.

> *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

> **Matthew 1:1**

> *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*
>
> **Matthew 16:16**

> *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*
>
> **Matthew 28:19**

Distinctive Features

- **Fulfilled prophecy.** Matthew quotes or alludes to the Old Testament more than any other Gospel, about sixty times. A dozen times he uses a formula such as "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet."
- **The kingdom of heaven.** Matthew alone uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven," over thirty times. Jews often avoided saying the name of God out of reverence, so "heaven" stands for God; the phrase means the same as "kingdom of God" in Mark and Luke.
- **Five great discourses.** Matthew arranges Jesus' teaching in five major sermons, each ending with words like "when Jesus had ended these sayings" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Some see a parallel with the five books of Moses: Jesus is the new and greater Lawgiver.
- **Jewish concerns.** Matthew discusses the law, the Sabbath, ritual purity, the temple tax, the scribes and Pharisees, and the Messiah's mission first to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:6; 15:24).
- **Gentiles included.** Yet Matthew also shows God's grace to Gentiles: Gentile women in the genealogy, the wise men from the east, the Roman centurion, the Canaanite woman, and the commission to "all nations."
- **The church.** Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word "church" (16:18; 18:17).

The Five Discourses

Discourse	Chapters	Theme
The Sermon on the Mount	5-7	The character and conduct of the kingdom's citizens
The Mission Discourse	10	Sending out the twelve; the cost of discipleship
The Parables of the Kingdom	13	The growth and nature of the kingdom in this age
The Discourse on the Church	18	Humility, discipline and forgiveness among believers
The Olivet Discourse	24-25	The destruction of the temple, the end of the age and Christ's return

Material Found Only in Matthew

Matthew records many things not found in the other Gospels, including: Joseph's dreams and the visit of the wise men (1-2); the flight into Egypt and the slaughter of the children of Bethlehem (2); Peter walking on the water (14:28-31); the coin in the fish's mouth (17:24-27); the parables of the tares, the hidden treasure, the pearl, the dragnet, the unmerciful servant, the labourers in the vineyard, the two sons, the ten virgins, and the sheep and the goats; Judas' remorse and death (27:3-10); the dream of Pilate's wife and Pilate washing his hands (27:19, 24); the raising of saints at Christ's death (27:52-53); the guard at the tomb and the bribing of the soldiers (27:62-66; 28:11-15); and the full wording of the Great Commission (28:18-20).

Outline of Matthew

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Coming of the King	1-4	His birth, forerunner and preparation
The King's genealogy and birth	1	Son of David, Son of Abraham, Emmanuel
The King worshipped and hunted	2	The wise men; Herod
The forerunner and the baptism	3	John the Baptist; "my beloved Son"
The temptation and early ministry	4	"It is written"; "Follow me"
II. The Teaching and Works of the King	5-15	His authority in word and deed
The Sermon on the Mount	5-7	Discourse 1
Ten miracles	8-9	Authority over disease, nature, demons, sin and death
The mission of the twelve	10	Discourse 2
Rising opposition	11-12	"Come unto me"; Lord of the Sabbath
The parables of the kingdom	13	Discourse 3
Withdrawal and revelation	14-15	Feeding the multitudes; walking on water
III. The King Prepares His Disciples	16-20	The cross ahead
Peter's confession and the first passion prediction	16	"Upon this rock I will build my church"
The transfiguration	17	"Hear ye him"
Life in the community of the King	18	Discourse 4
On the road to Jerusalem	19-20	Marriage, riches, rewards, servanthood
IV. The King Presents Himself and Is Rejected	21-25	The final week
The triumphal entry and the temple	21	"Hosanna to the son of David"
Conflict with the leaders	22-23	Questions answered; woes pronounced
The Olivet Discourse	24-25	Discourse 5
V. The Death and Resurrection of the King	26-28	The cross and the empty tomb

Section	Chapters	Theme
Betrayal, the Last Supper, Gethsemane, trial	26	"Not as I will, but as thou wilt"
The crucifixion	27	"Truly this was the Son of God"
The resurrection and the Great Commission	28	"He is risen"; "Go ye therefore"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Coming of the King (Chapters 1-4)

Chapter 1 — The Genealogy and Birth of Jesus

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (1:1). Matthew begins by establishing Jesus' legal right to David's throne and His place as the promised Seed of Abraham (Genesis 22:18; 2 Samuel 7:12-16). The genealogy is arranged in three groups of fourteen generations: from Abraham to David (the rise of the kingdom), from David to the Babylonian exile (its decline and fall), and from the exile to Christ (its restoration in the true King) (1:17).

Remarkably, the genealogy names four women besides Mary: Tamar, who sinned with her father-in-law (Genesis 38); Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute (Joshua 2); Ruth, a Moabitess (Ruth 4:13); and "her that had been the wife of Urias," Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11). Gentiles and sinners are in the Messiah's family tree: a picture of the grace He came to bring. The genealogy carefully avoids saying Joseph fathered Jesus: "Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ" (1:16). (In Greek, "of whom" is feminine, referring to Mary.) Jesus received His legal right to the throne through Joseph, His legal father; Luke traces His physical descent through Mary (Luke 3).

Mary, engaged to Joseph, "was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (1:18). Joseph, "a just man," planned to divorce her quietly, but an angel told him in a dream:

> *Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*
>
> **Matthew 1:20-21**

"Jesus" (the Greek form of Joshua) means "the LORD is salvation." Matthew then gives his first fulfillment quotation: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (1:22-23; Isaiah 7:14). Jesus is both truly man (born of a woman) and truly God ("God with us"). Joseph obeyed, "And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son" (1:24-25), confirming the virgin birth.

Chapter 2 — The Wise Men and Herod

After Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, wise men (magi) from the east came to Jerusalem: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (2:1-2). King Herod the Great "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him" (2:3). The chief priests and scribes knew exactly where the Messiah would be born, quoting Micah 5:2: "And thou Bethlehem... out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (2:5-6). Yet they did not go to see Him. Gentile seekers came from afar; the religious leaders nearby were indifferent, and Herod was murderous.

The star led the wise men to the house where the young child was, "and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (2:10). "They saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and

myrrh" (2:11). Many have seen meaning in these gifts: gold for a King, frankincense (used in worship) for God, and myrrh (used in burial) for One who would die. Warned in a dream, the wise men went home another way (2:12).

An angel warned Joseph to flee to Egypt, and he went by night (2:13-14), fulfilling "Out of Egypt have I called my son" (2:15; Hosea 11:1): Jesus is the true Israel, God's Son, who relives and fulfils Israel's history. Herod, furious, ordered the killing of all the boys in Bethlehem two years old and under (2:16), fulfilling Jeremiah's words of Rachel weeping for her children (2:17-18; Jeremiah 31:15). After Herod's death (4 BC), the family returned, but because Herod's son Archelaus ruled Judea, they settled in Nazareth in Galilee, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (2:19-23). Matthew says "the prophets" (plural), probably summarising their teaching that the Messiah would be despised (Isaiah 53:3; Psalm 22:6), as Nazareth was (John 1:46), and perhaps alluding to the "Branch" (Hebrew netzer) of Isaiah 11:1.

Chapter 3 — John the Baptist and the Baptism of Jesus

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (3:1-2). He fulfilled Isaiah 40:3: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (3:3). Dressed in camel's hair with a leather belt like Elijah (2 Kings 1:8), and eating locusts and wild honey (3:4), he called people to repent and be baptized, confessing their sins (3:5-6). To the Pharisees and Sadducees he said: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father" (3:7-9). Physical descent from Abraham could not save them. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees" (3:10).

> *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*
>
> **Matthew 3:11**

Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized by John. John protested, "I have need to be baptized of thee," but Jesus answered, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (3:13-15). Though sinless, He identified with sinners and set an example of obedience. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (3:16), indicating baptism by immersion. The heavens opened, the Spirit descended like a dove, and the Father spoke:

> *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*
>
> **Matthew 3:17**

All three persons of the Trinity are present: the Son baptized, the Spirit descending, the Father speaking.

Chapter 4 — The Temptation and the Beginning of Ministry

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (4:1). After fasting forty days, He was tempted three times, and each time answered with Scripture from Deuteronomy, where Israel had been tested in the wilderness and failed:

Satan's Temptation	Matthew	Jesus' Answer
Turn stones into bread	4:3-4	"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3)
Throw yourself from the temple	4:5-7	"It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 6:16)
Worship Satan for the kingdoms of the world	4:8-10	"Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13)

Where Adam fell in a garden and Israel failed in the wilderness, Jesus, the last Adam and true Israel, stood firm. Satan even quoted Scripture (Psalm 91:11-12), but out of context; Jesus answered with Scripture rightly understood. "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (4:11). He is able to help those who are tempted (Hebrews 2:18; 4:15).

After John's arrest, Jesus moved to Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah 9:1-2: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light" (4:12-16). "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (4:17). Walking by the sea, He called two pairs of brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John:

> *Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*
>
> **Matthew 4:19**

They left their nets "straightway" and followed Him (4:20, 22). Jesus went through Galilee "teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (4:23), and great crowds followed from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond Jordan (4:24-25).

Section II: The Teaching and Works of the King (Chapters 5-15)

Chapters 5-7 — The Sermon on the Mount

Seeing the multitudes, Jesus went up a mountain, sat down (the posture of a teacher), and taught His disciples (5:1-2). The Sermon on the Mount describes the character, conduct and priorities of those who belong to the kingdom of heaven. It does not teach how to be saved by works; it shows the righteousness God requires, which drives us to Christ for mercy, and describes the life of those who have been born again.

The Beatitudes (5:3-12). Eight blessings describe the citizens of the kingdom:

Blessed Are	Matthew	For They Shall
The poor in spirit (who know their spiritual need)	5:3	Have the kingdom of heaven

Blessed Are	Matthew	For They Shall
They that mourn (over sin)	5:4	Be comforted
The meek (humble, gentle, submissive to God)	5:5	Inherit the earth
They which hunger and thirst after righteousness	5:6	Be filled
The merciful	5:7	Obtain mercy
The pure in heart	5:8	See God
The peacemakers	5:9	Be called the children of God
They which are persecuted for righteousness' sake	5:10-12	Have the kingdom of heaven; great reward in heaven

Salt and light (5:13-16). "Ye are the salt of the earth... Ye are the light of the world" (5:13-14). Believers preserve and illuminate a corrupt and dark world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (5:16).

Jesus and the law (5:17-20).

> *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*
>
> **Matthew 5:17**

Jesus fulfils the law by perfectly obeying it, by fulfilling its prophecies and sacrifices, and by revealing its full meaning. Not one "jot" (the smallest Hebrew letter) or "tittle" (a tiny stroke) will pass away until all is fulfilled (5:18). "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (5:20). The Pharisees' righteousness was external; God requires inward righteousness, which only Christ can provide (Romans 10:3-4; Philippians 3:9).

Six contrasts: "Ye have heard... But I say unto you" (5:21-48). Jesus showed that God's law reaches the heart:

- **Murder and anger (5:21-26):** anger and contempt are murder in the heart. Be reconciled with your brother before offering your gift.
- **Adultery and lust (5:27-30):** "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Deal radically with sin.
- **Divorce (5:31-32):** divorce is not a casual matter; except for fornication, remarriage after divorce involves adultery (compare 19:3-9).
- **Oaths (5:33-37):** "let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay": be truthful always, without needing oaths.
- **Retaliation (5:38-42):** "Resist not evil": turn the other cheek; go the second mile; give generously. The "eye for an eye" principle was for courts, not personal revenge.
- **Love for enemies (5:43-47):** "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (5:44-45).

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (5:48). The standard is God Himself.

True religion in secret (6:1-18). Giving, praying and fasting must be done for God's eyes, not to be seen by people: "thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly" (6:4, 6, 18). Don't pray with "vain repetitions, as the heathen do" (6:7). Then Jesus gave a model prayer:

> *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*
>
> **Matthew 6:9-13**

The prayer puts God's name, kingdom and will first, then our needs: provision, forgiveness and protection. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not... neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6:14-15). An unforgiving heart shows it has not truly received God's forgiveness (18:21-35).

Treasure and trust (6:19-34). "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (6:20-21). "No man can serve two masters... Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (6:24). Therefore do not be anxious about food, drink or clothing: "Behold the fowls of the air... Consider the lilies of the field" (6:25-30). Your Father knows your needs.

> *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.*
>
> **Matthew 6:33-34**

Judging, asking and the Golden Rule (7:1-12). "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (7:1): don't condemn others hypocritically; first remove the beam from your own eye, then you can help with the mote in your brother's (7:3-5). Yet use discernment: don't give holy things to dogs or pearls to swine (7:6). "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (7:7). If earthly fathers give good gifts, "how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (7:11).

> *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*
>
> **Matthew 7:12**

Two ways, two trees, two claims, two builders (7:13-27).

- **Two gates:** "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (7:13-14).
- **Two trees:** false prophets come in sheep's clothing; "by their fruits ye shall know them" (7:15-20).

- **Two claims:** "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father." Many will claim to have prophesied and done miracles in His name, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (7:21-23). Profession without relationship saves no one.
- **Two builders:** the wise man who hears and does Jesus' words builds on the rock; the foolish man who hears and does not, builds on sand, and great is the fall of his house (7:24-27).

"The people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (7:28-29). The scribes quoted authorities; Jesus spoke with His own: "But I say unto you."

Chapters 8-9 — Ten Miracles of the King

After demonstrating His authority in word, Jesus demonstrated it in deed, with ten miracles grouped in three sets, separated by teaching on discipleship.

Authority over disease (8:1-17). A leper said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus touched him: "I will; be thou clean" (8:2-3). A Roman centurion asked Him to heal his servant with only a word: "speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Jesus marvelled: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham... in the kingdom of heaven: But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness" (8:5-12). He healed Peter's mother-in-law and many others, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (8:14-17; Isaiah 53:4).

The cost of following (8:18-22). To an eager scribe: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (8:20). To a hesitant disciple: "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead" (8:22).

Authority over nature and demons (8:23-34). In a great storm, while Jesus slept, the disciples cried, "Lord, save us: we perish." He rebuked their little faith, then rebuked the winds and sea, "and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (8:23-27). In the country of the Gergesenes (Gadarenes), He delivered two fierce demon-possessed men; the demons cried, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" He sent them into a herd of swine, which ran into the sea. The townspeople begged Him to leave (8:28-34).

Authority to forgive sins (9:1-8). To a paralysed man brought on a bed, Jesus said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." The scribes thought He blasphemed. Jesus answered, "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (9:2-6). Only God can forgive sins; Jesus proved His authority by the healing.

The call of Matthew (9:9-17). "He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him" (9:9). At dinner with many tax collectors and sinners, the Pharisees objected. Jesus answered:

> *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Matthew 9:12-13

Asked why His disciples did not fast, He spoke of Himself as the Bridegroom, and taught that new wine (His message) needs new bottles, not the old forms of religion (9:14-17).

Authority over death (9:18-34). A ruler (Jairus, Mark 5:22) asked Jesus to raise his dead daughter. On the way, a woman with a twelve-year haemorrhage touched the hem of His garment: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole" (9:20-22). At the ruler's house, Jesus said, "the maid is not dead, but sleepeth," took her by the hand, and she arose (9:23-25). Two blind men cried, "Thou son of David, have mercy on us." "According to your faith be it unto you," and their eyes were opened (9:27-30). He cast a demon out of a mute man, and the crowds marvelled, but the Pharisees said, "He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils" (9:32-34).

Compassion and the harvest (9:35-38).

> *But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*
>
> **Matthew 9:36-38**

Chapter 10 — The Mission of the Twelve

Jesus called twelve disciples and gave them power over unclean spirits and diseases (10:1). They are named: Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John (sons of Zebedee), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, "Matthew the publican," James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus (Thaddaeus), Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, "who also betrayed him" (10:2-4).

He sent them first "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:5-6), preaching "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," healing, cleansing lepers, raising the dead, casting out devils: "freely ye have received, freely give" (10:7-8). They were to travel light and depend on hospitality (10:9-15). He warned of persecution:

> *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*
>
> **Matthew 10:16**

They would be brought before councils and rulers, but the Spirit of their Father would give them words (10:17-20). Families would be divided, and they would be hated for His name, "but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (10:21-22). "The disciple is not above his master" (10:24).

> *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*
>
> **Matthew 10:28**

God cares for sparrows; "the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (10:29-31). "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him

will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny" (10:32-33). "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (10:34): the gospel divides even families (Micah 7:6).

> *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me... And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.*
>
> **Matthew 10:37-39**

Even a cup of cold water given to one of His disciples will be rewarded (10:40-42).

Chapter 11 — John's Question and Jesus' Invitation

From prison, John the Baptist sent disciples to ask, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (11:3). Even great believers can struggle with doubt when circumstances are hard. Jesus answered with His works, echoing Isaiah's prophecies of the Messiah: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (11:5; Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1). Then He praised John: "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (11:11). "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (11:14; Malachi 4:5).

That generation was like children who would neither dance nor mourn: they rejected John as too strict and Jesus as too friendly with sinners (11:16-19). Jesus pronounced woes on the cities where He had done most of His miracles, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, for they did not repent; it would be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon and even Sodom in the day of judgment (11:20-24). Greater light brings greater responsibility. Then Jesus prayed:

> *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes... All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*
>
> **Matthew 11:25-27**

Only the Son truly knows the Father and can reveal Him. Then one of the most gracious invitations in Scripture:

> *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*
>
> **Matthew 11:28-30**

To people weighed down by sin and by the heavy rules of the Pharisees, Jesus offered rest for the soul (Jeremiah 6:16).

Chapter 12 — Lord of the Sabbath; Opposition Grows

When the Pharisees objected to the disciples picking grain on the Sabbath, Jesus reminded them that David ate the shewbread and that the priests work in the temple on the Sabbath (12:1-5). "But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple" (12:6). He quoted Hosea 6:6, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (12:7). "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (12:8). In the synagogue He healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath: "it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days" (12:9-13). The Pharisees began plotting to destroy Him (12:14).

Jesus withdrew and healed many, fulfilling Isaiah 42:1-4: "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles... A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench... And in his name shall the Gentiles trust" (12:17-21). He is gentle with the weak.

When He healed a blind and mute demon-possessed man, the people asked, "Is not this the son of David?" But the Pharisees said He cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils (12:22-24). Jesus answered that a divided kingdom cannot stand, and "if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (12:25-28). He had bound the strong man (Satan) and was plundering his house (12:29). "He that is not with me is against me" (12:30). Then a solemn warning:

> *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*
>
> **Matthew 12:31**

In context, this sin was the deliberate attribution of the Spirit's evident work in Christ to Satan: a settled, hardened rejection of the Spirit's testimony to Jesus. Those worried that they have committed it show by their concern that they have not. "A tree is known by his fruit... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (12:33-34). "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (12:36).

When they asked for a sign, Jesus gave "the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (12:39-40). The men of Nineveh and the queen of the south would condemn that generation, "and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here... a greater than Solomon is here" (12:41-42). A reformed but empty life is open to worse evil (12:43-45). When His mother and brothers came, Jesus said, "whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (12:50).

Chapter 13 — The Parables of the Kingdom

Jesus taught by the sea in parables, stories from everyday life that reveal spiritual truth to those willing to hear and conceal it from those who refuse (13:10-17; Isaiah 6:9-10). "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (13:16). These parables describe "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (13:11) during the present age, between Christ's first and second comings.

Parable	Matthew	Lesson
The sower	13:3-9, 18-23	The same word produces different results in different hearts: the wayside (Satan snatches it), stony ground (shallow, falls away in trouble), thorns (choked by cares and riches), good ground (understands and bears fruit)
The tares among the wheat	13:24-30, 36-43	The devil sows false believers among true ones; they will be separated at the end of the age
The mustard seed	13:31-32	The kingdom begins small and grows great
The leaven	13:33	The kingdom works its way through the whole (some see leaven, usually a symbol of evil, as the spread of corruption within professing Christendom)
The hidden treasure	13:44	The kingdom is worth giving up everything to gain
The pearl of great price	13:45-46	The merchant sells all to buy the one precious pearl
The dragnet	13:47-50	Good and bad gathered together now, separated at the end
The householder	13:51-52	The instructed scribe brings out treasures new and old

In explaining the tares, Jesus said, "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (13:38-39). "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (13:43; Daniel 12:3). Matthew notes that speaking in parables fulfilled Psalm 78:2: "I will open my mouth in parables" (13:35).

Returning to Nazareth, Jesus taught in the synagogue, but the townspeople were offended: "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" (13:55). "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country... And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (13:57-58).

Chapter 14 — John's Death; Feeding Five Thousand; Walking on the Water

Herod Antipas feared that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead (14:1-2). He had beheaded John at the request of Herodias, whose marriage to Herod John had condemned, after her daughter danced at Herod's birthday (14:3-12).

Jesus withdrew to a desert place, but the crowds followed, and "Jesus... was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (14:14). With five loaves and two fishes, He blessed, broke and gave, and about five thousand men, besides women and children, ate and were filled, with twelve baskets left over (14:15-21). It is the only miracle, apart from the resurrection, recorded in all four Gospels.

That night, the disciples were rowing against a contrary wind when Jesus came to them walking on the sea. They cried out in fear, but He said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (14:25-27). Peter said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." Jesus said, "Come." Peter walked on the water toward Jesus, "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (14:28-31). When they got into the boat, the wind ceased, "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (14:32-33). At Gennesaret, all who touched the hem of His garment were healed

(14:34-36).

Chapter 15 — Tradition, the Heart and a Canaanite Woman

Pharisees from Jerusalem accused the disciples of breaking "the tradition of the elders" by not washing hands ceremonially before eating (15:1-2). Jesus replied that they broke God's commandment by their tradition: by declaring their possessions "a gift" to God, they avoided supporting their parents, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (15:3-6). He quoted Isaiah 29:13: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth... but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (15:7-9). "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth" (15:11). The Pharisees were "blind leaders of the blind" (15:14).

> *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man*
>
> **Matthew 15:19-20**

In the region of Tyre and Sidon, a Canaanite woman cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil" (15:22). Jesus at first did not answer, then said He was sent "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" and that it was not right to give the children's bread to dogs. She replied, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Jesus answered, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt," and her daughter was healed (15:24-28). Her humble, persistent faith was richly rewarded. Jesus then healed many by the Sea of Galilee and fed four thousand men, besides women and children, with seven loaves and a few fish (15:29-39).

Section III: The King Prepares His Disciples (Chapters 16-20)

Chapter 16 — Peter's Confession and the Way of the Cross

The Pharisees and Sadducees demanded a sign from heaven. Jesus said they could read the sky but not "the signs of the times," and gave them only the sign of Jonah (16:1-4). He warned the disciples to beware of "the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," that is, their doctrine (16:6-12).

At Caesarea Philippi, He asked, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Some said John the Baptist, others Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. "But whom say ye that I am?"

> *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
>
> **Matthew 16:16-18**

This is the first use of "church" (ekklesia, "called-out assembly") in the New Testament. There is a wordplay: "Peter" is petros (a stone), and "rock" is petra (a mass of rock). Baptists and many other

Christians understand the rock to be Christ Himself and the truth Peter confessed about Him, not Peter as a person or a line of popes. Scripture elsewhere says, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11), and Peter himself calls Christ "a living stone" and "the chief corner stone," and believers "lively stones" built on Him (1 Peter 2:4-8; Ephesians 2:20). Christ builds His church, it belongs to Him ("my church"), and it will never be defeated. The "keys of the kingdom of heaven" given to Peter (16:19) refer to the authority to declare the terms of entry into the kingdom through the gospel, which Peter exercised in opening the door to Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2) and to Gentiles at Cornelius' house (Acts 10). Similar authority to "bind" and "loose" is later given to the church as a whole (18:18).

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things... and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (16:21). Peter rebuked Him: "Be it far from thee, Lord." Jesus answered, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (16:22-23). The same Peter who spoke by revelation from the Father now spoke Satan's temptation to avoid the cross.

> *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*
>
> **Matthew 16:24-26**

The Son of man will come in glory and reward every man according to his works (16:27). "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (16:28), fulfilled six days later when three of them saw His glory on the mount of transfiguration.

Chapter 17 — The Transfiguration

Jesus took Peter, James and John up a high mountain "and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (17:1-2). Moses (representing the law) and Elijah (representing the prophets) appeared, talking with Him (17:3); Luke says they spoke of His coming death in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). Peter offered to build three tabernacles (17:4), but a bright cloud overshadowed them, and the Father spoke:

> *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*
>
> **Matthew 17:5**

Jesus is not equal with Moses and Elijah; He is the Son to whom they pointed. When the disciples looked up, "they saw no man, save Jesus only" (17:8). Peter later wrote of this as eyewitness evidence of Christ's majesty (2 Peter 1:16-18). Coming down, Jesus explained that "Elias is come already, and they knew him not," and the disciples understood He meant John the Baptist (17:10-13).

At the foot of the mountain, the disciples had failed to cure a boy with seizures caused by a demon. Jesus healed him and told them it was because of their unbelief: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove... Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (17:14-21). Jesus again foretold His betrayal, death and resurrection (17:22-23). When asked whether He paid the temple tax, He explained that as the Son He

was exempt, but to avoid offence He told Peter to catch a fish, in whose mouth he would find a coin to pay for them both (17:24-27).

Chapter 18 — Life in the Community of the King

The disciples asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus set a little child among them:

> *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*
>
> **Matthew 18:3-4**

Causing one of these little ones to stumble is so serious that it would be better to be drowned with a millstone (18:6). Deal ruthlessly with sin (18:8-9). God cares for each one, like a shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine to find the one lost sheep: "it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (18:12-14).

Church discipline (18:15-20). If a brother sins against you, go to him privately; if he will not listen, take one or two witnesses; if he still refuses, "tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (18:15-17). The goal is restoration ("thou hast gained thy brother"). The church's decisions in line with God's Word are bound in heaven (18:18). "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (18:20).

Forgiveness (18:21-35). Peter asked if he should forgive seven times. "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (18:22): without limit. Jesus told of a servant forgiven a debt of ten thousand talents (an unpayable fortune) who then refused to forgive a fellow servant a hundred pence (a few months' wages) and threw him into prison. His master, angry, delivered him to the tormentors. "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (18:23-35). Those who have been forgiven an infinite debt must forgive others (Ephesians 4:32).

Chapter 19 — Marriage, Children, Riches and Rewards

Marriage and divorce (19:1-12). The Pharisees asked, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus went back to creation:

> *Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*
>
> **Matthew 19:4-6**

Moses permitted divorce "because of the hardness of your hearts: but from the beginning it was not so" (19:8). "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery" (19:9). Some are given the gift of singleness for the kingdom's sake (19:10-12; 1 Corinthians 7:7).

Little children (19:13-15). "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (19:14).

The rich young ruler (19:16-26). A young man asked, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus pointed him to the commandments; he claimed to have kept them all. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." He went away sorrowful, "for he had great possessions" (19:16-22). His wealth was his god. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." The astonished disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (19:24-26). Salvation is God's work.

Rewards (19:27-30). Peter said, "We have forsaken all." Jesus promised the twelve would sit on twelve thrones judging Israel "in the regeneration," and everyone who has left anything for His sake "shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first" (19:28-30).

Chapter 20 — Grace, the Cross and Servanthood

The labourers in the vineyard (20:1-16). A householder hired workers at different hours of the day, from early morning to the eleventh hour, and paid them all a penny (a day's wage). Those who worked all day complained. He answered, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" (20:15). God's grace is not earned by length of service; He gives freely as He chooses. "So the last shall be first, and the first last" (20:16).

The third passion prediction (20:17-19). For the third time Jesus foretold His suffering, this time with specific detail: He would be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes, condemned to death, handed to the Gentiles "to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again."

Greatness through service (20:20-28). The mother of James and John asked that her sons sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom. Jesus asked, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" (20:22). The other ten were indignant. Jesus taught that in the world rulers lord it over others, "But it shall not be so among you":

> *But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*
>
> **Matthew 20:26-28**

His death would be a "ransom," the price paid to free captives, in place of many (Isaiah 53:11-12; 1 Timothy 2:6).

Two blind men at Jericho (20:29-34). As Jesus left Jericho, two blind men cried, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David." The crowd rebuked them, but they cried louder. "So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him" (20:30-34).

Section IV: The King Presents Himself and Is Rejected (Chapters 21-25)

Chapter 21 — The Triumphal Entry and the Temple

Near Jerusalem, Jesus sent two disciples to bring a donkey and her colt, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass" (21:1-5; Zechariah 9:9; Isaiah 62:11). The crowds spread their garments and branches on the road and cried:

> *Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.*
>
> **Matthew 21:9**

"Hosanna" means "Save now" (Psalm 118:25-26). All Jerusalem was stirred, asking, "Who is this?" (21:10-11). Jesus was publicly presenting Himself as the promised King, but in humility.

He entered the temple and drove out the money changers and merchants: "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (21:12-13; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11). He healed the blind and lame in the temple, and children cried, "Hosanna to the son of David." When the chief priests objected, Jesus quoted Psalm 8:2: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise" (21:14-16).

The next morning He cursed a fig tree that had leaves but no fruit, and it withered (21:18-20), an acted parable of Israel's religious leaders: outward show, no fruit. "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (21:22).

When the chief priests and elders challenged His authority, He asked them whether John's baptism was from heaven or of men; afraid of either answer, they said, "We cannot tell," and He refused to answer them (21:23-27). Then He told three parables of judgment against the leaders:

- **The two sons (21:28-32):** one said he would not work but later did; the other said he would but did not. "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you," because they repented at John's preaching and the leaders did not.
- **The wicked husbandmen (21:33-41):** tenants of a vineyard beat and killed the owner's servants, and finally his son. "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22-23: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner" (21:42). "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (21:43). "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (21:44; Isaiah 8:14-15; Daniel 2:34-35).

The leaders knew He spoke of them, but feared the crowds (21:45-46).

Chapter 22 — The Wedding Feast and the Great Questions

The marriage of the king's son (22:1-14). A king invited guests to his son's wedding, but they refused, made light of it, and even killed his servants. The king destroyed them and burned their city, then invited everyone from the highways, both bad and good. One guest came without a wedding garment and was cast into outer darkness. "For many are called, but few are chosen" (22:14). The gospel invitation goes to all, but those who come must be clothed in the righteousness God provides (Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 19:8), not their own.

Tribute to Caesar (22:15-22). The Pharisees and Herodians tried to trap Him: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" Looking at a coin bearing Caesar's image, He said:

> *Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*
>
> **Matthew 22:21**

Believers owe obedience to government in its proper sphere (Romans 13:1-7), but their ultimate allegiance belongs to God, whose image they bear (Genesis 1:27).

The resurrection (22:23-33). The Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, posed a riddle about a woman married to seven brothers. Jesus answered, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (22:29). In the resurrection there is no marriage. And God said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," not "I was": "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (22:32; Exodus 3:6).

The great commandment (22:34-40). A lawyer asked which is the great commandment.

> *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*
>
> **Matthew 22:37-40**

(Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18.)

David's Son and Lord (22:41-46). Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" "The Son of David." Then how does David by the Spirit call Him "Lord" in Psalm 110:1, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand"? "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" (22:42-45). No one could answer. The Messiah is both David's descendant and David's divine Lord. "Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions" (22:46).

Chapter 23 — Woes on the Scribes and Pharisees

Jesus warned the crowds and His disciples about the religious leaders. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (23:2-3). They loaded heavy burdens on others, did everything to be seen, loved the best seats and titles (23:4-7). "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (23:8). "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted"

(23:11-12).

Then eight solemn woes:

Woe No.	Matthew	The Charge
1	23:13	Shutting the kingdom of heaven against others, neither entering nor letting others enter
2	23:14	Devouring widows' houses while making long prayers for show
3	23:15	Making converts "twofold more the child of hell than yourselves"
4	23:16-22	Blind guides who make hair-splitting rules about oaths
5	23:23-24	Tithing tiny herbs but neglecting "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith"; straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel
6	23:25-26	Cleaning the outside of the cup while inside is full of extortion and excess
7	23:27-28	Like whited sepulchres: beautiful outside, full of dead men's bones inside
8	23:29-36	Building tombs for the prophets their fathers killed, while planning to kill God's messengers

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (23:33). The guilt for all the righteous blood shed "from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias" would come on that generation (23:35). Then His heart broke over the city:

> *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*
>
> **Matthew 23:37-39**

Jesus' words of judgment are spoken with tears. Israel will see Him again when they welcome Him as Messiah at His return (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:26).

Chapters 24-25 — The Olivet Discourse

As Jesus left the temple, the disciples admired its magnificent buildings. He said, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (24:2). This was fulfilled in AD 70, when the Romans destroyed the temple. On the Mount of Olives the disciples asked: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (24:3).

Jesus' answer covers both the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age. Christians understand the details differently: some see much of it fulfilled in AD 70; many Baptist and dispensational interpreters see the core of the discourse describing the future great tribulation and Christ's second coming, with AD 70 as a foreshadowing.

The course of the age (24:4-14). Deceivers claiming to be Christ, wars and rumours of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes are "the beginning of sorrows" (24:5-8). Believers will be persecuted and hated; many will be offended, betray one another and follow false prophets; "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved"

(24:9-13).

> *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*
>
> **Matthew 24:14**

The great tribulation (24:15-28). "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place... Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains" (24:15-16; Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (24:21; Daniel 12:1). False Christs will show great signs, but believers must not be deceived: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (24:24-27). His coming will be unmistakable and public.

The coming of the Son of man (24:29-31). "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened... And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (24:29-30; Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10). He will send His angels "with a great sound of a trumpet," to gather His elect from the four winds (24:31).

Readiness (24:32-51). Learn from the fig tree: when its branches are tender, summer is near (24:32-33). "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (24:34): either the generation that sees these signs, or the Jewish people as a race, will not pass away before the end. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (24:35).

> *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*
>
> **Matthew 24:36**

It will be like the days of Noah: people eating, drinking and marrying, unaware until the flood came (24:37-39). "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (24:40-41). "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (24:42). Be like the faithful and wise servant whom the master finds working when he returns, not the evil servant who says, "My lord delayeth his coming," and abuses others (24:45-51).

Three parables of readiness and judgment (25).

- **The ten virgins (25:1-13):** five wise virgins took oil for their lamps; five foolish ones did not. When the bridegroom came at midnight, the foolish had to go and buy oil, and the door was shut. "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (25:13). Outward profession without inner reality (the oil, often seen as a picture of the Holy Spirit and true salvation) will not be enough.
- **The talents (25:14-30):** a man entrusted his servants with five, two and one talents. The first two doubled theirs and heard, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (25:21, 23). The third hid his talent out of fear and was cast "into outer darkness" (25:24-30). Believers must use faithfully what God has entrusted to them.

- **The sheep and the goats (25:31-46):** "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (25:31-32). The King commends the righteous for feeding, welcoming, clothing and visiting "the least of these my brethren":

> *Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*
>
> **Matthew 25:40**

Those who neglected them are condemned. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (25:46). The same word "everlasting" describes both the punishment and the life: both are eternal. Good works do not earn salvation, but they are the evidence of a genuine relationship with Christ (James 2:14-26; Ephesians 2:8-10).

Section V: The Death and Resurrection of the King (Chapters 26-28)

Chapter 26 — Betrayal, the Last Supper and Gethsemane

"Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (26:2). The chief priests and elders plotted at the palace of Caiaphas to take Him by subtlety (26:3-5). At Bethany, a woman poured very precious ointment on His head. The disciples called it waste, but Jesus said she had prepared Him for burial: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (26:6-13).

Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests: "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver" (26:14-15; Zechariah 11:12).

The Last Supper (26:17-30). At the Passover meal, Jesus said, "one of you shall betray me." Each asked, "Lord, is it I?" Jesus said the betrayer was the one who dipped with Him in the dish, and "woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." To Judas' question He replied, "Thou hast said" (26:21-25). Then He instituted the Lord's Supper:

> *Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*
>
> **Matthew 26:26-29**

At the Passover, which remembered Israel's deliverance from Egypt by the blood of the lamb, Jesus revealed Himself as the true Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). The bread and cup are memorials of His body given and His blood shed to establish the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Baptists understand the Lord's Supper as a memorial ordinance, observed "in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26), in which the elements represent His body and blood, proclaiming His death until He comes. "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (26:30).

Predictions on the way (26:31-35). "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (26:31; Zechariah 13:7). Peter insisted he would never deny Him; Jesus said, "this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice" (26:34).

Gethsemane (26:36-46). Jesus took Peter, James and John further and said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (26:38). He fell on His face and prayed:

> *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*
>
> **Matthew 26:39**

The "cup" was the cup of God's wrath against sin (Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15), which He would drink for sinners. Three times He prayed; three times He found the disciples sleeping: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (26:41). He submitted fully: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done" (26:42).

The arrest (26:47-56). Judas arrived with an armed crowd and identified Jesus with a kiss. "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" (26:50). When Peter (John 18:10) struck the high priest's servant with a sword, Jesus said, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (26:52-54). He went willingly. "Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled" (26:56).

Before Caiaphas (26:57-68). The council sought false witnesses but found none that agreed, until two twisted His words about destroying and rebuilding the temple (26:59-61; John 2:19-21). Jesus was silent (26:63; Isaiah 53:7). Then the high priest said:

> *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*
>
> **Matthew 26:63-64**

Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, the One who would sit at God's right hand (Psalm 110:1) and come in the clouds (Daniel 7:13). The high priest tore his clothes and declared it blasphemy; the council said, "He is guilty of death." They spat in His face, struck Him, and mocked Him (26:65-68; Isaiah 50:6).

Peter's denial (26:69-75). In the courtyard, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, the last with cursing and swearing. "And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus... And he went out, and wept bitterly" (26:74-75). His tears of repentance would lead to restoration (John 21:15-19), unlike Judas.

Chapter 27 — The Crucifixion

In the morning the council delivered Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor (27:1-2).

Judas' end (27:3-10). When Judas saw Jesus condemned, he "repented himself" (felt remorse), returned the money and said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." The priests replied, "What is that to us? see thou to that." Judas threw the silver into the temple and hanged himself. The priests, unwilling to put blood money in the treasury, bought the potter's field to bury strangers, fulfilling the prophecy of the thirty pieces and the potter (27:9-10; Zechariah 11:12-13; Jeremiah 18-19; 32). Remorse without repentance toward God led to despair.

Before Pilate (27:11-26). "Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest" (27:11). To the chief priests' accusations He answered nothing, "insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly" (27:12-14). Pilate offered to release a prisoner at the feast, either Barabbas, a notorious criminal, or Jesus, knowing the leaders had delivered Him out of envy (27:15-18). Pilate's wife sent word: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him" (27:19). But the priests persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas. "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified" (27:20-23). Pilate "took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children" (27:24-25). Barabbas, guilty, went free; Jesus, innocent, was condemned in his place: a picture of substitution. Pilate scourged Jesus and delivered Him to be crucified (27:26).

The mocking (27:27-31). The soldiers stripped Him, put on Him a scarlet robe and a crown of thorns, put a reed in His hand, knelt and mocked, "Hail, King of the Jews!", spat on Him and struck Him on the head.

The crucifixion (27:32-50). Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry His cross (27:32). At Golgotha, "the place of a skull," they offered Him vinegar mixed with gall; He tasted it and refused (27:33-34; Psalm 69:21). They crucified Him and divided His garments by casting lots, fulfilling Psalm 22:18 (27:35). Above His head they set the accusation: "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (27:37). Two thieves were crucified with Him (27:38; Isaiah 53:12). Passers-by wagged their heads and mocked; the chief priests said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save... He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God" (27:39-43; Psalm 22:7-8). He could have saved Himself, but then He could not have saved others.

> *Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*
>
> **Matthew 27:45-46**

From noon to three, darkness covered the land (Amos 8:9). Jesus cried the opening words of Psalm 22. In those hours He bore the full weight of God's wrath against sin and experienced separation from the Father, being "made... sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13). "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (27:50): He gave up His life voluntarily (John 10:18).

The signs at His death (27:51-56). "The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (27:51): God Himself opened the way into His presence through Christ's death (Hebrews 10:19-22). The earth quaked, rocks split, graves opened, and many saints who had died "arose, And

came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (27:52-53). The centurion and the soldiers, terrified, said, "Truly this was the Son of God" (27:54). Many women who had followed Him watched from a distance (27:55-56).

The burial (27:57-66). Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and a disciple, asked Pilate for the body, wrapped it in clean linen, and laid it in his own new tomb hewn in the rock, rolling a great stone across the entrance (27:57-60), fulfilling Isaiah 53:9: "with the rich in his death." The next day the chief priests and Pharisees remembered that Jesus had said, "After three days I will rise again," and asked Pilate to secure the tomb. Pilate said, "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can." They sealed the stone and set a guard (27:62-66). Their precautions only made the evidence for the resurrection stronger.

Chapter 28 — The Resurrection and the Great Commission

"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre" (28:1). There was a great earthquake; an angel of the Lord descended, rolled back the stone and sat on it; his appearance was like lightning, and the guards shook and "became as dead men" (28:2-4). The stone was rolled away not to let Jesus out but to let the witnesses in. The angel said:

> *Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead*
>
> **Matthew 28:5-7**

As the women ran with fear and great joy, Jesus met them: "All hail." "And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him" (28:8-9). He was not a ghost but bodily risen, and He accepted their worship. "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (28:10).

Meanwhile some of the guards reported to the chief priests, who bribed them to say, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept," promising to protect them from the governor. "And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (28:11-15). The story was self-defeating: sleeping guards could not know what happened, and the disciples later died for their testimony that He rose.

The eleven went to the mountain in Galilee, "And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted" (28:16-17). Then Jesus gave the Great Commission:

> *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
>
> **Matthew 28:18-20**

The commission rests on Christ's universal authority. Its central command is to "teach" (make disciples of) all nations, by going, by baptizing believers in the one name of the triune God, and by teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded. It ends with His promise of continual presence. The Gospel that began with "Emmanuel, God with us" (1:23) ends with "I am with you alway."

Part Three: Christ in Matthew

Jesus the King

Matthew presents Jesus above all as the Messiah-King.

Title	Key References	Meaning
Son of David	1:1; 9:27; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9, 15; 22:42	The heir to David's throne (2 Samuel 7:12-16)
Son of Abraham	1:1	The Seed in whom all nations are blessed (Genesis 22:18)
King of the Jews	2:2; 27:11, 29, 37	The rightful King, worshipped by wise men, mocked by soldiers
Emmanuel, God with us	1:23	God incarnate
Jesus (the LORD saves)	1:21	The Saviour from sin
Christ (Messiah, Anointed)	1:16; 16:16; 26:63-64	The promised Anointed One
Son of God	3:17; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5; 27:54	His unique divine relationship to the Father
Son of man	8:20; 9:6; 16:13; 24:30; 26:64	From Daniel 7:13: the heavenly King who suffers and returns in glory
The Bridegroom	9:15; 25:1-13	The One whose coming brings joy
Lord of the Sabbath	12:8	Authority over God's law
Greater than the temple, Jonah and Solomon	12:6, 41-42	Greater than priest, prophet and king
The Stone	21:42-44	The rejected stone made head of the corner
The Shepherd	2:6; 9:36; 26:31	The Ruler who shepherds God's people; smitten for them
The Judge	25:31-46	The King on the throne of glory

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in Matthew

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in Matthew
Born of a virgin; Emmanuel	Isaiah 7:14	1:22-23
Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	2:5-6
Called out of Egypt	Hosea 11:1	2:15
Rachel weeping for her children	Jeremiah 31:15	2:17-18
Called a Nazarene	The prophets (Isaiah 11:1; 53:3)	2:23
The forerunner's voice in the wilderness	Isaiah 40:3	3:3

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in Matthew
A great light in Galilee	Isaiah 9:1-2	4:14-16
Bearing our sicknesses	Isaiah 53:4	8:17
The gentle Servant who brings justice to the Gentiles	Isaiah 42:1-4	12:17-21
Hearing but not understanding	Isaiah 6:9-10	13:14-15
Speaking in parables	Psalm 78:2	13:35
The King coming on a donkey	Zechariah 9:9	21:4-5
Praise from children	Psalm 8:2	21:16
The rejected stone	Psalm 118:22-23	21:42
David's Lord	Psalm 110:1	22:44; 26:64
The smitten Shepherd	Zechariah 13:7	26:31, 56
Thirty pieces of silver and the potter	Zechariah 11:12-13	26:15; 27:9-10
Silent before His accusers	Isaiah 53:7	26:63; 27:12-14
Spat upon and struck	Isaiah 50:6	26:67; 27:30
Gall and vinegar	Psalm 69:21	27:34, 48
Garments divided by lot	Psalm 22:18	27:35
Numbered with transgressors	Isaiah 53:12	27:38
Mocked: "let him deliver him"	Psalm 22:7-8	27:39-43
Darkness at noon	Amos 8:9	27:45
"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Psalm 22:1	27:46
With the rich in His death	Isaiah 53:9	27:57-60
Three days in the heart of the earth	Jonah 1:17	12:40; 28:6
The Son of man coming with the clouds	Daniel 7:13	24:30; 26:64

Part Four: Jesus' Own Prophecies Fulfilled

Jesus' Prophecy	Matthew	Fulfillment
He will be killed and rise the third day	16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19	27:50; 28:6
He will be betrayed by one of the twelve	26:21-25	26:47-50
He will be delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, scourged and crucified	20:19	27:2, 26-35
The disciples will be scattered	26:31	26:56
Peter will deny Him three times before the cock crows	26:34	26:69-75
The woman's deed will be told wherever the gospel is preached	26:13	Recorded in the Gospels and told worldwide
He will meet them in Galilee	26:32	28:16-17
The temple will be destroyed	24:2	AD 70
The gospel will be preached in all the world	24:14	In progress (Acts; Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:6)
He will come again in glory	24:30; 26:64	Still future (Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Matthew 1:21-23 — Jesus, Emmanuel

His name declares His mission: to save His people from their sins. His title declares His nature: God with us. Salvation is not merely improvement but deliverance from sin, accomplished by God Himself in human flesh.

Matthew 5:3-12 — The Beatitudes

The kingdom belongs not to the proud, self-sufficient and powerful, but to the poor in spirit, the mourners over sin, the meek, the hungry for righteousness. The Beatitudes describe the character the Holy Spirit produces in those who belong to Christ, and they turn the world's values upside down.

Matthew 5:17-20 — Jesus Fulfils the Law

Jesus did not abolish the Old Testament; He fulfilled it, keeping it perfectly, fulfilling its types and prophecies, and revealing its deepest meaning. The righteousness God requires exceeds the best external religion; it is found only in Christ, and is then lived out from a changed heart.

Matthew 6:9-13 — The Lord's Prayer

A pattern for prayer: approaching God as Father, putting His glory, kingdom and will first, then asking for daily provision, forgiveness and protection. Forgiveness received must lead to forgiveness given.

Matthew 11:28-30 — Rest for the Weary

Jesus invites all who are weary and burdened, whether by sin, guilt or empty religion, to come to Him. His yoke is easy because He carries the load with us, and His rest is for the soul.

Matthew 16:13-19 — Who Is Jesus?

The most important question anyone can answer is, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter's confession, revealed by the Father, is the foundation on which Christ builds His church: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. The church belongs to Christ, is built on Christ, and cannot be overcome.

Matthew 16:24-26 — The Cost of Discipleship

Following Jesus means denying self, taking up the cross and following Him. Nothing in the world is worth the loss of one's soul.

Matthew 22:37-40 — The Great Commandment

All of God's law is summed up in love for God with the whole being and love for neighbour as oneself. No one keeps these perfectly; Christ did, and through Him believers are enabled to love (Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 4:19).

Matthew 24-25 — Watch and Be Ready

Christ will return visibly, gloriously and unexpectedly. The proper response is not date-setting, but watchfulness, faithfulness with what He has entrusted, genuine faith (oil in the lamps), and love shown to His people.

Matthew 26:26-29 — The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper remembers Christ's body given and blood shed for the remission of sins, proclaims the new covenant, and looks forward to drinking anew with Him in His Father's kingdom.

Matthew 27:45-54 — The Death of the King

In the darkness, Jesus bore the wrath of God and the abandonment our sins deserved. The torn veil shows that His death opened the way to God. The centurion's confession shows that even at the cross, the truth of who He is shone through.

Matthew 28:18-20 — The Great Commission

Every believer shares in the commission to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey Christ, resting on His authority and His promised presence.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Matthew

1. Jesus Is the Messiah-King

He is the Son of David, the King of the Jews, and the fulfillment of Israel's hopes (1:1; 2:2; 21:5; 27:37).

2. Jesus Is God with Us

He is Emmanuel, the Son of God, worthy of worship (1:23; 14:33; 16:16; 28:9, 17).

3. Jesus Fulfils the Scriptures

His birth, life, death and resurrection fulfil the Old Testament (5:17; 26:54).

4. The Kingdom of Heaven

God's reign, present now in Christ and in the hearts of believers, growing through the world, and to be fully established at His return (4:17; 13; 25:31-34).

5. True Righteousness Comes from the Heart

God looks at the heart, not mere external religion (5:20-48; 6:1-18; 15:18-20; 23).

6. Discipleship Is Costly

Following Christ requires self-denial, the cross and loyalty above family and possessions (10:37-39; 16:24-26; 19:21).

7. The Church

Christ builds His church, gives it authority, and is present in its midst (16:18; 18:15-20).

8. Grace to Sinners and Gentiles

Jesus calls sinners, welcomes outcasts, and includes the nations (9:9-13; 15:21-28; 20:1-16; 28:19).

9. Forgiveness

Those forgiven by God must forgive others (6:12-15; 18:21-35).

10. Judgment and Eternal Destiny

There will be a final separation: everlasting punishment or life eternal (13:40-43; 25:31-46).

11. The Death and Resurrection of Christ

He gave His life a ransom for many, shed His blood for the remission of sins, and rose from the dead (20:28; 26:28; 28:6).

12. The Second Coming

The Son of man will return in power and glory; believers must watch and be ready (24:30, 42-44; 25:13).

13. The Great Commission

Christ's followers must make disciples of all nations (24:14; 28:18-20).

Part Seven: Connections — How Matthew Links to the Rest of the Bible

Matthew and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (1:2; 22:32); the Seed of Abraham (22:18; Matthew 1:1); male and female, one flesh (1:27; 2:24; Matthew 19:4-5); Noah's days (6-7; Matthew 24:37-39); Tamar (38)
Exodus	Out of Egypt; the Passover (12; Matthew 26:17-29); the God of Abraham (3:6; Matthew 22:32); the Ten Commandments (20; Matthew 5:21-37; 19:18-19)
Leviticus	Love thy neighbour (19:18; Matthew 22:39); an eye for an eye (24:20; Matthew 5:38)
Deuteronomy	Jesus' three answers to Satan (8:3; 6:16; 6:13); the great commandment (6:5); divorce (24:1; Matthew 19:7); Moses' seat
Joshua	Rahab (2; Matthew 1:5)
Ruth	Ruth and Boaz in the genealogy (4:13-22; Matthew 1:5)
1 Samuel	David eating the shewbread (21:1-6; Matthew 12:3-4)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David (7:12-16); Bathsheba (11; Matthew 1:6)
1 Kings	The queen of Sheba and Solomon (10; Matthew 12:42); Elijah (17-19; Matthew 11:14; 17:3-12)
2 Kings	Elijah's clothing (1:8; Matthew 3:4); the exile (24-25; Matthew 1:11-12)
2 Chronicles	Zacharias son of Jehoiada slain in the temple court (24:20-22; Matthew 23:35)
Psalms	Psalm 2 (3:17; 17:5); 8:2 (21:16); 22 (27:35, 39-46); 69:21 (27:34); 78:2 (13:35); 91:11-12 (4:6); 110:1 (22:44; 26:64); 118:22-26 (21:9, 42; 23:39)
Isaiah	6:9-10 (13:14-15); 7:14 (1:23); 9:1-2 (4:15-16); 29:13 (15:8-9); 35:5-6 and 61:1 (11:5); 40:3 (3:3); 42:1-4 (12:18-21); 50:6 (26:67); 53:4, 7, 9, 12 (8:17; 26:63; 27:38, 57-60); 56:7 (21:13)
Jeremiah	7:11 (21:13); 31:15 (2:18); 31:31 (26:28); the potter (18-19; 32; Matthew 27:9-10)
Daniel	The abomination of desolation (9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15); unequalled tribulation (12:1; Matthew 24:21); the Son of man with the clouds (7:13; Matthew 24:30; 26:64); the righteous shining (12:3; Matthew 13:43)
Hosea	"Out of Egypt" (11:1; Matthew 2:15); "mercy, and not sacrifice" (6:6; Matthew 9:13; 12:7)
Jonah	The sign of Jonah (1:17; 3:5; Matthew 12:39-41)
Micah	Bethlehem (5:2; Matthew 2:6); a man's foes are of his own household (7:6; Matthew 10:35-36)
Zechariah	The King on a donkey (9:9; Matthew 21:5); thirty pieces of silver (11:12-13; Matthew 26:15; 27:9); the smitten Shepherd (13:7; Matthew 26:31)
Malachi	The messenger (3:1; Matthew 11:10); Elijah (4:5; Matthew 11:14; 17:10-13)

Matthew and the Rest of the New Testament

Book	Link
Mark and Luke	Parallel accounts of much of Jesus' ministry (the Synoptic Gospels); Luke's genealogy through Mary (3:23-38)
John	The deity of Christ; the Good Shepherd (10); the true temple (2:19-21)
Acts	The Great Commission carried out (1:8); Peter using the keys to open the door to Jews and Gentiles (2; 10); the church built
Romans	The law fulfilled by love (13:8-10); the righteousness of God by faith (3:21-26); Israel's future salvation (11:26; Matthew 23:39)
1 Corinthians	The Lord's Supper (11:23-26); Christ the only foundation (3:11)
Ephesians	The church built on Christ the cornerstone (2:20)
1 Thessalonians	The Lord's coming like a thief; the trumpet (4:16-5:6; Matthew 24:31, 43)
2 Thessalonians	The man of sin in the temple (2:3-4; Matthew 24:15)
Hebrews	The torn veil and access to God (10:19-22; Matthew 27:51)
James	Many echoes of the Sermon on the Mount: doers of the word (1:22; Matthew 7:24-27); swear not (5:12; Matthew 5:34-37); mercy over judgment (2:13; Matthew 5:7); riches corrupted by moths (5:2; Matthew 6:19)
1 Peter	Christ the living stone and chief cornerstone (2:4-8; Matthew 16:18; 21:42); suffering for righteousness (3:14; Matthew 5:10)
2 Peter	The transfiguration (1:16-18; Matthew 17:1-8)
Revelation	The Son of man coming with clouds (1:7); the great tribulation (7:14); the harvest of the earth (14:14-20; Matthew 13:39); the final judgment (20:11-15; Matthew 25:31-46)

Themes That Run from Matthew Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Matthew	Developed in the New Testament
The Son of David	2 Samuel 7; Isaiah 11:1	1:1; 21:9; 22:41-45	Romans 1:3; Revelation 22:16
The kingdom	Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14	4:17; 13; 25:34	Acts 28:31; Colossians 1:13; Revelation 11:15
Fulfillment of the law	Deuteronomy 18:15; Jeremiah 31:33	5:17-48	Romans 8:3-4; 10:4
The new covenant in His blood	Jeremiah 31:31-34; Exodus 24:8	26:28	1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8-10
The church	Psalm 22:22	16:18; 18:17	Acts; Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:25-27
The Great Commission	Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6	28:18-20	Acts 1:8; Romans 10:14-15
The second coming	Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 14:4-5	24:30; 25:31	1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 19:11-16

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Matthew	Developed in the New Testament
Final judgment	Daniel 12:2	13:40-43; 25:31-46	John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Trust that God works through imperfect people and families** (1:3-6).
- **Obey God's guidance promptly, like Joseph** (1:24; 2:14, 21).
- **Seek Christ and worship Him, like the wise men** (2:1-11).
- **Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance** (3:8).
- **Answer temptation with Scripture** (4:4, 7, 10).
- **Follow Christ immediately when He calls** (4:20, 22; 9:9).
- **Let your light shine** (5:16).
- **Deal with sin at the level of the heart** (5:21-30).
- **Love your enemies and pray for them** (5:44).
- **Give, pray and fast for God's eyes only** (6:1-18).
- **Lay up treasure in heaven; seek God's kingdom first** (6:19-33).
- **Don't worry; your Father knows your needs** (6:25-34).
- **Judge yourself before others** (7:1-5).
- **Ask, seek and knock** (7:7).
- **Treat others as you want to be treated** (7:12).
- **Build your life on Christ's words** (7:24-27).
- **Pray for labourers in the harvest** (9:38).
- **Fear God, not people** (10:28).
- **Come to Jesus for rest** (11:28).
- **Receive God's Word into good ground** (13:23).
- **Keep your eyes on Jesus, not the storm** (14:30-31).
- **Confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God** (16:16).
- **Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Him** (16:24).
- **Become humble like a child** (18:3-4).
- **Restore an offending brother lovingly** (18:15).
- **Forgive without limit** (18:22).
- **Honour marriage as God's lifelong design** (19:6).
- **Serve rather than seek to be served** (20:26-28).
- **Love God and your neighbour** (22:37-39).
- **Avoid religious hypocrisy** (23).
- **Watch and be ready for Christ's return** (24:42-44).
- **Use your gifts faithfully** (25:14-30).
- **Serve Christ by serving the least of His brethren** (25:40).
- **Remember the Lord's death until He comes** (26:26-29).

- **Pray "thy will be done"** (26:39).
- **Watch and pray against temptation** (26:41).
- **Repent like Peter, not despair like Judas** (26:75; 27:3-5).
- **Make disciples of all nations** (28:19-20).
- **Remember He is with you always** (28:20).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:21	She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.
4:4	Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
5:16	Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
6:33	But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
7:7	Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you
11:28	Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
16:16	Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
16:18	Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
16:24	If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
16:26	For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
20:28	The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
22:37	Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.
24:35	Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
26:41	Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
28:6	He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.
28:19-20	Go ye therefore, and teach all nations... and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Conclusion

Matthew, the tax collector who left everything to follow Jesus, wrote to show that Jesus of Nazareth is the long-promised Messiah, the Son of David and Son of Abraham, Emmanuel, God with us. Page after page, he shows the Old Testament fulfilled: born of a virgin in Bethlehem, called out of Egypt, proclaimed by the forerunner, teaching with unmatched authority in the Sermon on the Mount, healing every disease, calming the storm, forgiving sins, and revealing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in parables. He records the great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the promise that Christ will build His church. He shows the King entering Jerusalem humbly on a donkey, rejected by the leaders, betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, condemned, mocked, crucified under a sign that read "THE KING OF THE JEWS," crying "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" as He gave His life a ransom for many. And he shows the empty tomb, the risen King receiving worship, and the commission to make disciples of all nations, sealed with the promise that the One called Emmanuel at the beginning will be with His people "alway, even unto the end of the world."

> *And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
>
> **Matthew 28:20**

Mark

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John Mark, recording Peter's preaching • Date: c. AD 55-65 • Chapters: 16

> *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*
>
> **Mark 10:45**

Part One: Introduction to Mark

The Author

The early church consistently identified the author as John Mark, a young believer from Jerusalem. His story appears throughout the New Testament:

Mark's Life	Reference	Significance
His mother's house in Jerusalem is a meeting place for prayer	Acts 12:12	The church prayed there when Peter was in prison
He travels with Barnabas and Saul	Acts 12:25; 13:5	Helper on the first missionary journey
He leaves the mission at Perga and returns to Jerusalem	Acts 13:13	A painful failure
Paul refuses to take him on the second journey	Acts 15:36-39	Paul and Barnabas part company over him
He is Barnabas' cousin ("sister's son to Barnabas")	Colossians 4:10	Barnabas gave him a second chance
He is with Paul again in Rome	Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24	Restored to Paul's trust
"He is profitable to me for the ministry"	2 Timothy 4:11	Paul's final verdict
Peter calls him "Marcus my son"	1 Peter 5:13	Spiritual son of Peter

Mark's life is itself a gospel story: a young man who failed and was restored to useful service. Early Christian writers, beginning with Papias (around AD 125), say that Mark was Peter's interpreter and wrote down accurately what Peter preached about the Lord's words and deeds. This explains the vivid, eyewitness detail and the prominence of Peter, including his failures, in Mark's Gospel. Many believe the young man who fled naked when Jesus was arrested (14:51-52), mentioned only in Mark, was Mark himself.

Date and Readers

Mark was probably written in the AD 50s or 60s, many believe in Rome. It was written mainly for Gentile, especially Roman, readers:

- Mark explains Jewish customs, such as ceremonial washing (7:3-4).
- He translates Aramaic words: Boanerges (3:17), Talitha cumi (5:41), Corban (7:11), Ephphatha (7:34), Abba (14:36), Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani (15:34).
- He uses Latin terms: legion, centurion, praetorium (15:16), and explains a Greek coin in Roman terms (12:42).
- He quotes the Old Testament less often than Matthew.
- He mentions that Simon of Cyrene was "the father of Alexander and Rufus" (15:21), evidently known to his readers; Paul greets a Rufus in Rome (Romans 16:13).

Purpose and Theme

Mark presents Jesus Christ as the Son of God who came as the Servant of the LORD, to serve and to give His life a ransom for sinners.

> *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*
>
> **Mark 1:1**

> *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*
>
> **Mark 10:45**

The book opens by calling Jesus "the Son of God" (1:1) and reaches its climax when a Roman centurion at the cross confesses, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (15:39).

Distinctive Features

- **The shortest Gospel**, and probably the earliest written; almost all of Mark's content also appears in Matthew or Luke.
- **Action.** Mark records more of what Jesus did than what He said. The Greek word euthus ("straightway," "immediately," "forthwith") appears about forty times, giving the book a fast pace.
- **Vivid detail.** Mark notes that Jesus slept on "a pillow" in the boat (4:38), that the grass was "green" when the five thousand sat down "in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties" (6:39-40), and that Jesus looked round "with anger" (3:5), "sighed" (7:34), "marvelled" (6:6), was "much displeased" (10:14), and "loved" the rich young man (10:21).
- **The Servant.** Mark has no genealogy and no birth narrative; it begins with Jesus' ministry. A servant's work matters more than his pedigree.
- **The cross.** About a third of the book covers the final week in Jerusalem (11-16).
- **The disciples' weakness.** Mark honestly records the disciples' slowness to understand, their fear, and their flight, encouraging failing believers that Christ does not give up on His followers.
- **Commands to silence.** Jesus often told those He healed and demons He cast out not to make Him known (1:34, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30; 9:9), to avoid premature popularity as a political Messiah before the cross revealed what kind of Messiah He was.

The Turning Point

Mark divides into two halves around Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (8:27-30):

Half	Chapters	Question	Setting	Focus
First	1:1-8:30	Who is Jesus?	Mainly Galilee	His authority and power displayed
Second	8:31-16:20	What has He come to do?	The road to Jerusalem	His suffering, death and resurrection

Immediately after Peter's confession, "he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things" (8:31).

Material Found Only in Mark

The parable of the seed growing secretly (4:26-29); the healing of a deaf man with a speech impediment ("Ephphatha," 7:31-37); the blind man at Bethsaida healed in two stages (8:22-26); Jesus' family thinking He was "beside himself" (3:21); "The sabbath was made for man" (2:27); the young man who fled naked (14:51-52); Pilate's checking that Jesus was really dead (15:44-45); and "tell his disciples and Peter" (16:7).

The Ending of Mark (16:9-20)

Two early Greek manuscripts (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, fourth century) end at 16:8. But the great majority of Greek manuscripts, early translations and quotations include verses 9-20; Irenaeus quoted verse 19 as Mark's in the second century, earlier than those two manuscripts. The King James Version, based on the Received Text, includes them, and this study treats them as Scripture. Their content agrees with the rest of the New Testament.

Outline of Mark

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Servant Prepared	1:1-13	John the Baptist; baptism; temptation
II. The Servant's Ministry in Galilee	1:14-8:30	Authority in word and deed
Early ministry and growing fame	1:14-45	Authority over demons and disease
Conflicts with the religious leaders	2:1-3:35	Forgiveness, fasting, the Sabbath
Parables and mighty works	4:1-5:43	Authority over nature, demons, disease and death
Rejection and wider ministry	6:1-8:30	Nazareth; feeding thousands; the Syrophenician; Peter's confession
III. The Servant on the Way to the Cross	8:31-10:52	Teaching on suffering and discipleship
Three passion predictions	8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34	"The Son of man must suffer"
The transfiguration	9:2-13	"This is my beloved Son: hear him"
The servant's way	10	"Not to be ministered unto, but to minister"
IV. The Servant in Jerusalem	11:1-13:37	Entry, conflict and the Olivet Discourse
V. The Servant's Death and Resurrection	14:1-16:20	The cross and the empty tomb

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Many events in Mark are also recorded in Matthew and are treated more fully in the Matthew study. This analysis focuses on Mark's distinctive emphases and details.

Section I: The Servant Prepared (Chapter 1:1-13)

Chapter 1:1-13 — The Beginning of the Gospel

> *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*
>
> **Mark 1:1**

Mark starts not with a birth but with the ministry of John the Baptist, combining Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face... The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (1:2-3). John preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (1:4) and pointed to One mightier: "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (1:7-8). At Jesus' baptism, coming "up out of the water," He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending like a dove, and the Father said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (1:10-11).

"And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him" (1:12-13). Mark alone mentions the wild beasts, a picture of the conflict and of the One who will restore creation (Isaiah 11:6-9).

Section II: The Servant's Ministry in Galilee (Chapters 1:14-8:30)

Chapter 1:14-45 — Authority and Compassion

> *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*
>
> **Mark 1:14-15**

Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James and John: "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (1:17). In the synagogue at Capernaum, the people "were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (1:22). A man with an unclean spirit cried, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Jesus rebuked it, and it came out. "What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him" (1:23-27).

He healed Peter's mother-in-law, and by sunset "all the city was gathered together at the door" as He healed many and cast out devils, "and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him" (1:29-34).

> *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*
>
> **Mark 1:35**

After a day of intense ministry, Jesus sought His Father in prayer. When the disciples said everyone was looking for Him, He said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth" (1:38). Preaching was His priority.

A leper begged, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean" (1:40-41). Touching a leper made one ceremonially unclean, but Jesus' touch made the leper clean. He told the man to tell no one but to show himself to the priest; instead the man spread the news everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city (1:43-45).

Chapter 2 — Conflicts Over Forgiveness, Fellowship, Fasting and the Sabbath

Five conflicts with the religious leaders follow (2:1-3:6):

- **Forgiveness (2:1-12).** Four men, unable to reach Jesus through the crowd, "uncovered the roof where he was" and let down a paralysed man on his bed (2:3-4). "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." The scribes reasoned, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" (2:5-7). They were right: only God can forgive sins. Jesus healed the man "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (2:10-11). "We never saw it on this fashion" (2:12).
- **Fellowship with sinners (2:13-17).** Jesus called Levi (Matthew) and ate with tax collectors and sinners: "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (2:17).
- **Fasting (2:18-22).** The Bridegroom's presence is a time for joy; new wine needs new wineskins.
- **The Sabbath (2:23-28).** When His disciples plucked grain on the Sabbath, Jesus cited David eating the shewbread "in the days of Abiathar the high priest" (2:26). Then He said:

> *The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.*
>
> **Mark 2:27-28**

Chapter 3 — Hardened Hearts and the True Family

On the Sabbath, a man with a withered hand was in the synagogue, and the Pharisees watched to accuse Jesus. He asked, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" They were silent. "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts," He healed the man (3:1-5). Jesus' anger was righteous, mixed with grief. The Pharisees then joined with the Herodians, their political enemies, to plot His death (3:6).

Huge crowds came from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond Jordan, Tyre and Sidon (3:7-8). Jesus "ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (3:14). Being with Him came before being sent. He named James and John "Boanerges, which is, The

sons of thunder" (3:17).

His own family went to take Him, "for they said, He is beside himself" (3:21). The scribes from Jerusalem said He cast out devils by Beelzebub (3:22). Jesus warned that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost "hath never forgiveness... Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (3:28-30): calling the Spirit's work in Christ the work of Satan. When His mother and brothers called for Him, He looked at those sitting around Him: "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother" (3:34-35).

Chapter 4 — Parables and Power Over the Storm

From a boat on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus taught in parables. The parable of the sower (4:3-20) shows four responses to the word. "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel?" (4:21): what is hidden will be revealed. "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you" (4:24).

Only Mark records the parable of the seed growing secretly:

> *So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.*
>
> **Mark 4:26-28**

The sower plants, but God gives the growth, mysteriously and gradually (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). The mustard seed (4:30-32) shows the kingdom's small beginning and great growth.

That evening a great storm arose. Jesus "was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." The terrified disciples woke Him: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" (4:37-38).

> *And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?*
>
> **Mark 4:39-40**

"And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (4:41).

Chapter 5 — Power Over Demons, Disease and Death

Legion (5:1-20). In the country of the Gadarenes, a man possessed by unclean spirits lived among the tombs. No chains could hold him; he cried night and day and cut himself with stones (5:2-5). He ran and worshipped Jesus. Asked his name, he said, "My name is Legion: for we are many" (5:9). (Matthew records two men; Mark and Luke focus on the one who spoke.) Jesus allowed the demons to enter about two thousand swine, which rushed into the sea (5:13). The townspeople found the man "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind," and were afraid, and begged Jesus to leave (5:15-17). When the healed man wanted to go with Jesus, He said:

> *Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.*
>
> **Mark 5:19**

He became a missionary to the Decapolis, and all marvelled (5:20).

A woman and a girl (5:21-43). Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, begged Jesus to heal his dying twelve-year-old daughter (5:22-23). On the way, a woman who had suffered a haemorrhage for twelve years, and "had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse" (5:26), touched His garment and was healed instantly. Jesus, knowing "that virtue had gone out of him," asked, "Who touched my clothes?" She came trembling and told Him all. "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (5:30-34). He did not want her to go away with a secret healing, but with personal assurance.

News came that Jairus' daughter had died. Jesus said, "Be not afraid, only believe" (5:36). Taking Peter, James and John and the parents, He took the girl by the hand and said, "Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked" (5:41-42). He told them to give her something to eat (5:43).

Chapter 6 — Rejection, Mission and Miracles

At Nazareth the people asked, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" and were offended (6:3). "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk... And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (6:5-6). Unbelief shut them off from blessing.

He sent the twelve out two by two with authority over unclean spirits; they preached repentance, cast out devils and "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (6:7-13).

Mark gives the fullest account of John the Baptist's death (6:14-29). Herod Antipas "feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy... and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly" (6:20). Yet, trapped by a rash oath at his birthday feast, he had John beheaded at the request of Herodias' daughter (6:21-28). Herod liked hearing the truth but would not obey it.

When the apostles returned, Jesus said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (6:31). But the crowds followed, "and Jesus... was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things" (6:34; Numbers 27:17). He fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, seating them "by companies upon the green grass... in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties" (6:39-40), with twelve baskets left over (6:43).

That night, the disciples were "toiling in rowing" against the wind. About the fourth watch Jesus came walking on the sea "and would have passed by them" (6:48), as God "passed by" Moses and Elijah in revealing His glory (Exodus 33:22; 1 Kings 19:11). "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid" (6:50); "it is I" is literally "I am." The wind ceased, and the disciples were amazed, "For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened" (6:52).

Chapter 7 — The Heart, a Gentile Woman and a Deaf Man

The Pharisees criticised the disciples for eating without ceremonial hand-washing. Mark explains the Jewish traditions for his Gentile readers (7:3-4). Jesus quoted Isaiah 29:13 and showed how "Corban" (a vow dedicating property to God) was used to avoid supporting parents, "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (7:6-13). Food cannot defile a person spiritually, "because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly... purging all meats" (7:18-19). The real source of defilement is within:

> *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*
>
> **Mark 7:21-23**

In the region of Tyre and Sidon, a Greek woman, "a Syrophenician by nation," begged Him to cast a demon out of her daughter. Her humble answer, "yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs," was rewarded, and her daughter was healed (7:24-30).

In the Decapolis, Jesus healed a deaf man with a speech impediment in a uniquely personal way: He took him aside, put His fingers in his ears, spat and touched his tongue, "And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened" (7:32-34). He communicated with a man who could not hear by touch and sight, and He sighed over the brokenness of the fallen world. The people were astonished: "He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (7:37; compare Isaiah 35:5-6).

Chapter 8:1-30 — Seeing Clearly

Jesus fed four thousand with seven loaves (8:1-9). The Pharisees demanded a sign, and "he sighed deeply in his spirit" and refused (8:11-12). He warned His disciples of "the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod," but they thought He was talking about bread. "Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?" (8:15-18).

Then, at Bethsaida, He healed a blind man in two stages, found only in Mark. After the first touch the man said, "I see men as trees, walking." After the second, "he was restored, and saw every man clearly" (8:22-25). The miracle pictures the disciples themselves: they saw Jesus partly, but not yet clearly. At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked, "But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ" (8:29). They now saw that He was the Messiah; they still needed a "second touch" to understand that the Messiah must suffer.

Section III: The Servant on the Way to the Cross (Chapters 8:31-10:52)

Chapter 8:31-38 — The Son of Man Must Suffer

> *And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly.*
>
> **Mark 8:31-32**

Peter rebuked Him; Jesus answered, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (8:33). Then He called the crowd as well as the disciples:

> *Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*
>
> **Mark 8:34-36**

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (8:38).

Chapter 9 — Glory, Faith and Greatness

"There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (9:1). Six days later, on a high mountain, Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John: "his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (9:2-3). Elijah and Moses appeared. Peter, "not knowing what to say," offered to build three tabernacles (9:5-6). A cloud overshadowed them, and the Father said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him" (9:7). Coming down, the disciples wondered what "rising from the dead should mean" (9:10). Jesus explained that Elijah had already come, meaning John the Baptist (9:11-13).

At the foot of the mountain, the other disciples had failed to cast a spirit out of a boy who had suffered seizures since childhood (9:14-22). The father pleaded, "if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us."

> *Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*
>
> **Mark 9:23-24**

Jesus turned the father's "if thou canst" back on him. The father's honest cry is the prayer of every struggling believer, and Jesus answered it. He cast out the spirit (9:25-27). "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting" (9:29).

Jesus again foretold His death and resurrection, "But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him" (9:31-32). On the road, they had argued about who was the greatest. "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all" (9:35). He took a child in His arms: receiving a little child in His name is receiving Him (9:36-37). When John reported forbidding someone who cast out devils in Jesus' name, Jesus said, "Forbid him not... For he that is not against us is on our part" (9:39-40). Even a cup of water given in His name will be rewarded (9:41). He warned against causing others to stumble, and urged radical dealing with sin, rather than be cast into hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (9:42-48; Isaiah 66:24). "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another" (9:50).

Chapter 10 — The Servant's Way

Marriage (10:1-12). As in Matthew, Jesus pointed back to creation: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (10:9). Mark alone adds that a wife who divorces her husband and marries another also commits adultery (10:12), relevant to Roman readers, among whom women could initiate divorce.

Children (10:13-16). When the disciples rebuked those bringing children, Jesus "was much displeased": "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God... Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them" (10:14-16).

The rich man (10:17-31). A man ran and knelt before Jesus: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus asked, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God" (10:17-18), challenging him to think about who Jesus is. When the man claimed to have kept the commandments from his youth, "Then Jesus beholding him loved him," and told him to sell everything, give to the poor, "and come, take up the cross, and follow me." He went away grieved, "for he had great possessions" (10:20-22). "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" (10:24). "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (10:27). Those who leave all for Christ will receive a hundredfold now, "with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (10:30).

The third prediction (10:32-34). "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid" (10:32). Jesus walked resolutely ahead toward the cross. He foretold in detail that He would be condemned, handed to the Gentiles, mocked, scourged, spat upon and killed, "and the third day he shall rise again" (10:33-34).

The Son of man came to serve (10:35-45). James and John asked to sit at His right and left hand in glory. "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (10:38): the cup and baptism of suffering. Then the key verse of the whole Gospel:

> *But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*
>
> **Mark 10:43-45**

Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52). As Jesus left Jericho, "blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging" (10:46). Hearing it was Jesus of Nazareth, he cried, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." Many told him to be quiet; "but he cried the more a great deal" (10:47-48). Jesus stood still and called him. "Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus" (10:49-50). "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" "Lord, that I might receive my sight." "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (10:51-52). Unlike the disciples, slow to see, this blind man saw clearly, called Jesus the Son of David, and followed Him on the road to Jerusalem.

Section IV: The Servant in Jerusalem (Chapters 11-13)

Chapter 11 — The King Comes to His Temple

Jesus sent two disciples for "a colt tied, whereon never man sat," telling them to say, "the Lord hath need of him" (11:2-3). The crowds spread garments and branches and cried, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David" (11:9-10; Psalm 118:25-26). Jesus entered the temple, "looked round about upon all things," and, since it was evening, went out to Bethany (11:11).

The next morning, He found a fig tree full of leaves but with no fruit, "for the time of figs was not yet," and said, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever" (11:12-14). Fig trees normally produce small early fruit with their leaves; leaves without any fruit signalled a barren tree, like Israel's religion. Mark sandwiches the temple cleansing between the cursing and the withering. Jesus drove out the buyers and sellers, overturned the tables, "And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple," saying, "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves" (11:15-17; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11). Mark alone includes "of all nations": the merchants were operating in the Court of the Gentiles, the only place where non-Jews could pray.

The next morning the fig tree had withered from the roots (11:20). Jesus said:

> *Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart... he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any*
>
> **Mark 11:22-25**

Prayer must be offered in faith in God and with a forgiving heart. The chief priests questioned His authority, and He answered with a question about John's baptism (11:27-33).

Chapter 12 — Questions in the Temple

The vineyard (12:1-12). Jesus told of a vineyard owner whose servants were beaten and killed by the tenants, until, "Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son" (12:6). They killed him. The stone the builders rejected has become the head of the corner (12:10-11; Psalm 118:22-23). The leaders knew He spoke against them (12:12).

Caesar and God (12:13-17). "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (12:17).

The resurrection (12:18-27). To the Sadducees: "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?" (12:24). "He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living" (12:27).

The first commandment (12:28-34). A scribe asked which commandment is first of all. Jesus began with the Shema:

> *Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*
>
> **Mark 12:29-31**

The scribe agreed that this is "more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Jesus said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (12:32-34). Being near is not the same as being in.

David's Lord (12:35-37). If David calls the Messiah "Lord," how is He David's son? "And the common people heard him gladly" (12:37).

The scribes and the widow (12:38-44). "Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing... Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers" (12:38-40). Then Jesus sat opposite the temple treasury and watched people giving. Many rich people gave much, "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing" (12:41-42).

> *Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.*
>
> **Mark 12:43-44**

God measures giving not by the amount but by the sacrifice and the heart (2 Corinthians 8:12). The contrast is striking: the scribes devoured widows' houses; this widow gave everything to God.

Chapter 13 — The Olivet Discourse

As in Matthew 24, Jesus foretold the temple's destruction (13:1-2) and described the signs leading to the end (see the Matthew study). Mark's account emphasises watchfulness:

- "Take heed lest any man deceive you" (13:5).
- Believers will be delivered up to councils and beaten, "And the gospel must first be published among all nations" (13:9-10).
- "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak... for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (13:11).
- "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (13:13).
- At "the abomination of desolation... (let him that readeth understand,)" those in Judea must flee (13:14).
- "Except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days" (13:20).
- "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (13:26).
- "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (13:31).

> *But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.*

> **Mark 13:32-33**

In His incarnation, the Son voluntarily limited the use of His divine knowledge (Philippians 2:7); He fully knew what the Father willed Him to reveal. The discourse closes with the parable of the porter commanded to watch, and the words: "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (13:34-37).

Section V: The Servant's Death and Resurrection (Chapters 14-16)

Chapter 14 — Anointing, Supper, Agony and Trial

The anointing (14:3-9). At Bethany, a woman broke an alabaster box of very costly spikenard ointment and poured it on Jesus' head (14:3). Some complained it could have been sold for "more than three hundred pence" (about a year's wages) for the poor (14:5). Jesus defended her: "She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying" (14:8). Her act would be told wherever the gospel is preached (14:9).

Betrayal and the Passover (14:10-25). Judas agreed to betray Him for money (14:10-11). Jesus sent two disciples into the city to follow "a man bearing a pitcher of water" (unusual, since women usually carried water) to a large upper room, furnished and prepared (14:13-16). At the meal He foretold His betrayal by one "that eateth with me" (14:18; Psalm 41:9), and instituted the Lord's Supper: "Take, eat: this is my body... This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many" (14:22-24).

Peter's boast (14:26-31). Jesus quoted Zechariah 13:7: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," and promised, "after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee" (14:27-28). Peter insisted, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Jesus told him, "this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice" (14:29-30).

Gethsemane (14:32-42). Jesus "began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death" (14:33-34).

> *Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.*
>
> **Mark 14:36**

"Abba" is the intimate Aramaic word for "father." Even in agony, Jesus trusted His Father and submitted to His will. Finding Peter asleep, He said, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?" (14:37).

The arrest (14:43-52). Judas betrayed Him with a kiss (14:44-45). "And they all forsook him, and fled" (14:50). Only Mark adds: "And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked" (14:51-52), probably Mark's own humble signature.

The trial (14:53-65). Many false witnesses testified, "but their witness agreed not together" (14:56, 59). Jesus was silent (14:61). Then the high priest asked:

> *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

> **Mark 14:61-62**

In Mark, Jesus' answer is direct: "I am." He was condemned for blasphemy. Some "began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy" (14:65), while at that very moment His prophecy about Peter was being fulfilled outside.

Peter's denial (14:66-72). Peter denied Him three times. "And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him... And when he thought thereon, he wept" (14:72).

Chapter 15 — The Crucifixion of the Servant

Before Pilate (15:1-15). "Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it" (15:2). To the many accusations "Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled" (15:5). Barabbas had been imprisoned for insurrection and murder (15:7). Pilate "knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy" (15:10), yet, "willing to content the people," he released Barabbas and delivered Jesus to be crucified (15:15). The innocent Servant took the place of the guilty.

The mocking (15:16-20). In the praetorium the whole band of soldiers clothed Him in purple, crowned Him with thorns, saluted Him "Hail, King of the Jews!", struck Him with a reed, spat on Him and mockingly worshipped Him.

The crucifixion (15:21-41). Simon of Cyrene, "the father of Alexander and Rufus," was compelled to carry His cross (15:21). At Golgotha they offered Him wine mingled with myrrh, a drug to dull pain, but He refused it (15:23). "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him" (15:25), about 9 a.m. They divided His garments by lot (15:24; Psalm 22:18). The accusation read "THE KING OF THE JEWS" (15:26). Crucified between two thieves, "the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors" (15:27-28; Isaiah 53:12). The mockers said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe" (15:31-32).

From the sixth hour to the ninth (noon to 3 p.m.) there was darkness over the whole land (15:33).

> *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*
>
> **Mark 15:34**

Some thought He was calling Elijah. One offered Him vinegar on a reed (15:35-36; Psalm 69:21). "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (15:37-38). Then the climax of Mark's Gospel:

> *And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.*
>
> **Mark 15:39**

The Gospel began, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1); here a Roman, a Gentile, the commander of the execution squad, makes the same confession. It was the way Jesus died that convinced him. Many women watched from afar, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the less and Joses,

and Salome, who had followed and ministered to Him in Galilee (15:40-41).

The burial (15:42-47). Joseph of Arimathea, "an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus" (15:43). Pilate "marvelled if he were already dead," and called the centurion to confirm it before releasing the body (15:44-45). Mark thus records official Roman confirmation of Jesus' death, answering any later claim that He merely fainted. Joseph wrapped the body in fine linen, laid it in a rock-hewn tomb and rolled a stone against the door, while Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses watched where He was laid (15:46-47).

Chapter 16 — The Risen Servant

After the Sabbath, very early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome came with spices to anoint the body. "And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" (16:1-3). But the stone, "very great," was already rolled away (16:4). Inside they saw "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment" (an angel), and were frightened (16:5).

> *And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.*
>
> **Mark 16:6-7**

"And Peter": only Mark includes these words. Peter, who had denied Jesus three times and wept, was specially named. The risen Lord had not given up on him. This detail, recorded by Peter's interpreter, must have meant a great deal to Peter. The women fled trembling and amazed, saying nothing to anyone along the way, "for they were afraid" (16:8).

Appearances (16:9-14). Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, "out of whom he had cast seven devils," but the mourning disciples did not believe her (16:9-11). He appeared to two walking into the country (compare Luke 24:13-35); they were not believed either (16:12-13). Then He appeared to the eleven at a meal "and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart" (16:14).

The commission (16:15-18).

> *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*
>
> **Mark 16:15-16**

The order is belief, then baptism, the believer's public testimony. Condemnation comes from unbelief, not from lack of baptism: "he that believeth not shall be damned" (compare John 3:18). Jesus promised that "signs shall follow them that believe": casting out devils, speaking with new tongues, taking up serpents, surviving deadly poison, and healing the sick (16:17-18). These signs were fulfilled in the apostolic age to confirm the gospel message (Acts 2:4; 16:18; 28:3-6; Hebrews 2:3-4). They are not a command to handle snakes or drink poison to prove faith; that would be to tempt God (Matthew 4:7).

The ascension and the mission (16:19-20).

> *So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*
>
> **Mark 16:19-20**

The Servant who came to serve and give His life is now exalted at the right hand of God (Philippians 2:9-11), and He continues to work through His servants as they preach.

Part Three: Christ in Mark

The Servant of the LORD

Mark presents Jesus as the perfect Servant foretold by Isaiah:

Isaiah's Servant	Isaiah	Fulfillment in Mark
God's chosen Servant, on whom the Spirit rests	42:1	The Spirit descends; "my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (1:10-11)
He does not cry out or lift up His voice in the street	42:2	Repeated commands to silence (1:44; 7:36)
He opens blind eyes	42:7	Bethsaida; Bartimaeus (8:22-26; 10:46-52)
He gives His back to smiters and does not hide His face from spitting	50:6	Spat upon, struck, scourged (14:65; 15:15, 19)
Despised and rejected	53:3	Rejected at Nazareth and by the leaders (6:3; 8:31; 12:10)
He bore our griefs	53:4	Healing the sick (1:34)
Silent like a lamb before its shearers	53:7	"He answered nothing" (14:61; 15:5)
Numbered with the transgressors	53:12	Crucified between two thieves (15:27-28)
He makes His soul an offering for sin; bears the sin of many	53:10-12	"To give his life a ransom for many"; "my blood... shed for many" (10:45; 14:24)
Exalted and extolled, and very high	52:13	"Received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (16:19)

The Son of God

Mark frames his Gospel with Jesus' divine sonship: "the Son of God" (1:1); the Father's voice at the baptism (1:11) and the transfiguration (9:7); the demons' recognition (3:11; 5:7); Jesus' own confession, "I am" (14:61-62); and the centurion's confession (15:39). He is the Servant who is also the Son.

The Authority of the Servant

Authority Over	Mark	Event
Teaching	1:22	He taught as one that had authority
Unclean spirits	1:27; 5:1-20	The synagogue demoniac; Legion
Disease	1:31, 41; 5:29	Fever, leprosy, haemorrhage
Sin	2:10	"The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins"
The Sabbath	2:28	"Lord also of the sabbath"
Nature	4:39; 6:48	The storm stilled; walking on the sea
Death	5:41-42	"Talitha cumi"
The temple	11:15-17	Cleansing His Father's house

Authority Over	Mark	Event
His own life	10:45; 15:37	He gave His life

The Humanity of the Servant

Mark shows Jesus' true humanity more vividly than any other Gospel: He was hungry (11:12), tired and slept (4:38), felt compassion (1:41; 6:34; 8:2), anger and grief (3:5), amazement (6:6), sighing (7:34; 8:12), indignation (10:14), love (10:21), and deep distress (14:33-34). He is truly God and truly man.

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in Mark

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in Mark
The messenger and the voice in the wilderness	Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3	1:2-4
Seeing but not perceiving	Isaiah 6:9-10	4:12
Lip service with a far-off heart	Isaiah 29:13	7:6-7
The deaf hear and the dumb speak	Isaiah 35:5-6	7:37
"Hosanna... Blessed is he that cometh"	Psalm 118:25-26	11:9-10
A house of prayer for all nations; a den of thieves	Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11	11:17
The rejected stone	Psalm 118:22-23	12:10-11
David's Lord at God's right hand	Psalm 110:1	12:36; 14:62; 16:19
The abomination of desolation	Daniel 9:27; 11:31	13:14
The Son of man coming in the clouds	Daniel 7:13	13:26; 14:62
Betrayed by one who eats with Him	Psalm 41:9	14:18
The smitten Shepherd	Zechariah 13:7	14:27, 50
Spat upon and struck	Isaiah 50:6	14:65; 15:19
Silent before accusers	Isaiah 53:7	14:61; 15:5
Garments divided by lot	Psalm 22:18	15:24
Numbered with the transgressors	Isaiah 53:12	15:27-28
Mocked; heads wagged	Psalm 22:7	15:29
Darkness at noon	Amos 8:9	15:33
"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Psalm 22:1	15:34
Vinegar to drink	Psalm 69:21	15:36
With the rich in His death	Isaiah 53:9	15:43-46

Jesus' Own Prophecies Fulfilled

Jesus' Prophecy	Mark	Fulfillment
He will suffer, be killed and rise after three days	8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34	15:37; 16:6

Jesus' Prophecy	Mark	Fulfillment
He will be delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, scourged, spat on and killed	10:33-34	15:1-37
One of the twelve will betray Him	14:18	14:43-45
All will be offended and scattered	14:27	14:50
Peter will deny Him three times before the cock crows twice	14:30	14:66-72
He will go before them into Galilee	14:28	16:7
The woman's deed will be told worldwide	14:9	Recorded in Scripture
The temple will be destroyed	13:2	AD 70
The gospel will be preached to all nations	13:10	Acts; the church's mission
He will come in the clouds	13:26; 14:62	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Mark 1:35 — Prayer Before Ministry

After a long, demanding day, Jesus rose before dawn to pray alone. If the Son of God needed time alone with the Father, how much more do we? His priorities were set in prayer.

Mark 2:1-12 — Faith That Carries Others

Four friends brought a paralysed man to Jesus, refusing to let obstacles stop them. Jesus saw "their faith" and forgave and healed the man. Bringing others to Christ is an act of faith and love. And the healing proved that Jesus has the authority only God has: to forgive sins.

Mark 4:35-41 — Peace in the Storm

The disciples asked, "Carest thou not that we perish?" while the Lord of creation slept in their boat. He calmed the storm with a word. Christ's presence does not always prevent storms, but He is Lord over them, and those with Him cannot perish.

Mark 5:1-20 — Tell What the Lord Has Done

The man once possessed by a legion of demons became the first missionary to the Decapolis. Every believer has a testimony: "how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Mark 8:22-30 — The Second Touch

The blind man saw partially, then clearly. The disciples, too, saw partly who Jesus was but not yet what He came to do. Spiritual understanding often grows in stages, and Jesus patiently leads His followers to see clearly.

Mark 9:23-24 — "Help Thou Mine Unbelief"

Faith is not the absence of doubt but turning to Christ even with weak faith. The father's honest prayer was answered. Jesus does not reject weak faith that comes to Him.

Mark 10:45 — The Servant Who Gives His Life

This verse summarises Mark's Gospel: Christ came to serve, and His greatest service was His death as a ransom, the price paid to set sinners free, in their place ("for many"). It is also the pattern for every believer: greatness in God's kingdom is measured by service.

Mark 12:41-44 — The Widow's Mites

God sees what we give and what it costs us. The widow's tiny gift was greater than all the large gifts, because she gave everything in faith. God values the heart behind the gift.

Mark 14:32-42 — Gethsemane

"Abba, Father... not what I will, but what thou wilt." In His agony, Jesus showed both full trust in His Father and full submission to His will. He drank the cup of wrath so that we would never have to.

Mark 15:39 — "Truly This Man Was the Son of God"

A hardened Roman soldier, seeing how Jesus died, confessed what the religious leaders refused to see. The cross reveals who Jesus is.

Mark 16:7 — "And Peter"

The risen Lord sent a special message to the disciple who had denied Him. Failure is not final for those Christ calls; He restores (John 21:15-19). Mark, who had once failed himself, would have treasured this truth.

Mark 16:15-20 — Into All the World

The risen Christ commissioned His followers to preach the gospel to every creature. Salvation comes through believing; baptism follows faith; condemnation comes from unbelief. The ascended Lord works with His people as they go.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Mark

1. Jesus Is the Son of God

From the first verse to the centurion's confession (1:1; 15:39).

2. Jesus Is the Servant Who Gives His Life

He came to serve and to give His life a ransom (10:45).

3. Jesus Has All Authority

Over demons, disease, nature, sin, the Sabbath and death (1-5).

4. Jesus Is Truly Human

He felt compassion, anger, grief, weariness and anguish (3:5; 4:38; 14:33-34).

5. The Necessity of the Cross

"The Son of man must suffer" (8:31). The cross was not a defeat but His purpose.

6. Discipleship Means Following the Servant

Deny self, take up the cross, be servant of all (8:34; 9:35; 10:43-44).

7. Faith

Faith in God moves mountains; even weak faith that turns to Christ is answered (5:34, 36; 9:23-24; 11:22-24).

8. The Danger of Hardness of Heart

The leaders, the people of Nazareth and even the disciples showed hard hearts (3:5; 6:6, 52; 8:17).

9. Grace for Failing Disciples

The disciples misunderstood, feared and fled, yet Christ restored them, "and Peter" (16:7).

10. Watchfulness

"What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (13:37).

11. The Gospel to All the World

"Preach the gospel to every creature" (16:15; 13:10).

Part Seven: Connections — How Mark Links to the Rest of the Bible

Mark and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Male and female; one flesh (1:27; 2:24; Mark 10:6-8)
Exodus	God passing by in revealing His glory (33:19-22; Mark 6:48); "I am the God of Abraham" (3:6; Mark 12:26); honour father and mother (20:12; 21:17; Mark 7:10)
Leviticus	Love thy neighbour (19:18; Mark 12:31); leprosy and the priest (13-14; Mark 1:44)
Numbers	Sheep without a shepherd (27:17; Mark 6:34)
Deuteronomy	The Shema and the great commandment (6:4-5; Mark 12:29-30); divorce (24:1; Mark 10:4)
1 Samuel	David and the shewbread in the days of Abiathar (21:1-6; Mark 2:25-26)
1 Kings	The LORD passing by Elijah (19:11)
2 Kings	Elijah's clothing (1:8; Mark 1:6); Elisha feeding a hundred with leftovers (4:42-44)
Psalms	22:1, 7, 18 (Mark 15:24, 29, 34); 41:9 (14:18); 69:21 (15:36); 110:1 (12:36; 14:62; 16:19); 118:22-26 (11:9-10; 12:10-11)
Isaiah	6:9-10 (4:12); 29:13 (7:6); 35:5-6 (7:37); 40:3 (1:3); 42:1 (1:11); 50:6 (14:65); 53 (10:45; 14:61; 15:28); 56:7 (11:17); 66:24 (9:48)
Jeremiah	A den of thieves (7:11; Mark 11:17)
Daniel	The Son of man (7:13; Mark 13:26; 14:62); the abomination (9:27; Mark 13:14); unequalled affliction (12:1; Mark 13:19)
Amos	Darkness at noon (8:9; Mark 15:33)
Zechariah	The smitten Shepherd (13:7; Mark 14:27)
Malachi	The messenger (3:1; Mark 1:2)

Mark and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew and Luke	Most of Mark's material appears in Matthew and Luke, often in the same order
Acts	John Mark's story (12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:36-39); the signs following (2:4; 16:18; 28:3-6); the ascension (1:9-11)
Romans	Rufus, perhaps the son of Simon of Cyrene (16:13); believing and calling on the Lord (10:9-17; Mark 16:15-16)
1 Corinthians	The Lord's Supper (11:23-26; Mark 14:22-25)
Philippians	The Servant who humbled Himself and was exalted (2:5-11; Mark 10:45; 16:19)
Colossians	Mark, Barnabas' cousin (4:10)
2 Timothy	"He is profitable to me for the ministry" (4:11)

Book	Link
Philemon	Mark among Paul's fellow labourers (24)
Hebrews	The torn veil (10:19-20; Mark 15:38); signs confirming the word (2:3-4; Mark 16:20); Christ at God's right hand (1:3)
1 Peter	"Marcus my son" (5:13); Christ's suffering as our example (2:21-24)
Revelation	The Son of man coming with clouds (1:7; Mark 14:62)

Themes That Run from Mark Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Mark	Developed in the New Testament
The Servant	Isaiah 42; 52:13-53:12	10:45	Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 2:21-25
The ransom	Exodus 30:12; Psalm 49:7-8	10:45	1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 1:18-19
The Son of God	Psalm 2:7	1:1, 11; 15:39	John 20:31; Hebrews 1:1-5
Authority over evil spirits	Genesis 3:15	1:27; 3:27; 5:1-20	Colossians 2:15; 1 John 3:8
Restoration of the failing	Psalm 51	14:72; 16:7	John 21:15-19; 2 Timothy 4:11
Watchfulness	Habakkuk 2:1	13:33-37	1 Thessalonians 5:6; Revelation 16:15
The gospel to every creature	Isaiah 49:6	13:10; 16:15	Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:23

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Make time alone with God a priority** (1:35).
- **Keep preaching the gospel central** (1:38).
- **Let compassion move you to touch the untouchable** (1:41).
- **Bring others to Jesus, whatever the obstacles** (2:3-5).
- **Spend time with Jesus before going out for Him** (3:14).
- **Be angry at hardness of heart, but grieve over it** (3:5).
- **Trust God to make His word grow** (4:26-29).
- **Trust Christ in the storm** (4:39-40).
- **Tell others what the Lord has done for you** (5:19).
- **Don't be afraid; only believe** (5:36).
- **Beware of unbelief that limits blessing** (6:5-6).
- **Rest a while with Jesus** (6:31).
- **Hearing the truth is not enough; obey it** (6:20).
- **Guard your heart; it is the source of defilement** (7:21-23).
- **Let Jesus give you the "second touch"** (8:22-25).
- **Don't be ashamed of Christ and His words** (8:38).
- **Pray, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief"** (9:24).
- **Be servant of all** (9:35; 10:43-44).
- **Receive the kingdom like a little child** (10:15).
- **Don't let possessions keep you from following Christ** (10:21-22).
- **Keep crying out to Jesus, even when others discourage you** (10:47-48).
- **Pray in faith and with forgiveness** (11:22-25).
- **Don't be merely "not far from the kingdom"** (12:34).
- **Give sacrificially** (12:41-44).
- **Do what you can for Jesus** (14:8).
- **Submit to the Father's will** (14:36).
- **Watch and pray** (13:37; 14:38).
- **Remember that failure need not be final** (16:7).
- **Preach the gospel to every creature** (16:15).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:15	The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.
1:17	Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.
1:35	And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.
2:17	I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.
4:39	Peace, be still.
5:19	Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee
8:34	Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
8:36	For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
9:24	Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.
10:45	For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
11:22	Have faith in God.
12:30	Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength
14:36	Abba, Father... nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.
15:39	Truly this man was the Son of God.
16:15	Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Conclusion

Mark, the young man who once deserted the mission field and was later called "profitable... for the ministry," wrote down the gospel as Peter preached it. In fast-moving, vivid scenes, he presents Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the Servant who came not to be served but to serve. With authority He taught, cast out demons, healed the sick, forgave sins, calmed the storm, and raised the dead; with compassion He touched lepers, fed the multitudes, took children in His arms, and sighed over the deaf. At the turning point, Peter confessed Him as the Christ, and from then on Jesus walked resolutely ahead of His frightened disciples toward Jerusalem, teaching them that the Son of man must suffer. There, betrayed, deserted, spat upon and crucified, He gave His life a ransom for many, and a Roman centurion confessed, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Three days later the tomb was empty, and the message went out to the disciples, "and Peter." The risen Servant, now seated at God's right hand, sends His people into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature, and works with them as they go.

> *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*
>
> **Mark 10:45**

Luke

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Luke, the beloved physician • Date: c. AD 60-62 • Chapters: 24

> *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
>
> **Luke 19:10**

Part One: Introduction to Luke

The Author

Luke was "the beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14) and a faithful companion of the apostle Paul. In Colossians 4:10-14, Paul lists him separately from his Jewish fellow workers ("who are of the circumcision"), which suggests Luke was a Gentile, the only Gentile writer of the New Testament. He travelled with Paul, as the "we" passages in Acts show (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16), and stayed with him to the end: "Only Luke is with me" (2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24). Luke wrote both this Gospel and the book of Acts, each addressed to "Theophilus" (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). Together they make up more than a quarter of the New Testament.

Luke the Historian

Luke opens with a formal prologue explaining his careful method:

> *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*
>
> **Luke 1:1-4**

He investigated the facts, drew on eyewitnesses, and wrote an orderly account so that his reader might know the certainty of the gospel. He anchors events in world history: the days of Herod king of Judea (1:5), the decree of Caesar Augustus and the governorship of Cyrenius (Quirinius) (2:1-2), and an elaborate dating of John the Baptist's ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, naming Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, Philip, Lysanias, Annas and Caiaphas (3:1-2). Archaeology has repeatedly confirmed Luke's accuracy, for example an inscription naming a Lysanias as tetrarch of Abilene in this period.

Date

Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome around AD 62, without recording his trial or death. Since Luke was written before Acts (Acts 1:1), it was probably completed around AD 60.

Purpose and Theme

Luke wrote to give an orderly, reliable account of Jesus' life, presenting Him as the Son of Man and the Saviour of all people, especially the lost, the poor and the outcast.

> *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
>
> **Luke 19:10**

> *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*
>
> **Luke 2:11**

Distinctive Features

- **The Saviour of all.** Luke traces Jesus' genealogy back to Adam (3:38), not only to Abraham, showing He came for all humanity. Simeon calls Him "a light to lighten the Gentiles" (2:32), and Luke extends the quotation of Isaiah 40 to include "all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (3:6).
- **Concern for outcasts.** Luke gives special attention to women, the poor, Samaritans, tax collectors, sinners, widows and children.
- **Prayer.** Luke shows Jesus praying at every major moment: at His baptism, before choosing the twelve, at the transfiguration, in Gethsemane and on the cross.
- **The Holy Spirit.** Luke mentions the Spirit more than Matthew and Mark combined, preparing for Acts.
- **Joy and praise.** Luke records the songs of Mary, Zacharias, the angels and Simeon, and ends with the disciples "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (24:53).
- **Money and possessions.** Luke has much teaching on wealth, generosity and the danger of riches.
- **Medical detail.** As a physician, Luke notes that Peter's mother-in-law had "a great fever" (4:38), the leper was "full of leprosy" (5:12), and Jesus' sweat was "as it were great drops of blood" (22:44).
- **Unique material.** About half of Luke is not found in the other Gospels, including some of Jesus' best-known parables.

The Songs of Luke

Song	Traditional Name	Singer	Luke
"My soul doth magnify the Lord"	The Magnificat	Mary	1:46-55
"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel"	The Benedictus	Zacharias	1:68-79
"Glory to God in the highest"	The Gloria in Excelsis	The angels	2:14
"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace"	The Nunc Dimittis	Simeon	2:29-32

Material Found Only in Luke

The announcement of John's birth; the annunciation to Mary; Mary's visit to Elisabeth; the four songs; the shepherds; Jesus' presentation in the temple, with Simeon and Anna; the boy Jesus in the temple; John the Baptist's practical teaching (3:10-14); the sermon at Nazareth (4:16-30); the miraculous catch of fish (5:1-11); the widow of Nain's son (7:11-17); the sinful woman at Simon's house (7:36-50); the women who supported Jesus (8:1-3); the sending of the seventy (10:1-24); the Good Samaritan; Martha and Mary; the friend at midnight; the rich fool; the barren fig tree; the woman bowed for eighteen years; the great supper (in this form); counting the cost; the lost coin and the prodigal son; the unjust steward;

the rich man and Lazarus; the ten lepers; the unjust judge; the Pharisee and the publican; Zacchaeus; Jesus weeping over Jerusalem; the sweat like drops of blood; Jesus before Herod; "Father, forgive them"; the penitent thief; "Father, into thy hands"; the walk to Emmaus; and the ascension from Bethany.

Outline of Luke

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Prologue	1:1-4	An orderly account
II. The Birth and Childhood of John and Jesus	1:5-2:52	Promise and fulfilment
III. Preparation for Ministry	3:1-4:13	John, baptism, genealogy, temptation
IV. Ministry in Galilee	4:14-9:50	The Spirit-anointed Saviour
Nazareth and Capernaum	4:14-44	"This day is this scripture fulfilled"
Calling disciples and conflicts	5-6	Fishers of men; the Sermon on the Plain
Compassion and power	7-8	Nain, the sinful woman, mighty works
Revelation to the twelve	9:1-50	"The Christ of God"; the transfiguration
V. The Journey to Jerusalem	9:51-19:27	"He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem"
Discipleship and mission	9:51-11:13	The seventy; the Good Samaritan; prayer
Conflict and warning	11:14-13:35	Hypocrisy, covetousness, repentance
Grace for the lost	14-15	The great supper; three lost things
Wealth, faith and humility	16-18	Lazarus; the lepers; the publican
Seeking the lost	19:1-27	Zacchaeus; the pounds
VI. Ministry in Jerusalem	19:28-21:38	Entry, tears, teaching, prophecy
VII. The Passion and Resurrection	22-24	The Supper, the cross, Emmaus, the ascension

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Events shared with Matthew and Mark are treated more briefly here; see those studies for fuller comment.

Section II: The Birth and Childhood of John and Jesus (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — Two Announcements and Two Songs

Gabriel and Zacharias (1:5-25). Zacharias, a priest "of the course of Abia," and his wife Elisabeth "were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child" (1:5-7). While Zacharias burned incense in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared and announced that Elisabeth would bear a son, John, who would be "great in the sight of the Lord," "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb," and would go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (1:13-17; Malachi 4:5-6). Because Zacharias doubted, he was struck dumb until the promise was fulfilled (1:18-22). Elisabeth conceived and rejoiced that the Lord had taken away her reproach (1:24-25).

Gabriel and Mary (1:26-38). Six months later Gabriel was sent to Nazareth, "To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (1:27). "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (1:28). Mary was troubled, but the angel said:

> *Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*
>
> **Luke 1:30-33**

"How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (1:34).

> *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*
>
> **Luke 1:35**

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (1:37). Mary answered with simple faith and surrender: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (1:38). The virgin birth fulfilled Isaiah 7:14, and ensured that Jesus would be both truly human and the sinless Son of God. "Favoured" means she received God's grace, not that she dispenses it.

Mary visits Elisabeth (1:39-45). When Mary greeted Elisabeth, "the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost," and said, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (1:41-43). Even before birth, John rejoiced at the presence of Jesus, a testimony to the life and

personhood of the unborn.

The Magnificat (1:46-56). Mary's song is full of Old Testament language, especially Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10):

> *My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*
>
> **Luke 1:46-48**

Mary called God "my Saviour": she too was a sinner in need of salvation. She praised God who "hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away" (1:52-53), and who remembered His mercy "As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever" (1:55).

John's birth and the Benedictus (1:57-80). At John's circumcision, the relatives wanted to name him after his father, but Elisabeth said, "he shall be called John," and Zacharias wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened, and he praised God (1:59-64). Filled with the Holy Ghost, he prophesied:

> *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David*
>
> **Luke 1:68-69**

God was keeping His covenant: "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham" (1:72-73; Micah 7:20). To his own son he said, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins" (1:76-77). The coming Messiah is "the dayspring from on high," who would "give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (1:78-79; Malachi 4:2; Isaiah 9:2).

Chapter 2 — The Birth and Childhood of Jesus

The birth (2:1-7). "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed" (2:1). God used the decree of the most powerful man on earth to bring Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem, "because he was of the house and lineage of David," fulfilling Micah 5:2 (2:3-5). (The reference to "Cyrenius" (Quirinius) in 2:2 has been much discussed; Quirinius is known to have held office in Syria, and the verse may refer to an earlier registration under him or be read "before Quirinius was governor.")

> *And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*
>
> **Luke 2:7**

The King of kings was born in humble circumstances and laid in an animal's feeding trough.

The shepherds (2:8-20). The first announcement went not to kings or priests but to shepherds watching their flocks at night, humble working men.

> *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*
>
> **Luke 2:10-11**

He is Saviour, Christ (Messiah) and Lord. The sign was a baby in a manger (2:12). Then a multitude of the heavenly host praised God:

> *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*
>
> **Luke 2:14**

The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem, found the baby, and spread the news, and returned "glorifying and praising God" (2:15-20). "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart" (2:19).

The presentation in the temple (2:21-39). Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day and named Jesus (2:21). At the time of purification, Mary and Joseph brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord as a firstborn son (Exodus 13:2) and to offer "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" (2:22-24), the offering of the poor (Leviticus 12:8).

Simeon, "just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel," had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before seeing the Lord's Christ. He took the baby in his arms and blessed God:

> *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*
>
> **Luke 2:29-32**

To Mary he said, "this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,)" (2:34-35), foreshadowing the cross. Anna, an elderly prophetess and widow who served God with fasting and prayer night and day, gave thanks and "spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (2:36-38).

The boy Jesus in the temple (2:40-52). "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him" (2:40). At twelve, Jesus went with His parents to Jerusalem for the Passover. When they started home, He stayed behind. After three days they found Him in the temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers" (2:46-47). When Mary said, "thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," Jesus answered:

> *How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*
>
> **Luke 2:49**

These first recorded words of Jesus show His awareness of His unique relationship with God the Father. Yet He returned to Nazareth "and was subject unto them" (2:51).

> *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*
>
> **Luke 2:52**

He grew intellectually, physically, spiritually and socially, a real human childhood.

Section III: Preparation for Ministry (Chapters 3:1-4:13)

Chapter 3 — John the Baptist, the Baptism and the Genealogy

Luke dates John's ministry precisely: "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" (about AD 26-29), naming the rulers of the day, when "the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness" (3:1-2). Luke extends the quotation from Isaiah 40:3-5: "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (3:4-6).

John's preaching was practical. When the people asked, "What shall we do then?", he answered: "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none." To tax collectors: "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." To soldiers: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages" (3:10-14). True repentance shows itself in everyday conduct. When people wondered whether John was the Christ, he pointed to One mightier who would baptize "with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (3:15-17). Herod Antipas imprisoned him for rebuking his marriage to Herodias (3:19-20).

At Jesus' baptism, Luke notes that Jesus was "praying" when "the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (3:21-22).

"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli" (3:23). Luke's genealogy differs from Matthew's. Many conservative scholars believe Luke traces Mary's line: Heli was Mary's father, and Joseph is named as his son-in-law, "as was supposed" making clear that Jesus was not Joseph's natural son. Luke's line comes through David's son Nathan (3:31), not Solomon and the cursed line of Jeconiah (Jeremiah 22:30). Luke traces it all the way back to "Adam, which was the son of God" (3:38): Jesus is the Saviour of the whole human race, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45).

Chapter 4:1-13 — The Temptation

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness" (4:1). Luke's order of the temptations (bread, the kingdoms, the temple pinnacle) ends in Jerusalem, the city that is the goal of Luke's Gospel. Jesus answered each with Scripture (see the Matthew study). "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season" (4:13); he would return at the cross (22:3, 53).

Section IV: Ministry in Galilee (Chapters 4:14-9:50)

Chapter 4:14-44 — The Sermon at Nazareth

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (4:14). In the synagogue at Nazareth, He stood up to read and was handed the book of Isaiah:

> *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*
>
> **Luke 4:18-19**

He closed the book, sat down, and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (4:20-21). This was His mission statement. Significantly, He stopped in the middle of Isaiah 61:2, before "and the day of vengeance of our God." His first coming was for grace; the day of vengeance awaits His second coming.

The people marvelled at His "gracious words," but asked, "Is not this Joseph's son?" (4:22). Jesus said, "No prophet is accepted in his own country," and reminded them that Elijah was sent to a Gentile widow in Sarepta and Elisha cleansed only Naaman the Syrian (4:24-27). Hearing that God's grace had gone to Gentiles, they were filled with wrath and tried to throw Him off the cliff, "But he passing through the midst of them went his way" (4:28-30).

At Capernaum He cast out an unclean spirit (4:31-37), rebuked the "great fever" of Simon's mother-in-law (4:38-39), and healed many at sunset (4:40-41). He said, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (4:43).

Chapter 5 — Fishers of Men, Forgiveness and Feasting

By the lake of Gennesaret, Jesus taught from Simon's boat, then told him to let down his nets. Simon replied, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net" (5:5). The catch was so great the nets broke and both boats began to sink (5:6-7).

> *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*
>
> **Luke 5:8**

In the presence of Christ's power, Peter saw his own sinfulness (compare Isaiah 6:5). Jesus said, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." They "forsook all, and followed him" (5:10-11).

Jesus healed a man "full of leprosy" (5:12-14). As His fame spread, "he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (5:16). He forgave and healed a paralysed man let down "through the tiling" (5:17-26). He called Levi, who "left all, rose up, and followed him" and made Him "a great feast in his own house" with many tax collectors (5:27-29). "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (5:32). New wine needs new bottles, though people prefer the old: "The old is better" (5:36-39).

Chapter 6 — Prayer, the Twelve and the Sermon on the Plain

After controversies about the Sabbath (6:1-11), Jesus "went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (6:12). Then He chose the twelve apostles (6:13-16). The most important decisions were made after a night of prayer.

Coming down to "the plain," He healed many and taught His disciples (6:17-19). The Sermon on the Plain parallels much of the Sermon on the Mount, with four blessings and four woes:

Blessed Are Ye	Woe Unto You
Poor: "yours is the kingdom of God" (6:20)	Rich: "ye have received your consolation" (6:24)
That hunger now: "ye shall be filled" (6:21)	That are full: "ye shall hunger" (6:25)
That weep now: "ye shall laugh" (6:21)	That laugh now: "ye shall mourn and weep" (6:25)
When men hate you for the Son of man's sake: "great is your reward in heaven" (6:22-23)	When all men speak well of you: so did their fathers to the false prophets (6:26)

"Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you" (6:27-28). "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (6:31). "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (6:36).

> *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*
>
> **Luke 6:37-38**

"Can the blind lead the blind?" (6:39). A good tree brings forth good fruit; "of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (6:43-45). "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (6:46). The wise builder digs deep and builds on the rock (6:47-49).

Chapter 7 — Compassion for the Outsider

The centurion's servant (7:1-10). The Jewish elders pleaded for a Roman centurion: "he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue." But the centurion himself sent word, "Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof... but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed" (7:4-7). Jesus marvelled: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (7:9).

The widow of Nain (7:11-17). Approaching the town of Nain, Jesus met a funeral procession: "a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow" (7:12). She had lost her husband and now her only means of support.

> *And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier... And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.*
>
> **Luke 7:13-15**

"A great prophet is risen up among us... God hath visited his people" (7:16; compare Elijah, 1 Kings 17:17-24).

John's question (7:18-35). As in Matthew 11, Jesus answered John's question with His works and praised John, but "he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (7:28). The common people and tax collectors "justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves" (7:29-30). "But wisdom is justified of all her children" (7:35).

The sinful woman (7:36-50). At the house of Simon the Pharisee, a woman known in the city as a sinner came with an alabaster box of ointment. Weeping, she washed Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and anointed them (7:37-38). Simon thought, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is" (7:39). Jesus told him a parable of two debtors, one owing five hundred pence and the other fifty; both were forgiven. "Which of them will love him most?" "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most" (7:41-43). Jesus contrasted Simon's cold hospitality with the woman's devotion (7:44-46).

> *Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*
>
> **Luke 7:47**

Her love was not the cause of her forgiveness but the evidence of it, as the parable shows (the one forgiven more loves more). "Thy sins are forgiven... Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (7:48, 50). She was saved by faith; her love flowed from forgiveness. Those who think they need little forgiveness love little.

Chapter 8 — Hearing the Word and Seeing His Power

The women (8:1-3). As Jesus preached from city to city, the twelve were with Him, and also "certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance" (8:2-3). Women were honoured disciples and supported His ministry financially.

The sower and hearing (8:4-21). The good ground represents those "which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (8:15). "Take heed therefore how ye hear" (8:18). Jesus' true family are "these which hear the word of God, and do it" (8:21).

Power over storm, demons, disease and death (8:22-56). He calmed the storm: "Where is your faith?" (8:25). He delivered the Gadarene demoniac named Legion, then sent him home: "Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee" (8:26-39). Luke the physician notes that the woman with the issue of blood "had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any"

(8:43). Jesus said, "Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me" (8:46). To Jairus, whose only daughter had died, He said, "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole," and took her by the hand: "Maid, arise" (8:49-55).

Chapter 9:1-50 — The Christ of God

Jesus sent out the twelve to preach and heal (9:1-6). Herod was perplexed about Him (9:7-9). He fed five thousand (9:10-17). Then, "as he was alone praying," He asked the disciples, "Whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God" (9:18-20). He foretold His suffering and resurrection (9:22) and taught: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (9:23). Luke alone adds "daily": discipleship is a daily surrender.

"As he prayed," He was transfigured (9:29). Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (9:31). The word "decease" is literally "exodus": His death would be a new exodus, delivering His people from bondage. The Father said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him" (9:35). He healed a demon-possessed boy (9:37-43), again foretold His betrayal (9:44), and taught that "he that is least among you all, the same shall be great" (9:48).

Section V: The Journey to Jerusalem (Chapters 9:51-19:27)

This long central section, much of it found only in Luke, describes Jesus' journey toward the cross and contains many of His best-loved parables.

Chapter 9:51-62 — Setting His Face

> *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem*
>
> **Luke 9:51**

With full knowledge of what awaited Him, Jesus resolutely headed for the cross (Isaiah 50:7). A Samaritan village refused to receive Him. James and John asked, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" Jesus rebuked them: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (9:52-56). To would-be followers He spoke of the cost: "Foxes have holes... but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (9:58); "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (9:60); "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (9:62).

Chapter 10 — The Seventy, the Samaritan, and Martha and Mary

The seventy (10:1-24). Jesus sent out seventy others, two by two, ahead of Him: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest" (10:2). "Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves" (10:3). "The labourer is worthy of his hire" (10:7), a verse Paul later quotes as Scripture (1 Timothy 5:18). "He that heareth you heareth me" (10:16). They returned with joy: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven... Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (10:17-20). Salvation is a greater

cause for joy than power. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit" and thanked the Father for revealing these things to babes (10:21).

The Good Samaritan (10:25-37). A lawyer asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus asked what the law said; the lawyer quoted the commands to love God and neighbour. "This do, and thou shalt live." But, "willing to justify himself," he asked, "And who is my neighbour?" (10:25-29). Jesus told of a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell among thieves, was stripped, wounded and left half dead. A priest and a Levite saw him and "passed by on the other side."

> *But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*
>
> **Luke 10:33-34**

He paid the innkeeper and promised, "whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee" (10:35). "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (10:36-37). Jews despised Samaritans; Jesus made a Samaritan the hero. The question is not "Who is my neighbour?" but "Am I a neighbour to anyone in need?" Christians have also long seen in the Samaritan a picture of Christ, who found us wounded and dying, had compassion, bound our wounds, paid the price, and promised to return. (Compare 2 Chronicles 28:15, where Samaritans showed similar mercy.)

Martha and Mary (10:38-42). In Bethany, Martha welcomed Jesus and was "cumbered about much serving," while her sister Mary "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." Martha complained, but Jesus answered:

> *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*
>
> **Luke 10:41-42**

Service is good, but sitting at Jesus' feet to hear His word comes first. Busyness for Christ must not replace time with Christ.

Chapter 11 — Prayer and Warnings

"Lord, teach us to pray" (11:1). Jesus gave a shorter form of the Lord's Prayer (11:2-4). Then He told of a man who went to his friend at midnight to borrow bread; "because of his importunity" (persistence) the friend got up and gave him what he needed (11:5-8). "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (11:9).

> *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*
>
> **Luke 11:13**

When accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub, Jesus said He did it "with the finger of God" (11:20; compare Exodus 8:19), the stronger man overcoming the strong man (11:21-22). When a woman called His mother blessed, He said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (11:27-28). He gave the sign of Jonah (11:29-32), and taught that the eye is the light of the body (11:33-36). At a Pharisee's dinner He pronounced woes on the Pharisees, who tithed herbs but passed over "judgment and the love of God" (11:42), and on the lawyers, who "have taken away the key of knowledge" (11:52).

Chapter 12 — Hypocrisy, Covetousness and Readiness

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed" (12:1-2). "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell" (12:5). God cares for sparrows; "the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (12:6-7).

The rich fool (12:13-21). Asked to settle an inheritance dispute, Jesus said:

> *Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*
>
> **Luke 12:15**

A rich farmer planned to build bigger barns and say to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (12:19-20). "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (12:21).

Trust instead of worry (12:22-34). "Consider the ravens... Consider the lilies" (12:24-27). "Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (12:31-32). "Provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not" (12:33).

Readiness (12:35-59). "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning" (12:35). Blessed are the servants whom the master finds watching (12:37). The faithful steward will be rewarded; the unfaithful punished, each according to his knowledge: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (12:47-48). "I am come to send fire on the earth... But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (12:49-50). He would bring division even in households (12:51-53). They could read the weather but not the times (12:54-56).

Chapter 13 — Repent or Perish

Some reported that Pilate had killed Galileans while they offered sacrifices. Jesus asked whether those victims, or the eighteen killed when the tower of Siloam fell, were worse sinners than others. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (13:1-5). Tragedies are not a measure of someone's guilt, but a warning to all.

The barren fig tree (13:6-9). A fig tree had borne no fruit for three years. The owner said to cut it down; the vinedresser asked for one more year to dig around it and fertilise it: "if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." God is patient, but His patience has an end.

The bowed woman (13:10-17). On the Sabbath, Jesus healed a woman "which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself": "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity" (13:11-12). When the synagogue ruler objected, Jesus said, "ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (13:16).

The narrow door (13:18-35). After the parables of the mustard seed and leaven (13:18-21), someone asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Jesus answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (13:23-24). Once the master shuts the door, some will knock and claim acquaintance, but He will say, "I know you not whence ye are" (13:25-27). People will come from east, west, north and south to sit in God's kingdom (13:29). Warned that Herod wanted to kill Him, Jesus called Herod "that fox" and said, "it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (13:31-33). He lamented over Jerusalem (13:34-35).

Chapter 14 — Humility, the Great Supper and the Cost

At a Pharisee's house on the Sabbath, Jesus healed a man with dropsy (14:1-6). Noticing guests choosing the best seats, He taught humility: take the lowest seat, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (14:11). He told His host to invite "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," who cannot repay: "thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (14:13-14).

The great supper (14:15-24). A man made a great supper and invited many, but they all made excuses: a piece of ground, five yoke of oxen, a new wife (14:18-20). The master sent his servant: "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind" (14:21). When there was still room: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (14:23). God's invitation goes first to Israel, then to the outcasts, then to the Gentiles. "Compel" means urgent persuasion, not force.

Counting the cost (14:25-35). To the great crowds following Him: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (14:26). "Hate" here means to love less by comparison (compare Matthew 10:37); love for Christ must come first. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (14:27). A builder counts the cost before building a tower; a king considers whether he can win a war (14:28-32). "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (14:33).

Chapter 15 — The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (15:1-2). In response Jesus told three parables of lost things found:

- **The lost sheep (15:3-7):** a shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to find the one that is lost, carries it home on his shoulders rejoicing, and calls his friends to rejoice: "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."
- **The lost coin (15:8-10):** a woman lights a candle, sweeps the house and searches diligently until she finds her lost silver coin: "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

- **The lost son (15:11-32):** the greatest of the parables.

A younger son demanded his share of the inheritance, went to a far country and "wasted his substance with riotous living" (15:12-13). When famine came, he was reduced to feeding pigs and longing to eat their food (15:14-16).

> *And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.*
>
> **Luke 15:17-19**

"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (15:20). The father had been watching. He interrupted the son's confession and called for the best robe, a ring, shoes, and the fatted calf: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (15:22-24). This is God's welcome to the repentant sinner: full forgiveness, restored sonship and joyful celebration.

But the elder brother, returning from the field, was angry and refused to go in. He complained, "these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid... But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf" (15:28-30). The father pleaded with him, too: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (15:31-32). The elder brother represents the Pharisees, outwardly obedient but without love for the father or the brother. The story ends without telling us whether he went in; the question is left for the Pharisees, and for every self-righteous reader.

Chapter 16 — The Unjust Steward and the Rich Man and Lazarus

The unjust steward (16:1-13). A steward about to be dismissed for wasting his master's goods reduced the debts of his master's debtors, so they would welcome him later. "The lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely": not for his dishonesty but for his shrewd foresight. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (16:8). Believers should use earthly wealth wisely for eternal purposes: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (16:9). "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (16:10). "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (16:13). The covetous Pharisees mocked Him, but He said, "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (16:14-15).

The rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31). "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores" (16:19-20). The dogs licked his sores. Both died. Lazarus "was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom," the place of comfort; the rich man was buried, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments" (16:22-23).

> *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.*
>
> **Luke 16:24**

Abraham replied that the rich man had received good things in life, and that "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (16:25-26). The rich man begged that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brothers. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them... If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (16:29-31).

Because a named person appears, many believe Jesus described an actual case rather than a parable. Either way, it teaches that the soul exists consciously after death; that there is immediate comfort for the righteous and torment for the lost; that destinies are fixed at death with no second chance; that hell is real; and that Scripture is sufficient to lead people to repentance. Even a resurrection does not convince those who reject God's Word, as the leaders' response to Jesus' own resurrection (and to the raising of another Lazarus, John 11-12) would show.

Chapter 17 — Forgiveness, Faith and Gratitude

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day... thou shalt forgive him" (17:3-4). "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith" (17:5). Even faith like a mustard seed can uproot a sycamine tree (17:6). Servants do not expect thanks for doing their duty: "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (17:10).

The ten lepers (17:11-19). On the border of Samaria and Galilee, ten lepers cried, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." He told them to show themselves to the priests, "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (17:12-14). One, seeing he was healed, turned back, glorified God with a loud voice, and fell at Jesus' feet giving thanks, "and he was a Samaritan" (17:15-16).

> *And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*
>
> **Luke 17:17-18**

"Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (17:19). Gratitude is rare, and the outsider often shows it best.

The coming of the kingdom (17:20-37). "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (17:20-21): it was already present among them in the person of the King. His future coming will be sudden, like lightning (17:24), like the days of Noah and of Lot, when people went about their business until judgment fell (17:26-30). "Remember Lot's wife" (17:32), who looked back. "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it" (17:33). One will be taken and the other left (17:34-36).

Chapter 18 — Persistent Prayer and Humble Faith

The unjust judge (18:1-8). "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (18:1). A widow kept coming to an unjust judge until he granted her justice just to be rid of her. If even he responded, "shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him...? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (18:7-8).

The Pharisee and the publican (18:9-14). Jesus told this parable "unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (18:9). Two men went up to the temple to pray.

> *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*
>
> **Luke 18:11-13**

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (18:14). The Pharisee trusted his own works; the publican trusted God's mercy alone. The word "merciful" here means "be propitiated," that is, "let your wrath be turned away by sacrifice." Justification, being declared righteous by God, comes not by works but by humble faith in God's mercy (Romans 3:24-28; 4:5).

Children, a rich ruler and the cross (18:15-34). "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (18:17). A rich ruler went away sorrowful when told to sell all and follow Jesus (18:18-23). "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (18:27). Jesus told the twelve plainly that "all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished" in Jerusalem, including His mocking, scourging, death and resurrection, "And they understood none of these things" (18:31-34).

The blind man near Jericho (18:35-43). A blind beggar cried, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me," and would not be silenced. "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God" (18:42-43).

Chapter 19:1-27 — Zacchaeus and the Pounds

Zacchaeus (19:1-10). In Jericho lived Zacchaeus, "the chief among the publicans, and he was rich" (19:2). He wanted to see Jesus but was too short to see over the crowd, so he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree (19:3-4).

> *And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.*
>
> **Luke 19:5**

Jesus knew his name and invited Himself to the home of the most hated man in town. Zacchaeus "received him joyfully," while the crowd murmured that Jesus had gone "to be guest with a man that is a sinner" (19:6-7). The change in Zacchaeus was immediate and practical: "Behold, Lord, the half of my

goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (19:8), going far beyond what the law required (Leviticus 6:5; compare Exodus 22:1).

> *This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
>
> **Luke 19:9-10**

This is the key verse of Luke. Zacchaeus' generosity did not earn salvation; it showed that salvation had come.

The pounds (19:11-27). Because some thought the kingdom would appear immediately, Jesus told of a nobleman who went to a far country to receive a kingdom and return. He gave each of ten servants a pound, saying, "Occupy till I come" (19:13). His citizens hated him and said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (19:14). On his return he rewarded the faithful servants with authority over cities, took the pound from the servant who had hidden it, and judged his enemies (19:15-27). Christ has gone to heaven and will return as King; meanwhile His servants must be faithful with what He has entrusted.

Section VI: Ministry in Jerusalem (Chapters 19:28-21:38)

Chapter 19:28-48 — The King Weeps over the City

As Jesus rode down the Mount of Olives on a colt, "the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest" (19:37-38). When the Pharisees told Him to rebuke His disciples, He said, "if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (19:39-40; compare Habakkuk 2:11).

Then, seeing the city, He wept over it:

> *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*
>
> **Luke 19:42-44**

This was fulfilled in AD 70, when the Roman armies built siege works around Jerusalem and destroyed it. The King wept even as He pronounced judgment. He cleansed the temple (19:45-46) and "taught daily in the temple," while the leaders sought to destroy Him, "for all the people were very attentive to hear him" (19:47-48).

Chapter 20 — Questions and Answers

As in Matthew and Mark, Jesus answered the challenge to His authority (20:1-8), told the parable of the wicked husbandmen (20:9-19), answered the question about tribute to Caesar (20:20-26), and refuted the Sadducees. Luke adds that the resurrected "are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection," and that God is the God of the living, "for all live unto him" (20:36-38). Jesus asked how the Christ can be David's son when David calls Him Lord (20:41-44), and warned against the scribes (20:45-47).

Chapter 21 — The Widow, Jerusalem and the End

The poor widow's two mites were more than all the gifts of the rich (21:1-4). Luke's version of the Olivet Discourse contains specific detail about the fall of Jerusalem:

> *And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains... And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*
>
> **Luke 21:20-24**

Christians in Jerusalem heeded this warning in AD 66-70 and fled before the city fell. The Jewish people were scattered among the nations, and Jerusalem was under Gentile control for most of the following centuries. "The times of the Gentiles" will be fulfilled when Christ returns. Then "there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations... Men's hearts failing them for fear... And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (21:25-27).

> *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*
>
> **Luke 21:28**

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (21:33). "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (21:34). "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (21:36).

Section VII: The Passion and Resurrection (Chapters 22-24)

Chapter 22 — The Supper, Gethsemane and the Trial

"Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot" (22:3), and he agreed to betray Jesus (22:4-6). Jesus sent Peter and John to prepare the Passover (22:8-13).

The Last Supper (22:14-38). "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (22:15).

> *And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*
>
> **Luke 22:19-20**

Luke's wording closely matches Paul's account (1 Corinthians 11:23-26); both include "this do in remembrance of me," the basis of the Lord's Supper as a memorial ordinance. Even at the table, the disciples argued about who was greatest. Jesus said, "I am among you as he that serveth" (22:24-27), and promised them a kingdom and thrones (22:28-30). Then He spoke to Peter:

> *Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*
>
> **Luke 22:31-32**

Jesus knew Peter would fall, prayed for him in advance, and already planned his restoration and future ministry. Peter's courage would fail, but his faith would not. Jesus foretold Peter's denial (22:33-34), and quoted Isaiah 53:12: "And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end" (22:37).

Gethsemane (22:39-46). "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (22:40).

> *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*
>
> **Luke 22:42-44**

Luke the physician records the angel and the bloody sweat, a rare condition (hematidrosis) associated with extreme anguish. The disciples were "sleeping for sorrow" (22:45).

The arrest (22:47-53). "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (22:48). When a disciple cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus said, "Suffer ye thus far," and touched his ear and healed him (22:50-51), His last healing miracle before the cross, performed on an enemy. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (22:53).

Peter's denial (22:54-62). After the third denial, while Peter was still speaking, the cock crew. "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord... And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (22:60-62). Only Luke records that look.

Before the council (22:63-71). The guards mocked, blindfolded and struck Him (22:63-65). The council asked, "Art thou the Christ?" He said, "Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God." "Art thou then the Son of God?" "Ye say that I am" (22:67-70), a Greek idiom meaning "Yes, I am."

Chapter 23 — The Crucifixion

Before Pilate and Herod (23:1-25). The leaders accused Jesus falsely: "perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King" (23:2); He had in fact said the opposite about tribute (20:25). Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man" (23:4). Learning Jesus was from Galilee, Pilate sent Him to Herod Antipas, who was in Jerusalem (23:6-7). Herod hoped to see a miracle, but Jesus answered him nothing; Herod and his soldiers mocked Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back. "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together" (23:8-12). Three times Pilate declared Jesus innocent (23:4, 14-15, 22), but the crowd cried, "Crucify him, crucify him" (23:21), and Pilate released Barabbas and "delivered Jesus to their will" (23:25).

On the way to the cross (23:26-32). Simon of Cyrene carried the cross "after Jesus" (23:26), a picture of discipleship. Women followed, weeping. Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children," warning of the coming destruction: "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (23:28-31). If the innocent One suffered so, how much more the guilty nation.

The crucifixion (23:33-49). "And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left" (23:33).

> *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*
>
> **Luke 23:34**

His first word from the cross was a prayer for His executioners (Isaiah 53:12). The rulers, soldiers and one of the criminals mocked Him: "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" (23:35-39). The superscription was written "in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (23:38). But the other criminal rebuked him:

> *Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*
>
> **Luke 23:40-43**

The dying thief feared God, confessed his own sin, declared Jesus innocent, called Him Lord, and believed He would have a kingdom. He could do no good works, attend no church and receive no baptism, yet Jesus promised that he would be with Him in paradise that very day. Salvation is by grace through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9), and at death the believer's spirit goes immediately to be with Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23).

Darkness covered the land from the sixth to the ninth hour, "And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst" (23:44-45).

> *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.*
>
> **Luke 23:46**

He died with the words of Psalm 31:5, committing Himself to His Father in trust. The centurion "glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man" (23:47). The people who had watched "smote their breasts, and returned" (23:48).

The burial (23:50-56). Joseph of Arimathea, "a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;)," who "waited for the kingdom of God," buried Jesus in a new rock-hewn tomb (23:50-53). The women from Galilee saw where He was laid, prepared spices, "and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (23:55-56).

Chapter 24 — The Risen Lord

The empty tomb (24:1-12). Early on the first day of the week, the women came with spices and found the stone rolled away and the body gone (24:1-3). Two men in shining garments said:

> *Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.*
>
> **Luke 24:5-7**

Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and other women told the apostles, "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (24:10-11). The disciples did not expect a resurrection; they had to be convinced. Peter ran to the tomb and saw the linen clothes lying by themselves (24:12).

The road to Emmaus (24:13-35). That afternoon two disciples, one named Cleopas, were walking to Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, discussing everything that had happened. Jesus drew near and walked with them, "But their eyes were holden that they should not know him" (24:15-16). They told Him of their crushed hopes: "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel" (24:21). He answered:

> *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*
>
> **Luke 24:25-27**

The whole Old Testament speaks of Christ, His suffering and His glory. At Emmaus they urged Him, "Abide with us: for it is toward evening" (24:29). At the table "he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight" (24:30-31).

> *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*
>
> **Luke 24:32**

They hurried back to Jerusalem and found the eleven saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (24:33-34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).

Appearance to the disciples (24:36-49). As they spoke, Jesus stood among them: "Peace be unto you." They were terrified, thinking they saw a spirit (24:36-37).

> *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.*
>
> **Luke 24:39**

He ate broiled fish and honeycomb before them (24:42-43). His resurrection was bodily, not merely spiritual. Then He explained the Scriptures:

> *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures*
>
> **Luke 24:44-45**

The three divisions of the Hebrew Bible (Law, Prophets and Writings, here represented by the Psalms) all speak of Him. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" (24:46-48). "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (24:49), fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4).

The ascension (24:50-53). "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven" (24:50-51). His last action on earth was blessing His people. "And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen" (24:52-53). The Gospel that began in the temple with Zacharias' priestly service (1:8-9) ends in the temple with joyful worship of the risen and ascended Lord.

Part Three: Christ in Luke

Titles of Christ in Luke

Title	Key References	Meaning
Jesus	1:31; 2:21	"The LORD is salvation"
The Son of the Highest; the Son of God	1:32, 35; 3:22; 22:70	His divine nature, conceived by the Holy Ghost
Saviour	1:47 (of God); 2:11	He came to save
Christ the Lord	2:11	Messiah and divine Lord
Son of David; heir to David's throne	1:32-33; 18:38	The promised King
Son of Adam, Son of God	3:38	Representative of the whole human race; the last Adam
The Son of man	5:24; 9:22; 19:10; 22:69	The Saviour who seeks the lost, suffers and will come in glory
The dayspring from on high	1:78	The dawning light of salvation
A light to lighten the Gentiles	2:32	Salvation for all nations
The Christ of God	9:20	God's Anointed
A great prophet	7:16; 24:19	The prophet like Moses who accomplishes a new exodus (9:31; Acts 3:22)
The King that cometh in the name of the Lord	19:38	The King of peace
The Righteous One	23:47	The innocent, just Man

The Praying Saviour

Luke shows Jesus' human dependence on His Father through prayer:

Occasion	Luke
At His baptism	3:21
Withdrawing to the wilderness to pray	5:16
All night before choosing the twelve	6:12
Before Peter's confession	9:18
At the transfiguration	9:28-29
Rejoicing and thanking the Father	10:21
Teaching His disciples to pray	11:1
Praying for Peter	22:32
In Gethsemane	22:41-44
For His executioners	23:34

Occasion	Luke
Committing His spirit to the Father	23:46
Blessing bread at Emmaus	24:30

The Saviour of the Outcast

Group	Examples in Luke
Women	Elisabeth, Mary, Anna (1-2); the widow of Nain (7:11-17); the sinful woman (7:36-50); the women who supported Jesus (8:1-3); Martha and Mary (10:38-42); the bowed woman (13:10-17); the widow's mites (21:1-4); the daughters of Jerusalem (23:27-31); the women at the tomb (24:1-10)
The poor	The shepherds (2:8-20); "the gospel to the poor" (4:18); "Blessed be ye poor" (6:20); Lazarus (16:19-31); invite the poor (14:13, 21)
Samaritans	The Samaritan village (9:52-56); the Good Samaritan (10:30-37); the grateful leper (17:16)
Tax collectors and sinners	Levi (5:27-32); the publican (18:9-14); Zacchaeus (19:1-10); "this man receiveth sinners" (15:2)
Gentiles	"A light to lighten the Gentiles" (2:32); the widow of Sarepta and Naaman (4:25-27); the centurion (7:1-10); "all nations" (24:47)
Children	John leaping in the womb (1:41); the boy Jesus (2:40-52); "Suffer little children" (18:15-17)
The dying	The penitent thief (23:39-43)

The Parables Found Only in Luke

Parable	Luke	Lesson
The two debtors	7:41-43	The forgiven much love much
The Good Samaritan	10:30-37	Be a neighbour to anyone in need
The friend at midnight	11:5-8	Persistence in prayer
The rich fool	12:16-21	Be rich toward God, not in possessions
The barren fig tree	13:6-9	God's patience has a limit
The great supper (Luke's form)	14:16-24	God's invitation to the outcast
The tower and the king	14:28-33	Count the cost of discipleship
The lost coin	15:8-10	Heaven's joy over one repentant sinner
The prodigal son	15:11-32	The Father's welcome; the elder brother's resentment
The unjust steward	16:1-13	Use earthly wealth for eternal purposes
The rich man and Lazarus	16:19-31	Eternal destinies are fixed; Scripture is sufficient

Parable	Luke	Lesson
The unprofitable servants	17:7-10	Service is our duty, not grounds for boasting
The unjust judge	18:1-8	Always pray and do not faint
The Pharisee and the publican	18:9-14	Justification by humble faith, not self-righteousness
The pounds	19:11-27	Faithful service until the King returns

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in Luke

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in Luke
The forerunner in the spirit of Elijah	Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6	1:17, 76; 7:27
The virgin's son	Isaiah 7:14	1:27, 31, 34-35
The eternal throne of David	2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 9:7	1:32-33
The mercy promised to Abraham	Genesis 12:3; 22:16-18	1:54-55, 72-73
Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	2:4-7
The dayspring and light to those in darkness	Isaiah 9:2; Malachi 4:2	1:78-79
A light to the Gentiles	Isaiah 42:6; 49:6	2:32
The voice in the wilderness; all flesh seeing God's salvation	Isaiah 40:3-5	3:4-6
The Spirit-anointed preacher to the poor	Isaiah 61:1-2	4:18-21
The King on a colt	Zechariah 9:9	19:35-38
"Blessed is he that cometh"	Psalm 118:26	19:38
A house of prayer; a den of thieves	Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11	19:46
The rejected stone	Psalm 118:22	20:17
David's Lord	Psalm 110:1	20:42-43; 22:69
The Son of man in the cloud	Daniel 7:13	21:27
Numbered with the transgressors; interceding for them	Isaiah 53:12	22:37; 23:33-34
Garments divided by lot	Psalm 22:18	23:34
Mocked by onlookers	Psalm 22:7-8	23:35
Vinegar offered	Psalm 69:21	23:36
Darkness at noon	Amos 8:9	23:44-45
"Into thine hand I commit my spirit"	Psalm 31:5	23:46
Buried with the rich	Isaiah 53:9	23:50-53
Raised on the third day	Psalm 16:10; Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17	24:6-7, 46

Jesus' Own Prophecies Fulfilled

Jesus' Prophecy	Luke	Fulfillment
His suffering, death and resurrection	9:22, 44; 18:31-33	22-24
Peter's denial before the cock crows	22:34	22:54-62
Peter's restoration and strengthening of the brethren	22:32	John 21; Acts 1-12
Jerusalem besieged, levelled and its people scattered	19:43-44; 21:20-24; 23:28-31	AD 70
Jerusalem trodden down until the times of the Gentiles	21:24	Fulfilled over the following centuries; completed at Christ's return
Repentance and remission preached to all nations from Jerusalem	24:47	Acts 2-28
Power from on high	24:49	Pentecost (Acts 2)
His return in glory	21:27	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Luke 1:26-38 — The Annunciation

The angel announced a miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit, the eternal reign of David's Son, and a child who would be "the Son of God." Mary responded with humble faith: "Be it unto me according to thy word." She is a model of submission to God's will, and she herself rejoiced in "God my Saviour."

Luke 2:8-14 — Good Tidings of Great Joy

The news of the Saviour came first to shepherds. It is good news, it brings great joy, it is for all people, and it centres on a Person: a Saviour, Christ the Lord. Heaven responds with glory to God and peace to men.

Luke 2:49-52 — The Boy Jesus

At twelve, Jesus was conscious of His unique relationship with His Father, yet He submitted to His earthly parents and grew in every way. He sanctified ordinary human life.

Luke 4:16-21 — The Mission Statement

Jesus declared that He fulfilled Isaiah 61: anointed by the Spirit to bring good news to the poor, healing to the brokenhearted, freedom to captives, sight to the blind, and liberty to the oppressed. He stopped before "the day of vengeance," which awaits His return.

Luke 10:25-37 — The Good Samaritan

Love for one's neighbour crosses every barrier of race, religion and prejudice. The religious professionals passed by; the despised outsider showed mercy. "Go, and do thou likewise."

Luke 10:38-42 — The One Thing Needful

Even good service can crowd out what matters most: sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing His word.

Luke 15 — Lost and Found

Three parables reveal God's heart: He seeks the lost, rejoices when they are found, and welcomes repentant sinners with lavish grace. They also expose the self-righteous who resent that grace.

Luke 16:19-31 — The Rich Man and Lazarus

This passage lifts the veil on life after death: conscious existence, comfort for the righteous, torment for the lost, a fixed gulf, and the sufficiency of Scripture for salvation.

Luke 18:9-14 — Justified by Mercy

The proud Pharisee trusted his own righteousness; the humble publican cast himself on God's mercy, and went home justified. Salvation comes to those who confess their need, not to those who parade their merits.

Luke 19:1-10 — Seeking and Saving the Lost

Jesus sought out Zacchaeus, called him by name, and brought salvation to his house. True conversion produced immediate generosity and restitution. This is why Christ came.

Luke 22:31-32 — Christ's Prayer for Peter

Jesus knew Peter would fail, prayed that his faith would not fail, and planned for his restoration and ministry. Christ intercedes for His people still (Hebrews 7:25).

Luke 23:34, 39-46 — Words from the Cross

"Father, forgive them"; "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"; "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." These three sayings, found only in Luke, reveal Christ's forgiving love, His saving power to the last moment, and His perfect trust in the Father.

Luke 24:13-35 — The Road to Emmaus

The risen Christ explained Himself from all the Scriptures, and the disciples' hearts burned. He is the key to understanding the whole Bible, and He makes Himself known to those who welcome Him.

Luke 24:44-53 — The Scriptures, the Commission and the Ascension

Christ is the theme of the whole Old Testament. His suffering and resurrection are the basis for preaching repentance and forgiveness in His name to all nations, in the power of the Spirit. He ascended blessing His people, who returned with joy.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Luke

1. Jesus Is the Saviour of All

He came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (19:10), for all people, Jew and Gentile (2:10, 32; 3:6, 38; 24:47).

2. The Virgin Birth and Incarnation

Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, truly God and truly man (1:35; 2:52).

3. God's Grace to Outcasts and Sinners

He receives sinners, eats with them, and rejoices over their repentance (5:32; 15; 19:1-10).

4. Justification by Faith

The publican and the penitent thief were saved by faith in God's mercy, not by works (18:9-14; 23:39-43; 7:50).

5. Prayer

Jesus prayed constantly and taught His disciples to pray persistently and humbly (11:1-13; 18:1-14).

6. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit filled John, Elisabeth, Zacharias and Simeon, came upon Mary, anointed Jesus, and was promised to all who ask and to the disciples for their mission (1:15, 35, 41, 67; 2:25-27; 4:1, 18; 11:13; 24:49).

7. The Danger of Riches and the Call to Generosity

Wealth can blind people to God and to others (12:13-21; 16:19-31; 18:22-25); true faith gives generously (19:8; 21:1-4).

8. The Cost of Discipleship

Following Christ means daily cross-bearing, putting Him first, and counting the cost (9:23, 57-62; 14:25-33).

9. Joy and Praise

The gospel brings great joy, and heaven rejoices over every repentant sinner (2:10; 15:7, 10; 24:52-53).

10. Life After Death and Judgment

Conscious existence after death; heaven and hell; a final judgment (16:19-31; 23:43; 12:4-5).

11. The Fulfillment of Scripture

All the Scriptures speak of Christ and are fulfilled in Him (4:21; 24:25-27, 44-47).

12. The Resurrection and the Mission

Christ rose bodily, and His witnesses must preach repentance and forgiveness in His name to all nations (24:39-49).

Part Seven: Connections — How Luke Links to the Rest of the Bible

Luke and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Adam, son of God (Luke 3:38); the promise to Abraham (12:3; 22:16-18; Luke 1:55, 73); Sodom and Lot's wife (19; Luke 17:28-32); Noah (6-7; Luke 17:26-27)
Exodus	The firstborn presented to the LORD (13:2; Luke 2:23); the finger of God (8:19; Luke 11:20); the exodus (Luke 9:31)
Leviticus	Purification after childbirth; the poor man's offering (12:6-8; Luke 2:22-24); love thy neighbour (19:18; Luke 10:27); restitution (6:5; Luke 19:8)
Numbers	Showing oneself to the priest (Leviticus 13-14; Luke 5:14; 17:14)
Deuteronomy	The answers to Satan (8:3; 6:13, 16; Luke 4:4, 8, 12); the great commandment (6:5; Luke 10:27)
1 Samuel	Hannah's song (2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55); Samuel's growth in favour with God and men (2:26; Luke 2:52)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David (7:12-16; Luke 1:32-33)
1 Kings	Elijah and the widow of Sarepta; her son raised (17; Luke 4:25-26; 7:11-16)
2 Kings	Elijah calling down fire (1:10-12; Luke 9:54); Naaman (5; Luke 4:27)
2 Chronicles	The courses of the priests (24:10; Luke 1:5); Samaritans showing mercy (28:15; Luke 10:33-34)
Psalms	22 (Luke 23:34-35); 31:5 (23:46); 69:21 (23:36); 91:11-12 (4:10-11); 110:1 (20:42-43); 118:22-26 (19:38; 20:17)
Isaiah	7:14 (1:31); 9:2 (1:79); 40:3-5 (3:4-6); 42:6; 49:6 (2:32); 53:12 (22:37); 56:7 (19:46); 61:1-2 (4:18-19)
Jeremiah	A den of robbers (7:11; Luke 19:46)
Daniel	The Son of man (7:13; Luke 21:27; 22:69); Gabriel (8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26)
Hosea	"They shall say to the mountains, Cover us" (10:8; Luke 23:30)
Micah	Bethlehem (5:2; Luke 2:4); the mercy promised to the fathers (7:20; Luke 1:72-73)
Zechariah	The King on a colt (9:9; Luke 19:35)
Malachi	The forerunner turning hearts (4:5-6; Luke 1:17); the dayspring (4:2; Luke 1:78)

Luke and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew and Mark	Parallel accounts; Matthew's genealogy through Joseph and Solomon, Luke's through Nathan
John	The raising of a Lazarus and the leaders' refusal to believe (John 11-12; Luke 16:31); Peter's restoration (John 21; Luke 22:32)

Book	Link
Acts	Luke's second volume to Theophilus; the promise of the Father fulfilled (Acts 1-2; Luke 24:49); the ascension (Acts 1:9-11); the gospel to all nations beginning at Jerusalem (Acts 1:8)
Romans	Justification of the ungodly by faith (4:5; Luke 18:14)
1 Corinthians	The Lord's Supper in nearly identical words (11:23-26; Luke 22:19-20); the risen Christ appeared to Peter (15:5; Luke 24:34); the last Adam (15:45; Luke 3:38)
2 Corinthians	Absent from the body, present with the Lord (5:8; Luke 23:43)
Colossians	"Luke, the beloved physician" (4:14)
1 Timothy	"The labourer is worthy of his reward," quoted as Scripture alongside Deuteronomy (5:18; Luke 10:7)
2 Timothy	"Only Luke is with me" (4:11)
Philemon	Luke among Paul's fellow labourers (24)
Hebrews	Christ's prayers "with strong crying and tears" (5:7; Luke 22:44); His intercession (7:25; Luke 22:32)

Themes That Run from Luke Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Luke	Developed in the New Testament
Salvation for all nations	Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6	2:32; 3:6; 24:47	Acts 10-11; Romans 1:16; Galatians 3:8
Seeking the lost	Ezekiel 34:11-16	15; 19:10	1 Timothy 1:15
Justification by faith	Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4	18:9-14; 23:43	Romans 3-5; Galatians 2:16
The Holy Spirit's power	Joel 2:28-32	1:35; 4:18; 24:49	Acts 1:8; 2:1-21
The reversal of the proud and humble	1 Samuel 2:7-8	1:51-53; 14:11; 18:14	James 4:6-10; 1 Peter 5:5-6
Life after death	Daniel 12:2	16:19-31; 23:43	2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:21-23
Christ the theme of Scripture	Deuteronomy 18:15	24:27, 44	John 5:39, 46; Acts 3:18-24

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Know the certainty of what you believe** (1:4).
- **Believe God's promises, unlike Zacharias at first** (1:20).
- **Surrender to God's will like Mary** (1:38).
- **Magnify the Lord, and rejoice in God your Saviour** (1:46-47).
- **Share the good news like the shepherds** (2:17).
- **Ponder God's works in your heart** (2:19).
- **Be about your Father's business** (2:49).
- **Grow in wisdom, stature and favour with God and man** (2:52).
- **Show repentance in everyday honesty and generosity** (3:10-14).
- **Obey Christ's word even when it makes no sense to you** (5:5).
- **Pray before making important decisions** (6:12).
- **Love your enemies, and be merciful** (6:27, 36).
- **Give generously** (6:38).
- **Love much, because you have been forgiven much** (7:47).
- **Take heed how you hear** (8:18).
- **Take up your cross daily** (9:23).
- **Don't look back once you have put your hand to the plough** (9:62).
- **Rejoice that your name is written in heaven** (10:20).
- **Be a neighbour to anyone in need** (10:37).
- **Choose the one thing needful** (10:42).
- **Pray persistently** (11:8; 18:1).
- **Beware of covetousness** (12:15).
- **Be rich toward God** (12:21).
- **Be ready for the Master's return** (12:35-40).
- **Repent before it is too late** (13:3-5).
- **Take the lowest place** (14:10-11).
- **Count the cost of following Christ** (14:28).
- **Rejoice over sinners who repent; don't be like the elder brother** (15:7, 28).
- **Be faithful in little things** (16:10).
- **Heed the Scriptures while there is time** (16:31).
- **Forgive repeatedly** (17:4).
- **Give thanks like the Samaritan leper** (17:15-16).
- **Humble yourself before God, and trust His mercy** (18:13-14).
- **Seek Jesus wholeheartedly, like Zacchaeus** (19:3-4).

- **Lift up your head; your redemption draws near** (21:28).
- **Serve others as Christ served** (22:27).
- **Forgive those who wrong you** (23:34).
- **Let Christ open the Scriptures to you** (24:27, 45).
- **Be His witness to all nations in the power of the Spirit** (24:48-49).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:37	For with God nothing shall be impossible.
1:38	Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.
2:10-11	I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
2:14	Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
2:52	And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.
4:18	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor
6:31	And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
6:38	Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over
9:23	If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.
10:42	But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part
12:15	A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
15:7	Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth
18:13	God be merciful to me a sinner.
19:10	For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
23:34	Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.
23:43	Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.
24:32	Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

Conclusion

Luke, the beloved physician and careful historian, wrote an orderly account so that his readers might know the certainty of the gospel. He presents Jesus as the Son of Man and the Saviour of all, whose genealogy reaches back to Adam and whose salvation reaches out to all nations. He tells the story of the Saviour's coming with songs of joy, of a baby in a manger announced to shepherds, of a boy about His Father's business. He shows the Spirit-anointed Christ preaching good news to the poor, praying through the night, raising a widow's only son, forgiving a weeping woman, and telling the stories of the Good Samaritan, the lost sheep, coin and son, the rich man and Lazarus, and the Pharisee and the publican. He shows Jesus setting His face toward Jerusalem, seeking out Zacchaeus, weeping over the city, sweating as it were drops of blood, praying for His executioners, and promising paradise to a dying thief. And he ends with the risen Lord opening the Scriptures to burning hearts, showing His hands and feet, commissioning His witnesses to all nations, and ascending as He blessed them, while they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost, and He is seeking still.

> *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
>
> **Luke 19:10**

John

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John, the beloved disciple • Date: c. AD 85-95 • Chapters: 21

> *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*
>
> **John 20:31**

Part One: Introduction to John

The Author

The Gospel was written by "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20), who identifies himself at the end: "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true" (21:24). The early church unanimously identified him as John the apostle, son of Zebedee and brother of James. A fisherman from Galilee (Mark 1:19-20), he was one of the inner circle of three with Peter and James, present at the raising of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration and Gethsemane. Jesus called James and John "Boanerges, The sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17), yet John became the apostle of love. He leaned on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper (13:23), stood at the cross, where Jesus entrusted His mother to him (19:26-27), and outran Peter to the empty tomb (20:4). He also wrote 1, 2 and 3 John and Revelation.

John writes as an eyewitness: "we beheld his glory" (1:14); "he that saw it bare record, and his record is true" (19:35); "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life" (1 John 1:1). Irenaeus, a disciple of John's disciple Polycarp, records that John wrote his Gospel while living at Ephesus.

Date

John is traditionally dated around AD 85-95, making it the last Gospel written. A small papyrus fragment containing John 18:31-33 and 37-38 (known as P52), found in Egypt and usually dated around AD 125, is the earliest known manuscript fragment of the New Testament. Its presence in Egypt so early supports a first-century date for the Gospel.

Purpose and Theme

John states his purpose plainly:

> *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*
>
> **John 20:30-31**

John is the great evangelistic Gospel. Its theme is that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, God made flesh, and that everyone who believes in Him has eternal life. The verb "believe" appears about 98 times. If Matthew presents the King, Mark the Servant, and Luke the Son of Man, John presents the Son of God.

> *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
>
> **John 3:16**

How John Differs from the Other Gospels

About ninety percent of John's material is not found in Matthew, Mark or Luke. John wrote after them and seems to assume his readers knew their accounts.

Feature	Matthew, Mark and Luke	John
Setting	Mostly Galilee	Much in Judea and Jerusalem
Length of ministry	Mostly one year described	At least three Passovers (2:13; 6:4; 11:55)
Teaching style	Short sayings and parables	Long discourses and conversations
Miracles	Many, including exorcisms	Seven selected "signs"; no exorcisms
Emphasis	The kingdom of God	Eternal life; believing in Jesus
Christ's identity	Gradually revealed	Declared from the first verse
Omitted	(Included)	Birth narrative, baptism scene, temptation, transfiguration, institution of the Lord's Supper, Gethsemane prayer
Unique	(Absent)	The Word, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Lazarus, the foot washing, the Upper Room Discourse (13-17), "I am" sayings

Key Words

Word	Approximate Occurrences	Example
Believe	98	"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (3:36)
Father	120+	"I and my Father are one" (10:30)
World	78	"God so loved the world" (3:16)
Life; eternal life	36	"I am come that they might have life" (10:10)
Love	57	"A new commandment... love one another" (13:34)
Truth; true	45	"The truth shall make you free" (8:32)
Witness; record; testify	47	"These are they which testify of me" (5:39)
Light	23	"I am the light of the world" (8:12)
Glory; glorify	42	"We beheld his glory" (1:14)
Abide	40	"Abide in me, and I in you" (15:4)

The Seven Signs

John calls Jesus' miracles "signs" because they point beyond themselves to who He is:

Sign	John	What It Reveals
Water turned into wine at Cana	2:1-11	Christ brings the joy of a new order
Healing the nobleman's son	4:46-54	His word has power over distance
Healing the man at Bethesda	5:1-9	His power over long-standing weakness
Feeding the five thousand	6:1-14	He is the bread of life
Walking on the water	6:16-21	He is Lord over nature: "It is I"
Healing the man born blind	9:1-7	He is the light of the world
Raising Lazarus	11:1-44	He is the resurrection and the life

The greatest sign of all is His own resurrection (2:18-22), followed by the miraculous catch of 153 fish (21:1-14).

The Seven "I Am" Sayings

When God revealed Himself to Moses, He said, "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14). Jesus used "I am" (Greek ego eimi) in seven great statements, and also absolutely, claiming the divine name:

Saying	John	Meaning
"I am the bread of life"	6:35	He satisfies spiritual hunger
"I am the light of the world"	8:12; 9:5	He reveals truth and dispels darkness
"I am the door"	10:7, 9	He is the only entrance to salvation
"I am the good shepherd"	10:11, 14	He lays down His life for the sheep
"I am the resurrection, and the life"	11:25	He conquers death
"I am the way, the truth, and the life"	14:6	He is the only way to the Father
"I am the true vine"	15:1, 5	Spiritual life and fruit come from union with Him
"Before Abraham was, I am"	8:58	His eternal existence and deity (compare 8:24, 28; 13:19; 18:5-6)

The Feasts in John

John organises much of Jesus' ministry around the Jewish feasts, showing Jesus as their fulfilment: the Passover (2:13; 6:4; 11:55; 19:14), an unnamed feast (5:1), the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 37), and the Feast of Dedication (10:22).

Note on John 7:53-8:11

The account of the woman taken in adultery is missing from some early manuscripts but is found in the great majority of later ones and in the King James Version. This study treats it as Scripture; its content fits the character of Christ shown throughout the Gospels.

Outline of John

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Prologue: The Word Made Flesh	1:1-18	Who Jesus is
II. The Book of Signs: Christ Revealed to the World	1:19-12:50	Seven signs and growing belief and unbelief
The first disciples	1:19-51	"Behold the Lamb of God"
Early signs and conversations	2-4	Cana; Nicodemus; the Samaritan woman
Growing opposition	5-10	Bethesda; bread of life; Tabernacles; the blind man; the good shepherd
The climactic sign and the hour	11-12	Lazarus; the anointing; "the hour is come"
III. The Book of Glory: Christ Revealed to His Disciples	13-17	The Upper Room
The foot washing and the new commandment	13	"Love one another"
The farewell discourse	14-16	The Father's house; the Comforter; the vine
The High Priestly Prayer	17	"Father, the hour is come"
IV. The Passion	18-19	Arrest, trial and crucifixion: "It is finished"
V. The Resurrection	20	"My Lord and my God"
VI. Epilogue	21	Peter restored; "Follow thou me"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Prologue (1:1-18)

Chapter 1:1-18 — The Word Was Made Flesh

> *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*
>
> **John 1:1-5**

John begins where Genesis begins, "In the beginning," but goes back before creation. The "Word" (Greek Logos) is God's self-expression, the One through whom God speaks and acts. Three truths are stated:

- **His eternity:** "In the beginning was the Word": when everything else began, He already was.
- **His distinct personhood:** "the Word was with God": He is distinct from the Father, in face-to-face fellowship.
- **His deity:** "the Word was God": He is fully God. (The Greek grammar does not support the translation "a god"; it identifies the Word's nature as truly divine.)

He is the Creator: "All things were made by him" (1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2). He is the source of life and light.

John the Baptist was sent "to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe" (1:6-8). "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (1:9).

> *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
>
> **John 1:11-13**

Receiving Christ means believing on His name. Those who do become children of God, born not by human descent, effort or decision, but by God.

> *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*
>
> **John 1:14**

This is the incarnation: the eternal Word became a real human being without ceasing to be God. "Dwelt" means "tabernacled" or "pitched His tent": as God's glory dwelt in the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 40:34), so God's glory dwelt in Jesus. "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"

(1:16-18). Jesus is the perfect revelation of the invisible God.

Section II: The Book of Signs (1:19-12:50)

Chapter 1:19-51 — The First Witnesses and Disciples

When priests and Levites asked John the Baptist who he was, he said he was not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor "that prophet" (Deuteronomy 18:15): "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (1:19-23; Isaiah 40:3). The next day he saw Jesus coming:

> *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
>
> **John 1:29**

Every lamb sacrificed since Abel, the Passover lamb (Exodus 12) and the lamb led to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7) pointed to Him. John testified that he saw the Spirit descend and remain on Jesus, "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (1:32-34).

The next day John again said, "Behold the Lamb of God," and two of his disciples followed Jesus: Andrew and, almost certainly, John himself (1:35-40). "What seek ye?" "Rabbi... where dwellest thou?" "Come and see" (1:38-39). Andrew first found his brother Simon: "We have found the Messias," and brought him to Jesus, who said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (1:41-42). Jesus called Philip, who found Nathanael. When Nathanael scoffed, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?", Philip said, "Come and see" (1:43-46). Jesus said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" and revealed that He had seen him under the fig tree before Philip called him (1:47-48). Nathanael confessed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (1:49). Jesus promised, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (1:51). Jacob dreamed of a ladder between earth and heaven (Genesis 28:12); Jesus is that ladder, the one link between God and humanity.

Chapter 2 — Water into Wine and the Temple Cleansed

The first sign (2:1-11). At a wedding in Cana, the wine ran out, a serious embarrassment for the hosts. Mary told Jesus, "They have no wine." He answered, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come" (2:3-4), a respectful address indicating that He now acted according to His Father's timing, not family requests. Mary said to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (2:5), her last recorded words in Scripture, pointing people to obey her Son. Jesus had six stone waterpots, used for Jewish purification rituals, filled with water to the brim. When drawn out, the water had become wine, and the governor of the feast said, "thou hast kept the good wine until now" (2:10).

> *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*
>
> **John 2:11**

The vessels of ceremonial purification were filled with the joy of the new order Christ brings, and He saves the best for last.

The temple cleansed (2:13-25). At the Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus found merchants and money changers in the temple. He made a whip of cords, drove them out, overturned the tables, and said, "make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (2:15-16). His disciples remembered Psalm 69:9: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (2:17). This cleansing at the beginning of His ministry is distinct from the one at the end recorded in the other Gospels. When the Jews demanded a sign, He said:

> *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*
>
> **John 2:19**

They thought He meant Herod's temple, forty-six years in the building, "But he spake of the temple of his body" (2:20-21). After His resurrection His disciples remembered and believed (2:22). Many believed because of His miracles, "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men... for he knew what was in man" (2:23-25): He saw their faith was superficial.

Chapter 3 — Born Again; God So Loved the World

Nicodemus (3:1-21). Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the ruling council, came to Jesus by night: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God" (3:1-2). Jesus went straight to the heart of the matter:

> *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*
>
> **John 3:3**

Nicodemus asked how a grown man could be born again (3:4). Jesus explained, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (3:5-7). "Water and the Spirit" recalls Ezekiel 36:25-27, where God promised to sprinkle clean water on His people and put His Spirit within them; the water represents the cleansing that accompanies the Spirit's work, through the Word (Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23). It does not mean that baptism produces the new birth; baptism is a picture of a change God has already made. Like the wind, the Spirit works sovereignly and invisibly, but His effects are seen (3:8). "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (3:10).

Jesus then pointed to the cure for sin:

> *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*
>
> **John 3:14-15**

When the Israelites were dying from snake bites, God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and lift it on a pole; anyone who looked at it lived (Numbers 21:8-9). So Christ would be lifted up on the cross, and whoever looks to Him in faith lives.

> *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
>
> **John 3:16-18**

This is the gospel in miniature: the source (God), the motive (so loved), the scope (the world), the gift (His only begotten Son), the condition (whosoever believeth), the escape (should not perish), and the result (everlasting life). People are lost not merely for their sins but because they reject the remedy. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (3:19).

John the Baptist's final testimony (3:22-36). When John's disciples worried that everyone was going to Jesus, John said he was only the friend of the bridegroom, rejoicing at the bridegroom's voice (3:29).

> *He must increase, but I must decrease.*
>
> **John 3:30**

> *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
>
> **John 3:36**

The believer "hath" everlasting life now, as a present possession.

Chapter 4 — The Samaritan Woman and the Nobleman's Son

Living water (4:1-26). Travelling north, Jesus "must needs go through Samaria" (4:4), not because of geography (Jews often went around), but because of a divine appointment. Wearied, He sat by Jacob's well at Sychar about noon (4:6). A Samaritan woman came to draw water, alone, in the heat of the day, probably avoiding other women. Jesus said, "Give me to drink." She was astonished: Jews had no dealings with Samaritans, and rabbis did not speak to women in public (4:7-9).

> *Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water... Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*
>
> **John 4:10, 13-14**

When she asked for this water, Jesus said, "Go, call thy husband." She said she had none. Jesus revealed that she had had five husbands and was living with a man not her husband (4:16-18). He exposed her sin gently but directly. She tried to change the subject to the debate over the right place of worship (4:19-20). Jesus answered that "salvation is of the Jews" (4:22), but the place no longer matters:

> *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*
>
> **John 4:23-24**

She said, "I know that Messias cometh." Jesus answered, "I that speak unto thee am he" (4:25-26), His clearest early self-revelation, given to a sinful Samaritan woman.

The harvest (4:27-42). She left her waterpot and told the town, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (4:28-29). Meanwhile Jesus told His disciples, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (4:34). "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (4:35). Many Samaritans believed, first because of her testimony and then because they heard Him themselves: "this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (4:39-42).

The second sign (4:43-54). At Cana a nobleman from Capernaum begged Jesus to heal his dying son. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The father persisted. "Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way" (4:48-50). His servants met him with the news that the boy had recovered at the very hour Jesus spoke, "and himself believed, and his whole house" (4:51-53). His faith grew from desperation, to trust in Christ's word, to full belief.

Chapter 5 — The Healing at Bethesda and the Son's Authority

The third sign (5:1-16). At the pool of Bethesda by the sheep gate, which had "five porches" (5:2), lay many sick people waiting for the water to be stirred. (Archaeologists have excavated this pool in Jerusalem, with its porticoes, confirming John's description.) One man had been sick thirty-eight years. "Wilt thou be made whole?" (5:6). He explained he had no one to put him in the pool. "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole" (5:8-9). Because it was the Sabbath, the Jews objected. Jesus later found the man in the temple: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (5:14).

Equal with God (5:17-30). "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (5:17). The Jews sought to kill Him "because he... said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (5:18). Jesus did not correct them; He explained His unity with the Father. The Son does what the Father does (5:19); He gives life to whom He will (5:21); the Father has committed all judgment to the Son, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (5:22-23).

> *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*
>
> **John 5:24**

This verse gives the believer assurance: eternal life is a present possession ("hath"), condemnation is excluded ("shall not come"), and the change is already accomplished ("is passed"). Jesus also foretold the resurrection of all the dead: "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (5:28-29).

Four witnesses (5:31-47). Jesus cited four witnesses to His identity: John the Baptist (5:33-35), His works (5:36), the Father (5:37-38), and the Scriptures:

> *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*
>
> **John 5:39-40**

"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (5:46).

Chapter 6 — The Bread of Life

The fourth and fifth signs (6:1-21). Near the Passover, a great crowd followed Jesus. To test Philip, He asked where to buy bread; Philip calculated that two hundred pennyworth would not be enough (6:5-7). Andrew found "a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" (6:9). Jesus fed five thousand men, and twelve baskets of fragments remained (6:10-13). The people said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world," and wanted to make Him king by force, so He withdrew alone to a mountain (6:14-15). That night He came to the disciples walking on the sea: "It is I; be not afraid," and immediately the boat was at land (6:19-21).

The discourse (6:22-71). The next day the crowd found Him in Capernaum. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves... Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (6:26-27). "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (6:28-29). They cited the manna Moses gave. Jesus answered that the true bread from heaven is He Himself:

> *I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*
>
> **John 6:35**

> *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*
>
> **John 6:37-39**

These verses join God's sovereignty and human responsibility: all the Father gives will come; whoever comes will never be cast out; none will be lost. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (6:44).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (6:51). "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (6:53). This is figurative language for receiving Christ by faith: compare "he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (6:35), and "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (6:47). Jesus Himself explained, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (6:63). He was not teaching that the bread of the

Lord's Supper becomes His literal flesh.

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (6:66). Jesus asked the twelve, "Will ye also go away?"

> *Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*
>
> **John 6:68-69**

Yet Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" speaking of Judas (6:70-71).

Chapter 7 — The Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus' brothers, who "did not believe in him," urged Him to go to the feast and show Himself publicly; He said, "My time is not yet come" (7:2-6). Later He went up secretly (7:10). The crowds were divided: "He is a good man"; "Nay; but he deceiveth the people" (7:12). In the middle of the feast He taught in the temple, and the Jews marvelled, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (7:14-15).

> *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*
>
> **John 7:16-17**

Willingness to obey God is the key to recognising His truth. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (7:24). Some wondered if He was the Christ; the leaders sent officers to arrest Him (7:25-32).

At the Feast of Tabernacles, priests carried water daily from the pool of Siloam and poured it at the altar, recalling the water from the rock in the wilderness and looking forward to the outpouring of God's blessing.

> *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*
>
> **John 7:37-39**

The people were divided (7:40-44). The officers returned without Him: "Never man spake like this man" (7:46). Nicodemus cautiously defended Him: "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him?" (7:51). The Pharisees retorted, "Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (7:52), forgetting that Jonah came from Galilee (2 Kings 14:25).

Chapter 8 — The Light of the World and "Before Abraham Was, I Am"

The woman taken in adultery (7:53-8:11). At dawn in the temple, the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery: "Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" (8:5). It was a trap: if He said to release her, He would contradict the law; if He said to stone her, He would defy Roman authority and His own reputation for mercy. (Notably, they brought only the woman, though the law required both guilty parties to be judged, Leviticus 20:10.) Jesus stooped and wrote on the ground. When they persisted:

> *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*
>
> **John 8:7**

"Being convicted by their own conscience," they left one by one, beginning with the eldest (8:9). "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (8:10-11). Grace and truth met: He did not excuse her sin ("sin no more"), but He offered her forgiveness rather than condemnation.

The light of the world (8:12-30). During the Feast of Tabernacles, great lamps were lit in the temple court, recalling the pillar of fire that guided Israel in the wilderness.

> *I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
>
> **John 8:12**

His Father bore witness with Him (8:13-18). "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (8:24). ("He" is supplied; the Greek is simply "I am.") "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he... for I do always those things that please him" (8:28-29).

The truth shall make you free (8:31-47).

> *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
>
> **John 8:31-32**

They protested, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man" (8:33). "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (8:34-36). True children of Abraham would do Abraham's works; their desire to kill Him showed another father: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth... he is a liar, and the father of it" (8:39-44). Jesus challenged them, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (8:46): no one could accuse Him of sin.

Before Abraham was (8:48-59). "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (8:51). They asked if He was greater than Abraham, who died. Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (8:56). "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"

> *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

> **John 8:58**

He did not say "I was," but "I am," the name of God revealed to Moses (Exodus 3:14). He claimed eternal, timeless existence. His hearers understood: "Then took they up stones to cast at him" (8:59), the penalty for blasphemy.

Chapter 9 — The Man Born Blind

The sixth sign (9:1-12). Seeing a man blind from birth, the disciples asked, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (9:2).

> *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*
>
> **John 9:3-5**

Not every suffering is a direct punishment for personal sin; God can use it to display His works. Jesus made clay with His saliva, anointed the man's eyes, and said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.)" The man went, washed, "and came seeing" (9:6-7).

The investigation (9:13-34). Because it was the Sabbath, the Pharisees questioned the man, then his parents, who, fearing to be put out of the synagogue, said, "he is of age; ask him" (9:18-23). The Pharisees told the man, "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner." He replied:

> *Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*
>
> **John 9:25**

When they asked again, he asked, "will ye also be his disciples?" (9:27). They reviled him: "we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is" (9:28-29). The man answered with growing boldness: "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (9:32-33). They threw him out (9:34).

Spiritual sight (9:35-41). Jesus found him: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?... Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him" (9:35-38). The man's understanding grew step by step: "A man that is called Jesus" (9:11), "He is a prophet" (9:17), "of God" (9:33), and finally the Son of God, worthy of worship (9:38). "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind" (9:39). To the Pharisees: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (9:41). The proud who claim to see remain in darkness.

Chapter 10 — The Good Shepherd

The leaders who cast out the healed man were false shepherds. Jesus contrasted them with Himself. The true shepherd enters by the door, "and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (10:3).

> *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*
>
> **John 10:9-10**

> *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*
>
> **John 10:11**

The hireling flees when the wolf comes (10:12-13). "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (10:14). "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (10:16): the Gentiles would be brought in.

> *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.*
>
> **John 10:17-18**

His death would be voluntary, and He would raise Himself.

The Feast of Dedication (10:22-42). In winter, at the feast commemorating the rededication of the temple in the Maccabean period (Hanukkah), Jesus walked in Solomon's porch. The Jews demanded, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly" (10:24). He said His works testified, but they did not believe because they were not His sheep:

> *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.*
>
> **John 10:27-30**

These verses are a foundation for the eternal security of the believer: Christ gives eternal life; His sheep "shall never perish"; they are held in the Son's hand and in the Father's hand, and no one can remove them. "I and my Father are one" (one in essence, not merely one in purpose): the Jews took up stones "for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (10:31-33). Jesus answered from Psalm 82:6, where human judges are called "gods," arguing from lesser to greater: "the scripture cannot be broken" (10:34-36). He withdrew beyond Jordan, where many believed: "John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true" (10:40-42).

Chapter 11 — Lazarus Raised

The seventh sign (11:1-44). Lazarus of Bethany, brother of Martha and Mary, was sick. The sisters sent word: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (11:3). Jesus said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (11:4).

> *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.*
>
> **John 11:5-6**

His delay was not a lack of love but the expression of it: He planned something greater than a healing. When He announced He would return to Judea, where the Jews had tried to stone Him, Thomas said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (11:16).

When Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days (11:17). Martha met Him: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (11:21-24).

> *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.*
>
> **John 11:25-27**

Resurrection is not merely an event in the future; it is a Person present now. Believers who die will live again, and believers who live will never truly die.

Mary came and fell at His feet with the same words (11:32). Seeing her weeping, and the mourners weeping, "he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled" (11:33). "Where have ye laid him?"

> *Jesus wept.*
>
> **John 11:35**

The shortest verse in the Bible reveals the heart of God: Jesus, about to raise Lazarus, still entered into their grief and wept. He groaned at the ravages of sin and death. "Behold how he loved him!" (11:36).

At the tomb He said, "Take ye away the stone." Martha protested that by now there would be a stench. "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (11:39-40). Jesus prayed, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me" (11:41-42).

> *And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes... Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*
>
> **John 11:43-44**

Someone has observed that if He had not named Lazarus, every grave would have emptied. One day all the dead will hear His voice (5:28-29).

The plot (11:45-57). Many believed, but some reported to the Pharisees. The council met: "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation" (11:48). Caiaphas the high priest said, "it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (11:50). John explains that Caiaphas unknowingly prophesied "that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (11:51-52). "Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death" (11:53).

Chapter 12 — The Hour Has Come

The anointing (12:1-11). Six days before the Passover, at a supper in Bethany, Mary took a pound of very costly spikenard, anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair, "and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment" (12:3). Judas objected that it could have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor, "not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag" (12:4-6). "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this" (12:7). The chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many believed through him (12:10-11).

The entry (12:12-19). Crowds took palm branches and cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord" (12:13), as Jesus rode on a young donkey, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 (12:14-15). "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they" (12:16). The Pharisees said, "behold, the world is gone after him" (12:19).

The Greeks and the grain of wheat (12:20-36). Certain Greeks came to Philip: "Sir, we would see Jesus" (12:21). The arrival of Gentiles signalled that the hour had come.

> *The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*
>
> **John 12:23-25**

His death would produce a great harvest of believers from every nation. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be" (12:26).

> *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name.*
>
> **John 12:27-28**

A voice came from heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (12:28). "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (12:31-33). "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you" (12:35).

Unbelief (12:37-50). Despite so many signs, they did not believe, fulfilling Isaiah 53:1 ("Lord, who hath believed our report?") and Isaiah 6:10 (12:37-40). "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him" (12:41): the LORD whom Isaiah saw on the throne (Isaiah 6:1-5) was the pre-incarnate Christ. Some rulers believed but would not confess Him, fearing excommunication, "For

they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (12:42-43). Jesus' final public words in John: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness... the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (12:46-48).

Section III: The Book of Glory — The Upper Room (Chapters 13-17)

Chapter 13 — The Foot Washing and the New Commandment

> *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*
>
> **John 13:1**

"Unto the end" means to the uttermost, completely. Knowing "that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (13:3), fully aware of His divine glory, Jesus took the place of the lowest servant. He rose from supper, laid aside His garments, wrapped a towel around Himself, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet (13:4-5), an acted picture of His whole mission (Philippians 2:5-8).

Peter protested, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Peter swung the other way: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head" (13:8-9).

> *Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.*
>
> **John 13:10**

The believer has been washed once for all in salvation and needs no second bathing; but walking through a dirty world, he needs daily cleansing of the "feet" through confession (1 John 1:9). "Ye are clean, but not all": Judas had never been washed (13:11).

> *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you... If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*
>
> **John 13:14-15, 17**

Most Baptists understand this as an example of humble, loving service rather than a church ordinance, though some Baptist groups practise foot washing literally.

The betrayer (13:18-30). Jesus quoted Psalm 41:9: "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" (13:18). "Troubled in spirit," He said, "one of you shall betray me" (13:21). The disciple whom Jesus loved, leaning on His breast, asked who it was. Jesus gave the sop (a morsel, often a gesture of honour) to Judas. "And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly" (13:26-27). "He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night" (13:30), physically and spiritually.

The new commandment (13:31-38). "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (13:31): the cross would reveal God's glory.

> *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*
>
> **John 13:34-35**

The command to love was old (Leviticus 19:18), but the standard was new: "as I have loved you," with self-giving, sacrificial love. Peter vowed, "I will lay down my life for thy sake." Jesus answered, "The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice" (13:37-38).

Chapter 14 — The Father's House and the Comforter

> *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*
>
> **John 14:1-3**

In the face of His departure, Jesus comforted His disciples with the promise of a prepared home and His personal return to take them to be with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (14:5).

> *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
>
> **John 14:6**

Jesus does not merely show the way; He is the way. He does not merely teach truth; He is the truth. He does not merely give life; He is the life. And He is the only way to the Father (Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5).

Philip asked, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (14:8-9). "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (14:10-11). "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (14:12): greater in scope, as the gospel spread through the Spirit-empowered church to the whole world. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (14:13-14).

Another Comforter (14:15-31).

> *If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive... but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*
>
> **John 14:15-17**

"Comforter" (Greek parakletos) means one called alongside to help, counsel and defend. "Another" (Greek allos) means another of the same kind: the Spirit would be to them what Jesus had been. He would abide "for ever." "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you... because I live, ye shall live also" (14:18-19). Those who love and obey Him will be loved by the Father, "and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (14:21-23): the Father, Son and Spirit dwell in the believer.

> *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*
>
> **John 14:26**

This promise guaranteed the accurate recording of Jesus' words in the Gospels and the apostles' teaching in the New Testament.

> *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*
>
> **John 14:27**

"My Father is greater than I" (14:28) refers to the Son's voluntary subordinate role in His incarnation and mission, not to any inferiority of nature, since He has just said, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (14:30): Satan had no hold on the sinless Son. "Arise, let us go hence" (14:31).

Chapter 15 — The True Vine

> *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*
>
> **John 15:1-2**

Israel was God's vine in the Old Testament, but it bore wild grapes (Psalm 80:8-16; Isaiah 5:1-7). Jesus is the true vine. The Father prunes fruitful branches, through His Word and through trials, so that they bear more fruit (15:2-3).

> *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
>
> **John 15:4-5**

To abide is to remain in close, continuing dependence on Christ, through His Word, prayer and obedience. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered" (15:6). Interpreters understand this differently; those who hold the eternal security of the believer, as this study does, understand it either of professing disciples like Judas who were never truly joined to Christ, or of a believer's loss of usefulness and reward rather than salvation (1 Corinthians 3:15).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit" (15:7-8). "Continue ye in my love... that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (15:9-11).

> *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*
>
> **John 15:12-14**

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (15:16).

The world's hatred (15:18-27). "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you... The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (15:18-20). "They hated me without a cause" (15:25; Psalm 35:19; 69:4). The Comforter, "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness" (15:26-27).

Chapter 16 — The Work of the Spirit and Victory over the World

Jesus warned that they would be put out of the synagogues; "whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (16:2).

> *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*
>
> **John 16:7-11**

The Spirit convicts the world of the sin of unbelief, of the righteousness of Christ vindicated by His resurrection and ascension, and of judgment, because Satan was defeated at the cross. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself... and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me" (16:13-14). The Spirit's ministry centres on Christ.

"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me" (16:16). Their sorrow would turn to joy, like a woman's pain in childbirth giving way to joy at her baby's birth: "your joy no man taketh from you" (16:20-22). "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (16:24). "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me" (16:27). They would be scattered and leave Him alone, "and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (16:32).

> *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*
>
> **John 16:33**

Chapter 17 — The High Priestly Prayer

Jesus lifted His eyes to heaven and prayed the longest recorded prayer of His life, interceding as our great High Priest.

For Himself (17:1-5). "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (17:1-2).

> *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*
>
> **John 17:3**

Eternal life is not only endless existence but a personal relationship with God through Christ. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (17:4-5): He shared the Father's glory before creation.

For His disciples (17:6-19). "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world" (17:6). "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (17:9). He asked the Father to keep them: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (17:11). "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled" (17:12). "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (17:15-16).

> *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
>
> **John 17:17**

Believers are set apart and made holy through God's Word, which is truth itself. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself" (17:18-19).

For all future believers (17:20-26).

> *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*
>
> **John 17:20-21**

Jesus prayed for every believer who would ever come to faith through the apostles' word, including believers today. He prayed for a spiritual unity grounded in the truth (17:17) and in union with the Father and the Son, not a unity of organisation at the expense of doctrine. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory" (17:24). "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (17:26).

Section IV: The Passion (Chapters 18-19)

Chapter 18 — The Arrest and the Trials

Jesus crossed the brook Cedron (Kidron) to a garden. Judas came with "a band of men and officers... with lanterns and torches and weapons" (18:1-3).

> *Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he... As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*
>
> **John 18:4-6**

At His divine name, "I am," the arresting party fell to the ground. He was not captured; He surrendered. He asked that His disciples be allowed to go, "That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none" (18:8-9). Simon Peter cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus; Jesus said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (18:10-11).

Jesus was taken first to Annas, the former high priest and father-in-law of Caiaphas (18:12-14). Another disciple, known to the high priest (probably John), brought Peter into the courtyard (18:15-16). There Peter's first denial came: "I am not" (18:17), a tragic contrast to his Lord's "I am." When questioned, Jesus said, "I spake openly to the world... and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me" (18:20-21). An officer struck Him; Jesus answered, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?" (18:22-23). Peter denied Him twice more, the last time to a relative of Malchus, "and immediately the cock crew" (18:25-27).

Before Pilate (18:28-40). The leaders would not enter Pilate's judgment hall "lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover" (18:28): they worried about ritual defilement while plotting murder. They told Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death," so that Jesus' words would be fulfilled about "what death he should die" (18:31-32): Roman crucifixion, being "lifted up" (3:14; 12:32), not Jewish stoning.

"Art thou the King of the Jews?" (18:33).

> *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence... Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*
>
> **John 18:36-37**

Pilate asked, "What is truth?" (18:38), not waiting for an answer from the One who is the truth (14:6). He declared, "I find in him no fault at all," but the crowd demanded Barabbas, a robber (18:38-40).

Chapter 19 — The Crucifixion

Behold the man (19:1-16). Pilate had Jesus scourged; the soldiers put a crown of thorns and a purple robe on Him and struck Him, mocking, "Hail, King of the Jews!" (19:1-3). Pilate brought Him out: "Behold the man!" (19:5). The chief priests cried, "Crucify him, crucify him." "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (19:6-7). Pilate, more afraid, asked, "Whence art thou?" Jesus was silent. "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee?"

> *Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.*
>
> **John 19:11**

God was sovereign even over the trial. The Jews pressured Pilate: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend" (19:12). At the Pavement (Gabbatha), on the preparation of the Passover, Pilate said, "Behold your King!" They answered, "We have no king but Caesar" (19:13-15), a terrible rejection of their Messiah and their God. (John's "about the sixth hour" (19:14) is often explained as Roman reckoning from midnight, around 6 a.m., harmonising with Mark's "third hour" (9 a.m.) for the crucifixion.)

The crucifixion (19:16-37). "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha" (19:17). Pilate's title, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, read "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS." When the chief priests objected, Pilate said, "What I have written I have written" (19:19-22). The soldiers divided His garments and cast lots for His seamless coat, "woven from the top throughout," fulfilling Psalm 22:18 (19:23-24).

Near the cross stood His mother, her sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene (19:25).

> *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.*
>
> **John 19:26-27**

Even in agony, Jesus provided for His mother.

> *After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.*
>
> **John 19:28**

They put a sponge of vinegar on hyssop to His mouth (19:29; Psalm 69:21). Hyssop was used to apply the blood of the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:22).

> *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*
>
> **John 19:30**

"It is finished" (one Greek word, tetelestai) was used for a debt paid in full or a task accomplished. The work of redemption was complete. Nothing can be added to it. He "bowed his head" and gave up His spirit voluntarily.

Because the next day was a high Sabbath, the Jews asked that the legs be broken to hasten death. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but found Jesus already dead. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (19:31-34), medical evidence of death. John emphasises his eyewitness testimony: "And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true... that ye might believe" (19:35). Two scriptures were fulfilled: "A bone of him shall not be broken" (19:36; Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20), as with the Passover lamb, and "They shall look on him whom they pierced" (19:37; Zechariah 12:10).

The burial (19:38-42). Joseph of Arimathea, "a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews," asked for the body. Nicodemus, "which at the first came to Jesus by night," brought about a hundred pound weight of myrrh and aloes, enough for a royal burial (19:38-39). The two secret disciples came out into the open at the cross. They wrapped the body in linen with spices and laid it in a new tomb in a garden near the place of crucifixion (19:40-42).

Section V: The Resurrection (Chapter 20)

Chapter 20 — "My Lord and My God"

The empty tomb (20:1-10). Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene found the stone taken away and ran to Peter and John: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre" (20:1-2). The two disciples ran; John arrived first, stooped and saw the linen clothes lying. Peter went in and saw "the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself" (20:5-7). Robbers would not have unwrapped the body and left the cloths neatly in place. "Then went in also that other disciple... and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead" (20:8-9).

Mary Magdalene (20:11-18). Mary stood weeping at the tomb and saw two angels where the body had lain (20:11-12). Turning, she saw Jesus but supposed He was the gardener: "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him" (20:15).

> *Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*
>
> **John 20:16**

The Good Shepherd "calleth his own sheep by name" (10:3). "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (20:17). "Touch me not" means "stop clinging to me"; His relationship with His disciples would now be on a new footing. A woman, whose testimony counted for little in that culture, was the first witness of the resurrection, a detail no one inventing the story would have chosen.

The disciples (20:19-23). That evening, with the doors shut for fear, Jesus stood among them: "Peace be unto you." He showed them His hands and side, "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (20:19-20).

> *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*
>
> **John 20:21-23**

His breathing on them recalls God breathing life into Adam (Genesis 2:7), a pledge of the new creation and of the Spirit's full coming at Pentecost. The authority to remit and retain sins is the authority to declare, through the gospel, that those who believe are forgiven and those who reject Christ remain in their sins (Acts 10:43; 13:38-39). It is not a priestly power to grant absolution.

Thomas (20:24-31). Thomas was absent and refused to believe: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (20:25). Eight days later Jesus appeared again and said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (20:27).

> *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*
>
> **John 20:28**

This is the climax of John's Gospel and the clearest confession of Christ's deity in the Gospels. Jesus accepted it as true worship. "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (20:29). Then John states his purpose: these signs are written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:30-31). The Gospel that began with "the Word was God" (1:1) ends its main narrative with "My Lord and my God."

Section VI: Epilogue (Chapter 21)

Chapter 21 — Breakfast by the Sea and Peter Restored

The catch (21:1-14). Seven disciples were at the Sea of Tiberias (Galilee). Peter said, "I go a fishing," and the others went with him, but that night they caught nothing (21:2-3). At dawn Jesus stood on the shore: "Children, have ye any meat?... Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find" (21:5-6). The net was so full they could not draw it in. The beloved disciple said, "It is the Lord," and Peter threw himself into the sea and swam ashore (21:7). There they found "a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread" (21:9). Peter had denied Jesus beside "a fire of coals" (18:18); now he stood beside another. The net held 153 great fish, "and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken" (21:11). "Come and dine" (21:12). This was the third time Jesus showed Himself to the disciples as a group (21:14).

Peter restored (21:15-19). After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter three times, once for each denial:

> *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.*
>
> **John 21:15**

The second time, "Feed my sheep." The third time "Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (21:16-17). (Two different Greek words for love are used in the exchange, and many see significance in Peter's humbler choice of word, though the main point is clear in English: threefold denial is answered by threefold confession and recommissioning.) Jesus then foretold that Peter would one day stretch out his hands and be led where he did not want to go, "signifying by what death he should glorify God" (21:18-19). Early Christian tradition records that Peter was crucified in Rome. "And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me" (21:19).

"Follow thou me" (21:20-25). Seeing John, Peter asked, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me" (21:21-22). Each disciple must follow Christ personally without comparing his path with others'. John corrects a rumour that he would not die: Jesus had not said so (21:23). Then he signs his testimony:

> *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*
>
> **John 21:24-25**

Part Three: Christ in John

The Deity of Christ in John

John's Gospel is the clearest testimony in the Bible to the deity of Jesus Christ:

Evidence	John
He is called God	1:1, 18; 20:28
He existed eternally before creation	1:1-2; 8:58; 17:5, 24
He is the Creator	1:3, 10
He uses the divine name "I am"	8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5-6
He claims equality with the Father	5:17-18; 10:30, 33; 14:9
He receives the same honour as the Father	5:23
He gives eternal life	10:28; 17:2
He raises the dead and will judge all people	5:21-29; 11:25, 43-44
He forgives and cleanses	8:11; 13:8-10
He knows all things, including hearts	1:48; 2:24-25; 16:30; 21:17
He accepts worship	9:38; 20:28
Isaiah saw His glory as the LORD on the throne	12:41 (Isaiah 6:1-5)
He is sinless	8:29, 46; 14:30

Witnesses to Christ

Witness	Testimony	John
John the Baptist	"This is the Son of God"	1:34
Nathanael	"Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel"	1:49
The Samaritans	"This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world"	4:42
Peter	"Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"	6:69
The man born blind	"Lord, I believe" (and worshipped)	9:38
Martha	"Thou art the Christ, the Son of God"	11:27
Thomas	"My Lord and my God"	20:28
The Father	His voice; the works He gives	5:37; 12:28
His works	"The works that I do... bear witness of me"	5:36; 10:25
The Scriptures	"They are they which testify of me"	5:39
The Holy Spirit	"He shall testify of me"	15:26
John the writer	"That ye might believe"	19:35; 20:31; 21:24

Old Testament Pictures of Christ in John

Old Testament Picture	Fulfilment in John
The tabernacle where God's glory dwelt (Exodus 40:34)	"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us" (1:14)
The lamb of sacrifice and the Passover lamb (Exodus 12; Isaiah 53:7)	"Behold the Lamb of God" (1:29); no bone broken (19:36)
Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28:12)	Angels ascending and descending on the Son of man (1:51)
The temple (1 Kings 8)	"He spake of the temple of his body" (2:21)
The brazen serpent (Numbers 21:8-9)	The Son of man lifted up (3:14-15)
The water from the rock (Exodus 17:6)	Living water (4:10-14; 7:37-39)
The manna (Exodus 16)	"I am the bread of life" (6:31-35)
The pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21)	"I am the light of the world" (8:12)
The Shepherd of Israel (Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34)	"I am the good shepherd" (10:11)
Israel the vine (Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:8)	"I am the true vine" (15:1)
The LORD on His throne (Isaiah 6:1)	"Esaias... saw his glory, and spake of him" (12:41)

The Holy Spirit in John

John records more about the Holy Spirit than any other Gospel: He descends and remains on Christ (1:32-33); He brings the new birth (3:5-8); He is given without measure to Christ (3:34); He is the living water flowing from believers (7:37-39); He is "another Comforter" who abides for ever and dwells in believers (14:16-17); He teaches and reminds the apostles of all Christ said (14:26); He testifies of Christ (15:26); He convicts the world (16:8-11); He guides into all truth and glorifies Christ (16:13-14); and Christ breathes Him on the disciples (20:22).

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in John

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in John
The voice in the wilderness	Isaiah 40:3	1:23
Zeal for God's house	Psalm 69:9	2:17
The lifted-up serpent	Numbers 21:8-9	3:14; 12:32-33
Bread from heaven	Psalm 78:24; Exodus 16:4	6:31-35
"All taught of God"	Isaiah 54:13	6:45
The King coming on a donkey's colt	Zechariah 9:9	12:14-15
"Who hath believed our report?"	Isaiah 53:1	12:38
Blinded eyes and hardened hearts	Isaiah 6:10	12:40
Betrayed by a friend who ate His bread	Psalm 41:9	13:18
Hated without a cause	Psalm 35:19; 69:4	15:25
Garments divided; lots cast for His coat	Psalm 22:18	19:23-24
"I thirst"; vinegar	Psalm 69:21	19:28-29
No bone broken	Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20	19:36
Looking on the pierced One	Zechariah 12:10	19:37
With the rich in His death	Isaiah 53:9	19:38-42

Jesus' Own Prophecies Fulfilled

Jesus' Prophecy	John	Fulfillment
"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"	2:19-21	His resurrection (20)
He will be "lifted up," signifying crucifixion	3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33	18:31-32; 19:18
He will lay down His life and take it again	10:17-18	19:30; 20
Judas will betray Him	6:70-71; 13:21-26	18:2-5
Peter will deny Him three times	13:38	18:17, 25-27

Jesus' Prophecy	John	Fulfillment
The disciples will be scattered	16:32	18:8
None of His own will be lost except the son of perdition	17:12; 18:9	18:8-9
The Comforter will come	14:16-17, 26; 16:7	Pentecost (Acts 2)
Believers will be put out of synagogues and persecuted	16:2	Acts 4-8; later history
Peter will glorify God by death	21:18-19	Peter's martyrdom (tradition, Rome)
He will come again	14:3	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

John 1:1-14 — The Word Made Flesh

The eternal God, the Creator of all, became a man and lived among us, full of grace and truth. Everything in Christianity rests on this: the One on the cross is God the Son.

John 1:29 — The Lamb of God

John's announcement summarises the whole sacrificial system and its fulfilment: Christ is God's Lamb, provided by God, who takes away the sin of the world.

John 3:1-18 — The New Birth and God's Love

No one can enter God's kingdom without being born again by the Spirit. This new birth comes through believing in the lifted-up Son, given by the love of God for the world. Whoever believes is not condemned; whoever does not believe is condemned already.

John 4:1-42 — The Woman at the Well

Jesus crossed barriers of race, religion, gender and reputation to offer living water to a sinful woman. He exposed her sin gently, revealed Himself as the Messiah, and turned her into a witness. God seeks true worshippers who worship Him in spirit and truth.

John 5:24 — Assurance of Salvation

The believer has eternal life now, will not come into condemnation, and has already passed from death to life. Assurance rests on Christ's word, not on feelings.

John 6:35-40 — The Bread of Life and the Father's Will

Christ alone satisfies the soul. All the Father gives Him will come; none who come will be cast out; none will be lost; all will be raised.

John 8:31-36 — True Freedom

Sin enslaves; Christ frees. Continuing in His word marks true disciples, and the truth sets them free.

John 10:27-30 — Eternal Security

Christ's sheep hear His voice, follow Him, receive eternal life, and will never perish. They are held in the hands of the Son and the Father, and no one can snatch them away.

John 11:25-26 — The Resurrection and the Life

Christ does not only promise resurrection; He is the resurrection. For the believer, physical death is not the end, and spiritual death is impossible.

John 13:1-17 — The Foot Washing

The Lord of glory took a servant's towel. Believers are called to humble, loving service to one another. And every believer, once cleansed, needs daily cleansing from the defilement of walking in a sinful world.

John 14:1-6 — The Way to the Father

Christ promises a prepared home and His personal return. He is the only way to the Father, the truth itself and the source of life.

John 15:1-8 — Abiding in the Vine

Fruitfulness comes only from abiding in Christ. Without Him we can do nothing; in Him we bear much fruit, to the Father's glory.

John 16:7-15 — The Spirit's Work

The Spirit convicts the world, guides believers into truth, and glorifies Christ. It was better for the disciples that Christ ascended, so that the Spirit could come.

John 17 — The High Priestly Prayer

Christ prayed for His own glory, for His disciples' protection and sanctification through the Word, and for the unity and future glory of all believers. He still intercedes for His people (Hebrews 7:25).

John 19:30 — "It Is Finished"

The work of salvation is complete. Nothing can be added by human effort, ritual or merit. The debt is paid in full.

John 20:24-31 — From Doubt to Worship

Thomas' honest doubt became the greatest confession: "My Lord and my God." Those who believe without seeing are blessed, and the Gospel was written so that they may believe and have life.

John 21:15-19 — Peter Restored

Christ restores failing disciples, asks for love, and gives a commission. Three denials are answered by three confessions. Each believer's call is personal: "Follow thou me."

Part Six: The Major Teachings of John

1. The Deity of Christ

Jesus is God, eternal, Creator, equal with the Father (1:1; 8:58; 10:30; 20:28).

2. The Incarnation

The Word became flesh: truly God and truly man (1:14).

3. The Trinity

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinct persons, one God (1:1; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26).

4. Salvation by Believing

Eternal life is received by believing in Jesus Christ (1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:47; 20:31).

5. The New Birth

No one can see or enter God's kingdom without being born again by the Spirit (3:3-8).

6. Eternal Security

Believers have eternal life now and will never perish (5:24; 6:37-39; 10:27-29).

7. God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

The Father gives and draws (6:37, 44; 17:2), yet whoever believes is saved and those who refuse are responsible (3:18; 5:40).

8. The Love of God

God loved the world and gave His Son (3:16); Christ loved His own to the end (13:1).

9. The Holy Spirit

The Comforter indwells, teaches, convicts and glorifies Christ (14-16).

10. The Word of God Is Truth

"Thy word is truth" (17:17); "the scripture cannot be broken" (10:35).

11. Love for One Another

The new commandment is the mark of a disciple (13:34-35; 15:12).

12. Abiding in Christ

Fruit comes only from union with Him (15:1-8).

13. True Worship

In spirit and in truth (4:23-24).

14. The Resurrection and Final Judgment

All will be raised, to life or to condemnation (5:28-29; 11:25).

15. The Return of Christ

"I will come again, and receive you unto myself" (14:3).

Part Seven: Connections — How John Links to the Rest of the Bible

John and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	"In the beginning" (1:1; John 1:1); God breathing life into man (2:7; John 20:22); Jacob's ladder (28:12; John 1:51); Abraham seeing Christ's day (22; John 8:56)
Exodus	The tabernacle and God's glory (40:34; John 1:14); the Passover lamb (12; John 1:29; 19:36); manna (16; John 6:31); water from the rock (17:6; John 7:37); the pillar of fire (13:21; John 8:12); "I AM THAT I AM" (3:14; John 8:58)
Leviticus	Love thy neighbour (19:18; John 13:34); the penalty for adultery (20:10; John 8:5)
Numbers	The brazen serpent (21:8-9; John 3:14)
Deuteronomy	The prophet like Moses (18:15; John 1:21; 6:14); Moses wrote of Christ (John 5:46)
2 Kings	Jonah from Galilee (14:25; John 7:52)
Psalms	22:18 (John 19:24); 23 (John 10); 34:20 (19:36); 35:19 and 69:4 (15:25); 41:9 (13:18); 69:9 (2:17); 69:21 (19:28); 78:24 (6:31); 80:8 (15:1); 82:6 (10:34)
Isaiah	5:1-7 (the vine); 6:1-10 (John 12:40-41); 40:3 (1:23); 53:1, 7 (12:38; 1:29); 54:13 (6:45)
Ezekiel	Clean water and a new spirit (36:25-27; John 3:5); the shepherds and the one Shepherd (34; John 10)
Zechariah	The King on a colt (9:9; John 12:15); the pierced One (12:10; John 19:37)
Malachi	Elijah (4:5; John 1:21)

John and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew, Mark and Luke	John supplements their accounts; all four record the feeding of the five thousand, the triumphal entry, the passion and the resurrection
Acts	The Comforter comes at Pentecost (2; John 14-16); John with Peter (3-4); Thomas and the eleven (1:13)
Romans	Life in the Spirit; nothing can separate believers from God's love (8; John 10:28)
1 Corinthians	Christ the firstfruits of the resurrection (15; John 11:25)
Philippians	Christ's humbling as a servant (2:5-8; John 13:4-5)
Colossians	Christ the Creator and image of God (1:15-17; John 1:3, 18)
Hebrews	God speaking by His Son, the Creator and radiance of His glory (1:1-3; John 1:1-18); Christ our interceding High Priest (7:25; John 17)
1 Peter	Born again by the word of God (1:23; John 3:3-5); Christ the Shepherd (2:25; 5:4; John 10; 21:15-17)

Book	Link
1 John	"That which was from the beginning... the Word of life" (1:1; John 1:1); God is light (1:5; John 8:12); love one another (3:11; John 13:34); born of God (5:1; John 1:13); "that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (5:13; John 20:31)
Revelation	The Word of God (19:13; John 1:1); the Lamb (5:6; John 1:29); the pierced One seen by every eye (1:7; John 19:37); living water freely (22:17; John 4:14; 7:37); no need of sun, the Lamb is the light (21:23; John 8:12); God dwelling with men (21:3; John 1:14)

Themes That Run from John Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In John	Developed in the New Testament
The Word of God	Genesis 1; Psalm 33:6	1:1-14	Hebrews 4:12; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13
The Lamb of God	Genesis 22:8; Exodus 12; Isaiah 53:7	1:29; 19:36	1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 5:6-12
The new birth	Ezekiel 36:25-27	3:3-8	Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 5:1
Living water	Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 2:13	4:10-14; 7:37-39	Revelation 21:6; 22:1, 17
Light and darkness	Genesis 1:3; Isaiah 9:2	1:4-9; 8:12	2 Corinthians 4:6; 1 John 1:5-7; Revelation 21:23
The Good Shepherd	Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34	10:1-30	Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4
The Comforter	Joel 2:28-29	14-16	Acts 2; Romans 8; Galatians 5:22-25
Eternal life	Daniel 12:2	3:16; 10:28; 17:3	Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11-13

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and receive life through His name** (1:12; 20:31).
- **Come and see; bring others to Jesus** (1:39-46).
- **Do whatever He tells you** (2:5).
- **Be sure you are born again** (3:7).
- **Let Christ increase and yourself decrease** (3:30).
- **Cross barriers to share living water** (4:7-10).
- **Worship in spirit and in truth** (4:24).
- **Lift up your eyes to the harvest** (4:35).
- **Search the Scriptures; they testify of Christ** (5:39).
- **Labour for the food that endures** (6:27).
- **Come to Christ; He will never cast you out** (6:37).
- **When others leave, say: "Lord, to whom shall we go?"** (6:68).
- **Be willing to do God's will, and you will know His truth** (7:17).
- **Don't condemn others while ignoring your own sin** (8:7).
- **Continue in His word to know the truth that sets you free** (8:31-32).
- **Tell what you know: "Once I was blind, now I see"** (9:25).
- **Listen for the Shepherd's voice and follow Him** (10:27).
- **Rest secure in His hand** (10:28-29).
- **Trust His timing when He delays** (11:6).
- **Weep with those who weep** (11:35).
- **Pour out your best on Jesus** (12:3).
- **Die to self to bear fruit** (12:24-25).
- **Don't love the praise of men more than God's** (12:43).
- **Serve others humbly** (13:14-15).
- **Love one another as Christ loved you** (13:34-35).
- **Don't let your heart be troubled** (14:1, 27).
- **Show love for Christ by obedience** (14:15).
- **Abide in Christ; without Him you can do nothing** (15:5).
- **Expect the world's hatred, but take heart: He has overcome** (15:18; 16:33).
- **Let God's Word sanctify you** (17:17).
- **Rest in the finished work of Christ** (19:30).
- **Come out of secret discipleship** (19:38-39).
- **Move from doubt to worship** (20:28).
- **Accept Christ's restoration after failure** (21:15-17).

- **Follow Christ without comparing yourself to others** (21:22).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:1	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
1:12	But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name
1:14	And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth.
1:29	Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.
3:3	Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
3:16	For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
5:24	He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.
6:35	I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger
6:37	Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
8:12	I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
8:32	And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
8:58	Before Abraham was, I am.
10:10	I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.
10:11	I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
10:28	And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
11:25	I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live
13:35	By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.
14:6	I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
14:27	Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you
15:5	I am the vine, ye are the branches... for without me ye can do nothing.
16:33	In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
17:17	Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.
19:30	It is finished.
20:28	My Lord and my God.
20:31	These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Conclusion

John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, wrote so that his readers might believe and have life. He begins before creation: the Word was with God and was God, and became flesh and dwelt among us. He shows Jesus as the Lamb of God, the One who must be lifted up like the serpent, the giver of living water to a Samaritan woman, the bread of life, the light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth and the life, and the true vine. Seven signs reveal His glory, from water turned to wine to Lazarus called from the grave. He claims the divine name, "Before Abraham was, I am," and His enemies take up stones. In the upper room He washes His disciples' feet, gives them a new commandment, promises another Comforter and a prepared place, and prays for all who will ever believe. In the garden His "I am" throws His captors to the ground; on the cross He cries, "It is finished." On the third day He calls Mary by name, shows His wounds to Thomas, who cries, "My Lord and my God," and by the sea He restores Peter with the words, "Follow me." John's testimony is true, and it still calls every reader to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and in believing to have life through His name.

> *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*
>
> **John 20:31**

Acts

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Luke • Date: c. AD 62 • Chapters: 28

> *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*
>
> **Acts 1:8**

Part One: Introduction to Acts

The Book

Acts is the second volume of Luke's two-part work, the sequel to his Gospel. It opens: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up" (1:1-2). The Gospel records what Jesus began to do; Acts records what the risen, ascended Jesus continued to do through His Holy Spirit in His apostles and churches. The traditional title is "The Acts of the Apostles," but it could equally be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" or "The Acts of the Risen Christ." It is the only historical record of the first thirty years of the church, and it provides the setting for most of Paul's letters.

The Author and Date

Luke, the beloved physician and companion of Paul, wrote Acts (see the Luke study). In several passages the narrative changes from "they" to "we" (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16), showing that Luke himself was present. Acts ends with Paul spending two years under house arrest in Rome (28:30-31), around AD 60-62. It does not mention Paul's trial or death, Nero's persecution of Christians (AD 64), or the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70), events Luke would surely have recorded had they already happened. So Acts was probably written around AD 62.

Purpose and Theme

Acts records how the gospel of Jesus Christ spread, by the power of the Holy Spirit, from Jerusalem to Rome, from Jews to Gentiles, and from a small group in an upper room to churches throughout the Roman Empire. Its outline is given in the risen Lord's final words:

> *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*
>
> **Acts 1:8**

Witness Stage	Chapters	Main Figure	Key Events
Jerusalem	1-7	Peter	Pentecost; the first church; persecution; Stephen martyred
Judea and Samaria	8-12	Philip, Peter	Samaria; the Ethiopian; Saul's conversion; Cornelius; Antioch
The uttermost part of the earth	13-28	Paul	Three missionary journeys; the Jerusalem council; arrest; Rome

Progress Reports

Luke punctuates the story with six summaries of the gospel's advance, each marking a new stage:

Report	Acts	Stage Completed
"The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly"	6:7	The church in Jerusalem
"Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria... and... were multiplied"	9:31	Expansion through Palestine
"But the word of God grew and multiplied"	12:24	Peter's ministry and Herod's death
"And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily"	16:5	Churches in Asia Minor
"So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed"	19:20	Ephesus and Asia
"Preaching the kingdom of God... with all confidence, no man forbidding him"	28:31	The gospel in Rome

The Accuracy of Acts

Luke's details have been confirmed again and again by archaeology and ancient records. He correctly names local officials with their exact titles: the proconsul Sergius Paulus of Cyprus (13:7), the "politarchs" ("rulers of the city," 17:6) of Thessalonica, the "Asiarchs" ("chief of Asia," 19:31) and "town clerk" (19:35) of Ephesus, Gallio the proconsul of Achaia (18:12, whose term is dated to AD 51-52 by an inscription at Delphi), and the "chief man" (protos) of Malta (28:7). The scholar Sir William Ramsay began his research doubting Acts and ended by calling Luke a historian of the first rank. The account of the voyage and shipwreck in chapter 27 is so precise that it has been studied by experienced sailors as a record of ancient navigation.

A Book of Transition

Acts records a unique period: the transition from the Old Covenant to the New, from a Jewish to a largely Gentile church, and from the ministry of Christ on earth to His ministry from heaven through the Spirit. Some events were unrepeatable, such as the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, the apostles' sign miracles confirming their message (2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4), and the special outpourings of the Spirit that marked the gospel's reaching Samaritans (8) and Gentiles (10). Bible teachers therefore distinguish between what Acts describes and what the rest of the New Testament prescribes for all churches. Acts also gives the clearest picture of the New Testament church: believers baptized after faith, local congregations led by elders and served by deacons, gathering on the first day of the week, devoted to the Word, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer, and sending out missionaries.

Paul's Letters in the Setting of Acts

Letter	Written From	Setting in Acts
Galatians	Antioch or Corinth	After the first journey (14) or during the second (18)
1 and 2 Thessalonians	Corinth	Second journey (18:5-11)

Letter	Written From	Setting in Acts
1 Corinthians	Ephesus	Third journey (19)
2 Corinthians	Macedonia	Third journey (20:1-2)
Romans	Corinth	Third journey (20:2-3)
Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon	Rome	House arrest (28:30-31)
1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy	Macedonia, then Rome	After Acts, during a probable release and second imprisonment

Outline of Acts

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Church in Jerusalem	1-7	Witness in Jerusalem
Waiting and the ascension	1	"Ye shall receive power"
Pentecost	2	The Spirit poured out; three thousand saved
Power and persecution	3-5	The lame man; boldness; Ananias and Sapphira
The seven and Stephen	6-7	Deacons; the first martyr
II. The Church in Judea and Samaria	8-12	Expansion beyond Jerusalem
Philip in Samaria and the Ethiopian	8	The gospel crosses barriers
Saul's conversion	9	"A chosen vessel"
Cornelius and the Gentiles	10-11	"God is no respecter of persons"
Herod's persecution	12	James killed; Peter freed; Herod judged
III. The Church to the Uttermost Part of the Earth	13-28	Paul's missions
The first missionary journey	13-14	Cyprus and Galatia
The Jerusalem council	15:1-35	Salvation by grace, not circumcision
The second missionary journey	15:36-18:22	Into Europe
The third missionary journey	18:23-21:16	Ephesus; farewell to the elders
Paul's arrest and defences	21:17-26:32	Jerusalem and Caesarea
The voyage to Rome	27-28	Shipwreck; the gospel in Rome

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Church in Jerusalem (Chapters 1-7)

Chapter 1 — The Ascension and Waiting

For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus "shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs," speaking of the kingdom of God (1:3). He commanded the apostles to wait in Jerusalem "for the promise of the Father," for "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (1:4-5). They asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He did not deny that He would, but said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (1:6-7). Their task was to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (1:8).

Then "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (1:9). Two men in white apparel said:

> *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
>
> **Acts 1:11**

He will return personally, bodily, visibly and in the clouds, to the Mount of Olives from which He ascended (1:12; Zechariah 14:4).

Back in the upper room, about 120 disciples, including the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers, now believers, "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (1:13-15). This is the last mention of Mary in Scripture: praying with the other believers, not as an object of prayer. Peter explained that Judas' betrayal and death fulfilled Scripture (Psalm 69:25; 109:8). (Judas hanged himself, Matthew 27:5; Acts adds that "falling headlong, he burst asunder," evidently when the body fell.) The disciples chose Matthias by lot to replace Judas as a witness of the resurrection (1:16-26).

Chapter 2 — Pentecost

The coming of the Spirit (2:1-13). On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Passover, the harvest feast:

> *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
>
> **Acts 2:2-4**

The "tongues" were real languages: Jews from fifteen regions, from Parthia to Rome, heard "every man... in his own language" the wonderful works of God (2:6-11). At Babel, God confused human languages in judgment (Genesis 11); at Pentecost, He overcame the language barrier in grace. Some mocked: "These men are full of new wine" (2:13).

Peter's sermon (2:14-40). Peter explained that it was only nine in the morning, and that this was what Joel had prophesied: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh... whosoever shall call on the name of

the Lord shall be saved" (2:16-21; Joel 2:28-32). Then he preached Christ:

> *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs... Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*
>
> **Acts 2:22-24**

God planned the cross, yet those who crucified Christ were fully responsible. Peter quoted Psalm 16:8-11, where David said, "thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." David's tomb was still with them, so David spoke as a prophet of the Messiah's resurrection (2:25-31). "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (2:32). Exalted at God's right hand, Jesus had poured out the Spirit (2:33), fulfilling Psalm 110:1 (2:34-35).

> *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*
>
> **Acts 2:36**

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (2:37).

> *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*
>
> **Acts 2:38**

Some read this verse as teaching that baptism is necessary for forgiveness. Baptists and many others understand the forgiveness to be received through repentance and faith, with baptism following as its public confession. The Greek word translated "for" (eis) can mean "because of" or "with reference to," as when the men of Nineveh "repented at [eis] the preaching of Jonas" (Matthew 12:41). Elsewhere in Acts, forgiveness is promised to repentance and faith without mention of baptism (3:19; 10:43; 13:38-39; 16:31; 26:18), and Cornelius' household received the Spirit before being baptized (10:44-48). "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (2:39). "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (2:40).

The first church (2:41-47).

> *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*
>
> **Acts 2:41-42**

Those who received the word were baptized; the order is faith, then baptism. The church devoted itself to four things: the apostles' teaching (now preserved in the New Testament), fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer. They shared generously with those in need, met daily in the temple and in homes

"with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (2:44-47). Their sharing was voluntary (5:4), not compulsory communism.

Chapter 3 — The Lame Man Healed

At the hour of prayer, Peter and John met a man lame from birth begging at the Beautiful gate of the temple (3:1-3).

> *Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*
>
> **Acts 3:6**

Peter took him by the hand, and immediately his feet and ankles received strength; "he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God" (3:7-8; Isaiah 35:6).

In Solomon's porch, Peter preached to the astonished crowd. The power was not theirs but Jesus', whom they had "denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead" (3:14-15). "His name through faith in his name hath made this man strong" (3:16). They had acted in ignorance (3:17).

> *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things*
>
> **Acts 3:19-21**

Jesus is the prophet like Moses whom all must hear (3:22-23; Deuteronomy 18:15-19), and the Seed of Abraham in whom all families of the earth will be blessed (3:25; Genesis 22:18).

Chapter 4 — Boldness Before the Council

The priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees, "grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead," arrested Peter and John. Yet many believed, and the number of men reached about five thousand (4:1-4). Before the council, including Annas and Caiaphas, they were asked, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" (4:5-7). Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, answered:

> *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
>
> **Acts 4:10-12**

Salvation is found only in Jesus Christ. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (4:13). Forbidden to speak in Jesus' name, they replied, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (4:19-20).

Released, they reported to the church, which prayed, quoting Psalm 2 about the nations raging against the Lord's Anointed. They did not ask for safety but for boldness: "grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word" (4:24-30).

> *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*
>
> **Acts 4:31**

The believers "were of one heart and of one soul," shared freely, and "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (4:32-33). Joseph, called Barnabas ("son of consolation"), sold land and gave the money (4:36-37).

Chapter 5 — Purity and Persecution

Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11). Ananias and his wife sold a property and kept back part of the price while pretending to give it all. Peter said, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost...? While it remained, was it not thine own?... thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God" (5:3-4). Lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God: the Spirit is God. Ananias fell down dead, and three hours later his wife, telling the same lie, also died. "And great fear came upon all the church" (5:11), the first use of "church" in Acts. The sin was not keeping back money, which was theirs to keep, but hypocrisy and lying to God. God guarded the purity of the young church.

Signs and prison (5:12-42). Many signs were done; people laid the sick in the streets so Peter's shadow might fall on them, and believers were "the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (5:12-16). The jealous high priest imprisoned the apostles, but an angel opened the prison: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (5:17-20). Brought again before the council, they answered:

> *We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*
>
> **Acts 5:29-31**

The council wanted to kill them, but the respected teacher Gamaliel advised caution: "if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (5:38-39). They were beaten and released. "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (5:41-42).

Chapter 6 — The Seven

As the church grew, Greek-speaking Jewish believers complained that their widows were neglected in the daily distribution (6:1). The apostles said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables" (6:2). The church chose "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," to oversee the work, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (6:3-4). The apostles laid hands on them (6:6). These seven are generally regarded as the forerunners of the office of deacon (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). The result: "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (6:7).

Stephen, "full of faith and power," did great wonders. His opponents "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake," so they produced false witnesses accusing him of speaking against the temple and the law (6:8-14). "And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel" (6:15).

Chapter 7 — Stephen's Defence and Martyrdom

Stephen answered with a survey of Israel's history, the longest speech in Acts. His points were:

- **God is not confined to the temple or the land.** He appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia (7:2), was with Joseph in Egypt (7:9), and spoke to Moses in the wilderness at the burning bush (7:30-34). "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (7:48; Isaiah 66:1-2).
- **Israel always rejected God's deliverers.** Joseph's brothers sold him (7:9); Israel rejected Moses: "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" (7:27, 35). Moses foretold the prophet like himself (7:37), yet the people turned to the golden calf (7:39-41).

Then he applied it:

> *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers*
>
> **Acts 7:51-52**

"They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth" (7:54).

> *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*
>
> **Acts 7:55-56**

Elsewhere Christ is seated at God's right hand; here He stands, as if to welcome His first martyr. They dragged Stephen out and stoned him, and "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (7:58).

> *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*
>
> **Acts 7:59-60**

Stephen died like his Lord, committing his spirit and praying for his killers (Luke 23:34, 46). For the believer, death is "falling asleep." His prayer was answered in part when the young man watching became the apostle Paul.

Section II: The Church in Judea and Samaria (Chapters 8-12)

Chapter 8 — Samaria and the Ethiopian

"And Saul was consenting unto his death." A great persecution scattered the church throughout Judea and Samaria, except the apostles (8:1). Saul "made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison" (8:3). "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (8:4). Persecution spread the gospel, just as Jesus had said (1:8).

Philip in Samaria (8:5-25). Philip, one of the seven, preached Christ in Samaria, with miracles, "And there was great joy in that city" (8:5-8). "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (8:12). Simon, a sorcerer who had amazed the people, also "believed" and was baptized (8:9-13). The apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John, who prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans, "and they received the Holy Ghost" (8:14-17). This unusual delay was part of the transition: the apostles' presence confirmed that the despised Samaritans were part of the one church, not a rival sect. When Simon offered money for the power to give the Spirit, Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money... for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore" (8:18-22). (From his name comes "simony," the buying of spiritual office.) His profession had been outward only.

The Ethiopian (8:26-40). An angel sent Philip to the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza, where an Ethiopian official, treasurer to Queen Candace, was returning from worship, reading Isaiah in his chariot (8:26-28). "Understandest thou what thou readest?" "How can I, except some man should guide me?" (8:30-31). He was reading Isaiah 53:7-8: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter" (8:32-33).

> *Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.*
>
> **Acts 8:35**

They came to water. "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (8:36-37). Faith is the requirement for baptism. (Verse 37 is in the King James Version and the Received Text, though missing from some manuscripts.) "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip... and he went on his way rejoicing" (8:38-39). Going down into and coming up out of the water describes immersion. The gospel was heading toward Africa.

Chapter 9 — The Conversion of Saul

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," obtained letters to arrest any believers ("any of this way") in Damascus (9:1-2). Near Damascus a light from heaven flashed around him, and he fell to the ground.

> *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*
>
> **Acts 9:4-6**

To persecute Christ's people is to persecute Christ Himself. The proud Pharisee, blinded, was led by the hand into Damascus, where he fasted and prayed for three days (9:8-11). The Lord sent a disciple, Ananias, who was understandably afraid. The Lord said:

> *Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*
>
> **Acts 9:15-16**

Ananias went, laid hands on him, and said, "Brother Saul" (9:17). Something like scales fell from his eyes; he received his sight and was baptized (9:18). "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (9:20). When the Jews plotted to kill him, the disciples let him down over the wall in a basket (9:23-25). In Jerusalem the disciples were afraid of him, "But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles" and vouched for him (9:26-27). When Greek-speaking Jews sought to kill him, he was sent home to Tarsus (9:29-30).

> *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.*
>
> **Acts 9:31**

Peter, travelling among the churches, healed Aeneas, paralysed eight years, at Lydda (9:32-35), and at Joppa raised Tabitha (Dorcas), a disciple "full of good works and almsdeeds" (9:36-42). He stayed in Joppa with Simon, a tanner (9:43), a trade considered unclean by strict Jews, a sign that Peter's barriers were already coming down.

Chapter 10 — Cornelius: The Gospel to the Gentiles

Cornelius, a Roman centurion at Caesarea, was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (10:1-2). Yet he was not saved; he needed to hear "words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (11:14). An angel told him to send for Peter at Joppa (10:3-8).

The next day, on the housetop at prayer, Peter saw a vision: a great sheet let down from heaven, full of all kinds of animals, clean and unclean. "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (10:9-15).

This happened three times. As Peter puzzled over it, Cornelius' messengers arrived, and the Spirit told him to go with them (10:17-20).

At Caesarea, Peter explained: "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (10:28). The vision about food was really about people.

> *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*
>
> **Acts 10:34-35**

God welcomes people of every nation on the same terms. Peter preached Jesus, "Lord of all" (10:36): anointed with the Holy Ghost, He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (10:38). They killed Him by hanging Him on a tree; God raised Him the third day; He is ordained "to be the Judge of quick and dead" (10:39-42).

> *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*
>
> **Acts 10:43**

> *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*
>
> **Acts 10:44**

The Jewish believers were astonished that the Spirit was poured out on Gentiles, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (10:45-46). Peter asked, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (10:47). They received the Spirit, and therefore salvation, the moment they believed, before baptism; then they were baptized. Baptism is the response of the saved, not the means of salvation.

Chapter 11 — The Church Accepts the Gentiles; Antioch

The believers in Jerusalem objected that Peter had eaten with uncircumcised men (11:2-3). Peter recounted everything: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (11:17).

> *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*
>
> **Acts 11:18**

Meanwhile, believers scattered by persecution reached Antioch in Syria, the third-largest city of the Roman Empire, and some began preaching the Lord Jesus to Greeks. "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" (11:19-21). The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas, who "when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (11:22-24). He fetched Saul from Tarsus, and they taught there for a whole year.

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (11:25-26). The name means "belonging to Christ." When the prophet Agabus foretold a great famine, which came under the emperor Claudius, the Antioch believers sent relief to Judea by Barnabas and Saul (11:27-30), the first missionary church also showing practical love to the mother church.

Chapter 12 — Herod's Persecution and Death

Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, killed James the brother of John with the sword (12:1-2), the first of the twelve to be martyred. Seeing it pleased the Jews, he arrested Peter during the Passover, intending to execute him afterward (12:3-4). "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (12:5).

On the night before his trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. An angel woke him; the chains fell off; they passed the guards, and the iron gate "opened to them of his own accord" (12:6-10). Peter went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many were praying. The girl Rhoda was so excited at hearing his voice that she forgot to open the door, and the praying believers told her, "Thou art mad" (12:12-15). God answered beyond their faith. Peter told them to inform James (the Lord's brother, now a leader in Jerusalem) and departed (12:17).

Herod later made a speech at Caesarea, and the people shouted, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (12:22-23). The Jewish historian Josephus also records Herod's sudden, painful death at Caesarea in AD 44 after being flattered as a god.

> *But the word of God grew and multiplied.*
>
> **Acts 12:24**

The persecutor died; the word lived on.

Section III: The Church to the Uttermost Part of the Earth (Chapters 13-28)

Chapter 13 — The First Missionary Journey Begins

In the church at Antioch were prophets and teachers, including Barnabas and Saul. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (13:2-3). Missions began with a local church, led by the Spirit, through worship, fasting and prayer.

Cyprus (13:4-12). On Barnabas' home island, they preached in synagogues, with John Mark as their helper. At Paphos the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus wanted to hear the word, but the sorcerer Bar-jesus (Elymas) opposed them. "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost," rebuked him and pronounced temporary blindness, and the proconsul believed (13:6-12). From here on Saul is called by his Roman name, Paul, and usually leads.

Antioch in Pisidia (13:13-52). At Perga, John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (13:13). At Antioch in Pisidia, invited to speak in the synagogue, Paul preached his first recorded sermon

(13:16-41). He traced God's dealings from the Exodus to David, then declared that from David's seed God had raised up "a Saviour, Jesus" (13:23). Though the rulers in Jerusalem condemned Him, fulfilling the prophets, God raised Him from the dead, as Psalm 2:7, Isaiah 55:3 and Psalm 16:10 foretold (13:27-37).

> *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*
>
> **Acts 13:38-39**

This is the first statement in Acts of justification by faith, the theme Paul would later develop in Romans and Galatians. He warned them not to be like the despisers of Habakkuk 1:5 (13:40-41).

The next Sabbath almost the whole city came. The Jewish leaders, filled with envy, opposed Paul. Paul and Barnabas answered boldly:

> *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*
>
> **Acts 13:46-47**

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (13:48). God's sovereign choice and human faith go together. Expelled from the region, the missionaries shook off the dust of their feet, "And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost" (13:50-52).

Chapter 14 — Lystra and the Return to Antioch

At Iconium many believed, but opponents stirred up the city and plotted to stone them, so they fled to Lystra and Derbe (14:1-7). At Lystra Paul healed a man lame from birth: "Stand upright on thy feet" (14:8-10). The crowd shouted in their local language, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men," calling Barnabas Jupiter and Paul Mercurius, and the priest of Jupiter brought oxen to sacrifice (14:11-13). Horrified, Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes and ran among them:

> *Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.*
>
> **Acts 14:15-17**

To pagans with no knowledge of Scripture, Paul began with God as Creator and His witness in creation and providence (Romans 1:20). Soon after, Jews from Antioch and Iconium turned the fickle crowd, who stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him dead. "Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city" (14:19-20). (Paul later refers to this, 2 Corinthians

11:25; 2 Timothy 3:11. Young Timothy, from Lystra, may have witnessed it.)

After Derbe, they bravely returned through the same cities, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord" (14:22-23). They established organised local churches with their own leaders. Back at Antioch, they reported "all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (14:26-27).

Chapter 15 — The Jerusalem Council

Men from Judea came to Antioch teaching, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (15:1). This struck at the heart of the gospel: is salvation by grace through faith alone, or by faith plus law-keeping? Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to settle the question with the apostles and elders (15:2-6). Some believing Pharisees insisted Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law (15:5).

Peter (15:7-11): God gave the Gentiles the Holy Ghost, "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (15:9-11). Jew and Gentile alike are saved by grace through faith.

Barnabas and Paul (15:12) told of the miracles God had done among the Gentiles.

James (15:13-21), the Lord's brother and leader of the Jerusalem church, concluded that God was taking from the Gentiles "a people for his name," quoting Amos 9:11-12: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David... That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called" (15:14-17). "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" (15:19). He proposed that Gentile believers be asked to abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled and from fornication (15:20, 29), not as conditions of salvation but to avoid offending Jewish believers and to keep fellowship, along with the moral standard of sexual purity.

The council sent a letter by Judas and Silas: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things" (15:28). The Gentile churches "rejoiced for the consolation" (15:31). The gospel of grace was preserved.

Paul and Barnabas separate (15:36-41). When Paul proposed revisiting the churches, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark; Paul refused because Mark had deserted them. "And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other" (15:39). Barnabas took Mark to Cyprus; Paul chose Silas. God overruled: two missionary teams went out instead of one, and Mark was later restored to Paul's favour (2 Timothy 4:11).

Chapter 16 — Into Europe: Philippi

At Lystra Paul found Timothy, a young disciple with a Jewish mother and Greek father, "well reported of by the brethren," and took him along, circumcising him so that Jews would not be hindered from hearing the gospel (16:1-3). Timothy's circumcision was a matter of missionary strategy, not salvation (contrast Galatians 2:3). "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (16:5).

The Holy Ghost forbade them to preach in Asia, and the Spirit did not allow them into Bithynia (16:6-7). At Troas, Paul saw a vision of a man of Macedonia: "Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (16:9). "And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia" (16:10): Luke joined the team, and the gospel crossed into Europe.

Lydia (16:11-15). At Philippi, a Roman colony, there was apparently no synagogue, so on the Sabbath they went to a riverside place of prayer and spoke to the women. Lydia, a seller of purple cloth from Thyatira who worshipped God, "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household," she welcomed them into her home (16:14-15). God opens hearts; the gospel must be heard and received.

The slave girl (16:16-24). A girl possessed by a spirit of divination, who earned money for her masters by fortune-telling, followed them crying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." Grieved, Paul commanded the spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus Christ (16:16-18). Her masters, seeing their profits gone, dragged Paul and Silas before the magistrates, who had them beaten with many stripes and thrown into the inner prison with their feet in the stocks (16:19-24).

The jailer (16:25-40).

> *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*
>
> **Acts 16:25**

An earthquake shook the prison, opened the doors and loosed everyone's bands. The jailer, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword to kill himself. "But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (16:26-28). Trembling, the jailer fell before them:

> *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*
>
> **Acts 16:30-31**

The answer to the most important question is simple: believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "And thy house" means that the same way of salvation was open to his household; "they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (16:32). He washed their wounds, "and was baptized, he and all his, straightway," and "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (16:33-34). All his household heard the word, believed and were baptized: the household baptisms in Acts are of believers, not infants (compare 18:8). The next day the magistrates, learning that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens whom they had beaten without trial, came and apologised (16:35-39).

Chapter 17 — Thessalonica, Berea and Athens

Thessalonica (17:1-9). For three Sabbaths Paul "reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (17:2-3). Some Jews and many God-fearing Greeks believed. Jealous opponents raised a mob, accusing them before the city rulers: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (17:6).

Berea (17:10-14).

> *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*
>
> **Acts 17:11**

The Bereans tested even an apostle's preaching by Scripture. "Therefore many of them believed" (17:12).

Athens (17:15-34). Waiting in Athens, the cultural capital of the ancient world, Paul's "spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry" (17:16). He reasoned in the synagogue and the marketplace daily, and Epicurean and Stoic philosophers called him a "babbler" who preached "strange gods... because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection" (17:17-18). They brought him to the Areopagus (Mars' hill).

> *Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.*
>
> **Acts 17:22-23**

Paul started where they were and led them to the true God:

- **The Creator:** "God that made the world and all things therein... dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (17:24).
- **The Sustainer:** He needs nothing, "seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (17:25).
- **The Ruler of nations:** He "hath made of one blood all nations of men... and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (17:26). All humanity is one race.
- **The near God:** "That they should seek the Lord... though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (17:27-28). Paul quoted their own poets.
- **The Judge:** "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (17:30-31).

At the mention of the resurrection, some mocked, some said, "We will hear thee again of this matter," and some believed, including Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus court, and a woman named Damaris (17:32-34).

Chapter 18 — Corinth and Ephesus

Corinth (18:1-17). Paul came to Corinth, a wealthy, immoral port city. He stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, Jewish believers recently expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius (around AD 49, an event also recorded by the Roman historian Suetonius), and worked with them as a tentmaker (18:1-3). When Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul devoted himself to preaching that Jesus was the Christ (18:5). When the Jews opposed and blasphemed, he moved next door to the house of Justus. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (18:7-8): hearing, believing, then baptism. The Lord encouraged Paul in a vision:

> *Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*
>
> **Acts 18:9-10**

He stayed eighteen months (18:11). When the Jews brought him before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, Gallio dismissed the case as a matter of Jewish religious disputes (18:12-17), effectively giving the Christian faith legal protection.

Ephesus and the end of the second journey (18:18-22). Paul sailed with Priscilla and Aquila to Ephesus, left them there, and returned via Caesarea and Jerusalem to Antioch (18:18-22).

The third journey begins; Apollos (18:23-28). Paul set out again through Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening the disciples (18:23). Meanwhile at Ephesus, Apollos, "an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures," taught accurately about Jesus but knew "only the baptism of John" (18:24-25). Priscilla and Aquila took him aside "and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (18:26), a beautiful example of gentle, private correction. Apollos went on to Achaia, where he "helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews... shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (18:27-28).

Chapter 19 — Ephesus

John's disciples (19:1-7). At Ephesus Paul found about twelve disciples and asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They had not even heard that the Holy Ghost had been given; they had been baptized only with John's baptism (19:2-3). Paul explained that John pointed people to Christ. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (19:5-6). These men were disciples of John who had not yet heard the full gospel of the crucified and risen Christ; this was another unique transitional event, completing the four groups in Acts who received the Spirit in a visible way (Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles and John's disciples).

Two years of teaching (19:8-20). Paul spoke in the synagogue for three months, then, when opposition grew, taught daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years, "so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (19:8-10). The churches of Colossae, Laodicea and the seven churches of Revelation 2-3 may date from this period. God worked "special miracles by the hands of Paul" (19:11-12). Seven sons of a Jewish priest named Sceva tried to cast out demons "by Jesus whom Paul preacheth"; the evil spirit answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" and attacked them (19:13-16). Fear fell on all, and many believers confessed their practices. Those who

had practised magic burned their books publicly, worth fifty thousand pieces of silver (19:17-19).

> *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*
>
> **Acts 19:20**

The riot (19:21-41). Demetrius, a silversmith who made shrines of the goddess Diana (Artemis), whose temple at Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the World, gathered the craftsmen: Paul had persuaded many "that they be no gods, which are made with hands," endangering both their trade and Diana's glory (19:24-27). The city filled with confusion, and for about two hours the crowd in the theatre shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (19:28-34). The town clerk calmed them, pointing out that the Christians were neither temple robbers nor blasphemers, and that complaints should go to the courts (19:35-41). The gospel's impact was so great that it threatened the economy of idolatry.

Chapter 20 — Troas and the Farewell to the Ephesian Elders

After visiting Macedonia and Greece (where he wrote Romans), Paul travelled toward Jerusalem with representatives of the churches carrying a gift for the poor saints there (20:1-6; Romans 15:25-26).

Troas (20:7-12). "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (20:7). The church gathered on Sunday, the day of the resurrection, for the Lord's Supper and preaching (compare 1 Corinthians 16:2). Paul preached until midnight. A young man named Eutychus, overcome by sleep, fell from a third-storey window "and was taken up dead." Paul embraced him: "Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him" (20:9-10). They talked until daybreak and were greatly comforted (20:11-12).

The Ephesian elders (20:17-38). At Miletus, Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus and gave his only recorded address to Christian leaders, a model for every pastor. He reminded them of his own example:

> *Ye know... after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations... And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **Acts 20:18-21**

He was going to Jerusalem, knowing that bonds and afflictions awaited him:

> *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*
>
> **Acts 20:24**

"I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (20:26-27). Then his charge:

> *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*
>
> **Acts 20:28**

Elders (presbyters) are also overseers (bishops) and shepherds who must feed the flock; these are three descriptions of one office in the New Testament local church. The church belongs to God, who purchased it "with his own blood," a striking statement of Christ's deity. Paul warned that "grievous wolves" would come in, and that from among the elders themselves men would arise "speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (20:29-30). "Therefore watch" (20:31). "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (20:32). He reminded them that he had worked with his own hands to support himself and others, "and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (20:33-35), a saying of Jesus not recorded in the Gospels. They knelt, prayed, wept and kissed him, sorrowing most because they would see his face no more (20:36-38).

Chapter 21 — Journey to Jerusalem and Arrest

At Tyre, disciples told Paul "through the Spirit" not to go to Jerusalem (21:4); the Spirit revealed what awaited him, and they urged him to avoid it. At Caesarea, Paul stayed with Philip the evangelist, whose four unmarried daughters prophesied (21:8-9). The prophet Agabus took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles" (21:10-11). When all begged him not to go, Paul answered:

> *What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.*
>
> **Acts 21:13-14**

In Jerusalem, James and the elders rejoiced at the report of God's work among the Gentiles, but told Paul that thousands of Jewish believers, "all zealous of the law," had heard that he taught Jews to abandon Moses. They advised him to pay the expenses of four men completing a vow, to show he respected the law (21:17-24). Paul agreed, becoming "unto the Jews... as a Jew" (1 Corinthians 9:20).

Near the end of the seven days, Jews from Asia saw him in the temple and falsely accused him of bringing Greeks into the inner courts (they had seen him in the city with Trophimus the Ephesian). The whole city was stirred; they dragged him out and tried to kill him (21:27-31). The Roman commander, Claudius Lysias, rescued him and bound him with two chains, fulfilling Agabus' prophecy (21:32-33). Paul asked to speak to the people; the commander was surprised that he spoke Greek, having taken him for an Egyptian rebel. "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city" (21:37-39). Standing on the stairs of the fortress, he addressed the crowd in Hebrew (21:40).

Chapter 22 — Paul's Defence Before the Crowd

Paul told his story: born in Tarsus, "brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers," zealous toward God, persecuting "this way unto the death" (22:3-5). He described his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road (22:6-11) and Ananias' visit: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (22:16). The washing away of sins comes through "calling on the name of the Lord" (Romans 10:13); baptism is the outward picture of that inward cleansing (1 Peter 3:21). Paul had already acknowledged Jesus as Lord three days earlier (9:5-6).

He told how the Lord appeared to him in the temple and said, "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles" (22:17-21). At the word "Gentiles," the crowd erupted: "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live" (22:22). The commander ordered him to be examined by scourging, but Paul asked, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" The commander had bought his citizenship at great price; Paul said, "But I was free born" (22:24-29).

Chapter 23 — Before the Council and the Plot

Before the Sanhedrin, Paul declared, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." The high priest Ananias ordered him struck on the mouth. Paul retorted, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." Told it was the high priest, Paul said, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people" (23:1-5; Exodus 22:28). Even when wronged, Paul respected God's Word about rulers.

Perceiving that the council was divided between Sadducees and Pharisees, Paul cried, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question" (23:6). The Sadducees deny resurrection, angels and spirits; the Pharisees believe them (23:8). The council split, and the commander rescued Paul again (23:7-10).

> *And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.*
>
> **Acts 23:11**

The Lord personally encouraged His discouraged servant and promised that he would reach Rome. More than forty Jews bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul (23:12-15). But Paul's nephew heard of the ambush and told the commander (23:16-22), who sent Paul by night to Caesarea under an escort of 470 soldiers with a letter to the governor Felix (23:23-35). God used a young relative and a Roman army to keep His promise.

Chapter 24 — Before Felix

The high priest and an orator named Tertullus accused Paul: "we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews... and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (24:5). Paul answered calmly:

> *But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God... that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.*
>
> **Acts 24:14-16**

Felix, who had "more perfect knowledge of that way," postponed the case (24:22). Later he and his wife Drusilla, a Jewish princess, sent for Paul to hear him concerning faith in Christ:

> *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*
>
> **Acts 24:25**

Felix was convicted but put off the decision. There is no record that the "convenient season" ever came. He also hoped Paul would bribe him (24:26). After two years, Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus, and left Paul in prison to please the Jews (24:27).

Chapter 25 — Before Festus: "I Appeal unto Caesar"

The Jewish leaders asked Festus to bring Paul to Jerusalem, planning to ambush him on the way (25:1-3). At Caesarea, they laid many serious charges they could not prove (25:7). When Festus asked whether Paul would go to Jerusalem for trial, Paul, knowing he would never get justice there, used his right as a Roman citizen: "I appeal unto Caesar." Festus replied, "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go" (25:9-12). Through this legal process, the Lord's promise that Paul would testify at Rome was being fulfilled.

King Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice came to visit Festus. Festus explained that the dispute concerned "one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive" (25:19), the heart of the gospel stated by a puzzled pagan governor. Agrippa wanted to hear Paul, and the next day he and Bernice came "with great pomp" (25:22-23).

Chapter 26 — Before Agrippa

Paul said he was happy to answer before Agrippa, an expert in Jewish customs (26:2-3). He described his strict Pharisee upbringing and his hope in God's promise to the fathers (26:4-7). "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (26:8). He told again of his persecution of the believers and his meeting with Jesus, who commissioned him:

> *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*
>
> **Acts 26:18**

"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (26:19). He had preached everywhere "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (26:20), saying

nothing but what the prophets and Moses foretold: "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (26:22-23).

Festus interrupted loudly: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Paul replied, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness... for this thing was not done in a corner" (26:24-26). The facts of the gospel were public and verifiable. Then he turned to the king:

> *King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.*
>
> **Acts 26:27-29**

"Almost" is not enough. Agrippa remarked that Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar (26:32), but God's purpose was to send him to Rome.

Chapter 27 — The Voyage and the Shipwreck

Paul, with other prisoners, was handed to a centurion named Julius of the Augustan cohort, who treated him kindly. Luke and Aristarchus went with him (27:1-3). Sailing was dangerous after "the fast" (the Day of Atonement, in autumn) (27:9). At Fair Havens in Crete, Paul warned that the voyage would bring great loss, but the centurion trusted the master and owner of the ship, who wanted to reach a better winter harbour (27:9-12).

A violent north-east wind called Euroclydon struck, driving the ship helplessly (27:14-15). The crew undergirded the ship with ropes, lowered the gear, threw out cargo and tackle (27:16-19). For many days neither sun nor stars appeared, "all hope that we should be saved was then taken away" (27:20). Then Paul stood up:

> *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.*
>
> **Acts 27:22-25**

"Whose I am, and whom I serve": Paul belonged to God and served Him, and in the storm he was the calmest man aboard. On the fourteenth night, near land, the sailors tried to escape in the lifeboat. Paul told the centurion, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved" (27:30-31). God had promised that all would be saved, yet the means (the sailors' skill) were part of His plan. The soldiers cut the boat loose. Paul urged everyone to eat, gave thanks to God publicly, and broke bread; they were encouraged and ate. There were 276 people on board (27:33-37). At dawn the ship ran aground and began to break up. The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners, but the centurion, wanting to save Paul, prevented them. Some swam, others clung to planks, "And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land" (27:38-44). God kept His word to the last person.

Chapter 28 — Malta and Rome

Malta (28:1-10). The island was Melita (Malta). The islanders showed unusual kindness, lighting a fire in the rain and cold (28:1-2). When Paul gathered sticks, a viper fastened on his hand. The people said, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." But he shook it into the fire and felt no harm, and they changed their minds and said he was a god (28:3-6; compare Mark 16:18). Paul healed the father of Publius, the chief man of the island, of fever and dysentery, and many others came and were healed (28:7-9). After three months they sailed for Italy (28:11).

Arrival in Rome (28:11-16). Believers from Rome came as far as the Appii forum and the Three Taverns to meet him, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage" (28:15). In Rome Paul was allowed to live by himself with a soldier guarding him (28:16).

The Jews in Rome (28:17-29). Paul called the Jewish leaders together and explained that he was bound "for the hope of Israel" (28:20). They had heard nothing against him personally, but of "this sect we know that every where it is spoken against" (28:22). On an appointed day many came, and "he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" (28:23). Some believed and some did not (28:24). Paul quoted Isaiah 6:9-10, which describes those who hear but do not understand (28:25-27):

> *Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.*
>
> **Acts 28:28**

Two years in Rome (28:30-31).

> *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*
>
> **Acts 28:30-31**

Acts ends not with Paul's death but with the gospel being preached freely at the heart of the empire. The last word in the Greek text is "unhindered." The story is unfinished because the work continues: every church and every believer since has been writing the next chapter of Acts. During these two years Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, and even members of Caesar's household believed (Philippians 1:12-13; 4:22).

Part Three: Christ in Acts

The Risen and Reigning Lord

Acts is the story of what Jesus "began both to do and teach" continuing from heaven (1:1). The risen Christ is active throughout: He gives commandments through the Spirit (1:2), pours out the Spirit (2:33), adds to the church (2:47), heals (3:16; 9:34), stands to receive Stephen (7:56), appears to Saul (9:5), directs His servants (16:7; 18:9-10; 23:11), and opens hearts (16:14).

Titles of Christ in Acts

Title	Acts	Meaning
Lord and Christ	2:36	Divine Lord and promised Messiah
Thy Holy One	2:27; 13:35	The sinless One whose body did not see corruption
Thy Son (Servant) Jesus	3:13, 26; 4:27, 30	The Servant of the LORD (Isaiah 52-53)
The Holy One and the Just	3:14; 7:52; 22:14	The righteous One they rejected
The Prince of life	3:15	The Author of life whom they killed
The prophet like Moses	3:22; 7:37	The One all must hear
The stone made head of the corner	4:11	The rejected cornerstone
A Prince and a Saviour	5:31	Ruler and Deliverer who gives repentance and forgiveness
The Son of man standing at God's right hand	7:56	The exalted Son of man of Daniel 7
The Son of God	8:37; 9:20	His divine sonship
Lord of all	10:36	Universal Lord of Jew and Gentile
Judge of quick and dead	10:42; 17:31	The appointed Judge of all
A Saviour, Jesus, of David's seed	13:23	The promised Son of David

Old Testament Prophecies Preached in Acts

The apostles preached Christ from the Old Testament:

Prophecy	Old Testament	Acts
Judas' office given to another	Psalm 69:25; 109:8	1:20
The Spirit poured out on all flesh	Joel 2:28-32	2:16-21
His soul not left in hell; His body not corrupted	Psalm 16:8-11	2:25-31; 13:35
Seated at God's right hand	Psalm 110:1	2:34-35
The prophet like Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15-19	3:22-23; 7:37
All nations blessed in Abraham's seed	Genesis 22:18	3:25

Prophecy	Old Testament	Acts
The rejected stone made head of the corner	Psalm 118:22	4:11
The nations raging against the LORD's Anointed	Psalm 2:1-2	4:25-26
"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"	Psalm 2:7	13:33
Led as a sheep to the slaughter	Isaiah 53:7-8	8:32-35
The sure mercies of David	Isaiah 55:3	13:34
A light to the Gentiles	Isaiah 49:6	13:47
The tabernacle of David rebuilt; the Gentiles called	Amos 9:11-12	15:16-17
Hearing but not understanding	Isaiah 6:9-10	28:26-27

Part Four: Fulfilled Prophecies and Promises

Prophecy or Promise	Given	Fulfillment in Acts
The Spirit will come	Luke 24:49; John 14:16; Acts 1:5	2:1-4
Witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost part	1:8	2-7; 8-12; 13-28
Christ will build His church	Matthew 16:18	2:41, 47 and throughout
Peter will open the kingdom to Jews and Gentiles	Matthew 16:19	2 (Jews); 10 (Gentiles)
Believers will be brought before councils and kings	Matthew 10:17-18; Luke 21:12	4-5; 24-26
The Spirit will give them words	Luke 12:11-12	4:8; 6:10
Saul will suffer for Christ's name and bear it before Gentiles and kings	9:15-16	13-28; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28
A great famine	11:28 (Agabus)	Under Claudius (11:28-30)
Paul will be bound in Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles	21:11 (Agabus)	21:33
Paul will testify at Rome	23:11	28:16-31
No life lost in the shipwreck	27:22-24	27:44

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Acts 1:8 — The Great Commission's Pattern

Power comes from the Holy Spirit; the task is witness; the subject is Christ; the scope is the whole world, beginning at home. Every church's mission still follows this pattern.

Acts 1:11 — The Promise of His Return

The same Jesus will come in the same way: personally, bodily and visibly. This hope motivates watchful, faithful service.

Acts 2:36-42 — The First Gospel Sermon and the First Church

Peter preached Christ crucified and risen as Lord and Christ. Convicted hearers repented, were baptized, and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. This is the pattern of a New Testament church.

Acts 4:12 — No Other Name

Salvation is found exclusively in Jesus Christ. There is no other way, name or saviour.

Acts 4:13, 29-31 — Boldness

Ordinary people became bold because they had been with Jesus and were filled with the Spirit. They prayed not for safety but for boldness.

Acts 5:29 — Obeying God Rather Than Men

When human authorities forbid what God commands, believers must obey God, accepting the consequences with joy.

Acts 7:54-60 — The Death of Stephen

Stephen saw Christ standing to receive him, committed his spirit to the Lord, prayed for his killers, and fell asleep. The blood of the first martyr became the seed of the church, and his witness began the work that would win Saul.

Acts 8:26-40 — The Ethiopian

God sent one man to one seeker on a desert road. Beginning at Isaiah 53, Philip preached Jesus. The Ethiopian believed, was baptized by immersion, and went on rejoicing. Personal evangelism from the Scriptures is God's method.

Acts 9:1-19 — The Conversion of Saul

No one is beyond the reach of God's grace. The chief persecutor became the chief apostle. His question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?", is the right response of every converted heart.

Acts 10:34-48 — No Respecter of Persons

God accepts people of every nation through faith in Christ. Cornelius' household received the Spirit when they believed, before baptism, showing that salvation is by faith alone.

Acts 15:1-21 — Saved by Grace

The council rejected the teaching that Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law to be saved. "Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." This decision preserved the gospel of grace.

Acts 16:25-34 — "What Must I Do to Be Saved?"

The jailer's question receives the clearest answer in Scripture: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Saving faith produced immediate change: kindness, baptism and joy.

Acts 17:11 — The Noble Bereans

True nobility is receiving God's Word eagerly and testing all teaching by Scripture daily.

Acts 17:22-31 — Paul at Athens

Paul reached pagan philosophers by starting with God as Creator, Sustainer and Ruler, then calling all men everywhere to repent in view of the coming judgment guaranteed by Christ's resurrection.

Acts 20:17-38 — A Pastor's Charge

Faithful ministry means humility, tears, declaring the whole counsel of God publicly and from house to house, guarding the flock purchased with God's own blood, watching against false teachers, and generosity. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Acts 24:25 — The Convenient Season

Felix trembled at the gospel but delayed. Conviction without decision is dangerous; "now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Acts 26:28-29 — Almost Persuaded

Agrippa was "almost" a Christian. Almost is not enough; the gospel calls for wholehearted commitment.

Acts 27:21-25 — Faith in the Storm

"I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." In the worst storm, the man who belonged to God and served Him was the source of hope for all aboard.

Acts 28:30-31 — The Unhindered Gospel

Acts ends with the gospel preached boldly at the centre of the world, "no man forbidding him." The story continues through every generation of faithful witnesses.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Acts

1. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit empowers witness, fills believers with boldness, guides missionaries, appoints leaders and is God Himself (1:8; 2:4; 4:31; 5:3-4; 13:2; 16:6-7; 20:28).

2. The Resurrection of Christ

The resurrection is the centre of apostolic preaching and the proof of Christ's identity and coming judgment (2:24-32; 4:33; 17:31; 25:19; 26:23).

3. Salvation by Grace Through Faith

Forgiveness and justification come through faith in Christ, not by the law (10:43; 13:38-39; 15:11; 16:31; 26:18).

4. Repentance

Turning from sin to God accompanies saving faith (2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20).

5. Salvation Only in Christ

"Neither is there salvation in any other" (4:12).

6. Believer's Baptism

Those who believed were baptized, by immersion, as the first step of obedience (2:41; 8:12, 36-38; 10:47-48; 16:33; 18:8).

7. The Local Church

Congregations gathered for teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer, were led by elders (overseers) and served by deacons, met on the first day of the week, exercised discipline, and sent out missionaries (2:42; 6:1-6; 13:1-3; 14:23; 20:7, 17, 28).

8. Bold Witness and Missions

Believers spread the gospel everywhere, often through persecution (4:20, 31; 8:4; 13-28).

9. The Gospel for All Nations

God shows no partiality; Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles are saved on the same terms (10:34-35; 11:18; 15:9).

10. Suffering for Christ

Persecution is normal; believers rejoice to suffer for His name (5:41; 9:16; 14:22; 20:24).

11. God's Sovereignty

God's purposes are fulfilled through human evil, legal processes, storms and serpents (2:23; 4:27-28; 13:48; 23:11; 27:24).

12. Prayer

The early church prayed constantly and saw God answer (1:14; 2:42; 4:24-31; 12:5; 13:3; 16:25).

13. The Word of God

The word grew, multiplied and prevailed; believers searched the Scriptures daily (6:7; 12:24; 17:11; 19:20; 20:32).

Part Seven: Connections — How Acts Links to the Rest of the Bible

Acts and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The confusion of languages at Babel reversed at Pentecost (11; Acts 2); Abraham's call and the promise to his seed (12:1-3; 22:18; Acts 3:25; 7:2-8); Joseph (37-50; Acts 7:9-16)
Exodus	Moses and the Exodus (2-14; Acts 7:20-36); the golden calf (32; Acts 7:39-41); "Thou shalt not... curse the ruler of thy people" (22:28; Acts 23:5)
Leviticus	Laws about blood (17:10-14; Acts 15:20)
Deuteronomy	The prophet like Moses (18:15-19; Acts 3:22; 7:37); hanged on a tree (21:23; Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29)
2 Samuel	The covenant with David (7:12-16; Acts 2:30; 13:22-23)
1 Kings	God not contained in a house (8:27; Acts 7:48; 17:24)
Psalms	2 (Acts 4:25-26; 13:33); 16 (2:25-31; 13:35); 69 and 109 (1:20); 110:1 (2:34-35); 118:22 (4:11); 146:6 (4:24; 14:15)
Isaiah	6:9-10 (28:26-27); 49:6 (13:47); 53:7-8 (8:32-33); 55:3 (13:34); 66:1-2 (7:49-50)
Joel	The Spirit poured out (2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21)
Amos	Israel's idolatry in the wilderness (5:25-27; Acts 7:42-43); the tabernacle of David (9:11-12; Acts 15:16-17)
Jonah	Joppa and the call to the Gentiles (1:3; Acts 9:43-10:48)
Habakkuk	"Behold, ye despisers" (1:5; Acts 13:41)

Acts and the New Testament

Book	Link
Luke	Volume one of Luke's work; the promise of the Father (24:49; Acts 1:4); the ascension (24:50-51; Acts 1:9)
Matthew, Mark and John	The Great Commission carried out (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20); the Comforter comes (John 14-16)
Romans	Written from Corinth on the third journey (Acts 20:2-3); Paul's longing to visit Rome (1:10-15; 15:23-28; Acts 19:21; 28); justification by faith (Acts 13:38-39)
1 and 2 Corinthians	The founding of the church at Corinth (Acts 18); Apollos (1 Corinthians 3:6; Acts 18:24-28); the collection for Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:1-4; Acts 24:17); Paul's sufferings (2 Corinthians 11:23-33)
Galatians	The Jerusalem council and the circumcision controversy (Galatians 2; Acts 15); the churches of Galatia (Acts 13-14)
Ephesians	The church at Ephesus (Acts 19-20)
Philippians	The church at Philippi (Acts 16); Paul in Rome (Philippians 1:12-13; Acts 28:30)

Book	Link
Colossians and Philemon	Written from Rome; Mark, Luke and Aristarchus with Paul (Colossians 4:10-14; Acts 27:2)
1 and 2 Thessalonians	The church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
1 and 2 Timothy, Titus	Timothy (Acts 16:1-3); elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; Acts 6; 14:23; 20:17-28); Paul's final imprisonment
Hebrews	Stephen's themes: the temple, the tabernacle, and Christ greater than Moses
James	James, leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13; 21:18)
1 and 2 Peter	Peter's ministry (Acts 1-12); Christ the rejected cornerstone (1 Peter 2:7; Acts 4:11)
Revelation	The church at Ephesus which left its first love (2:1-7; Acts 19-20)

Themes That Run from Acts Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Acts	Developed in the New Testament
The outpoured Spirit	Joel 2:28-32; Ezekiel 36:27	2; 8; 10; 19	Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5:22-25
The gospel to the nations	Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6	1:8; 10; 13:47	Romans 15:8-21; Ephesians 3:6
Justification by faith	Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4	13:38-39; 15:9-11	Romans 3-5; Galatians 2-3
The church	Psalm 22:22	2:41-47; 14:23; 20:28	Ephesians; 1 Timothy 3
Suffering witness	Isaiah 53	5:41; 7; 14:22	2 Corinthians 4; 11; 2 Timothy 3:12
The resurrection	Psalm 16:10	2:24-32; 17:31	1 Corinthians 15
The return of Christ	Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 14:4	1:11; 3:20-21	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Wait on God for His power before you go** (1:4, 8).
- **Look for Christ's return, but don't stand gazing; get to work** (1:11).
- **Pray with other believers with one accord** (1:14).
- **Preach Christ crucified and risen** (2:23-24, 36).
- **Repent, believe and be baptized** (2:38, 41).
- **Continue stedfastly in doctrine, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer** (2:42).
- **Give what you have, even if it is not silver and gold** (3:6).
- **Proclaim that salvation is in Christ alone** (4:12).
- **Spend time with Jesus; it shows** (4:13).
- **Pray for boldness, not ease** (4:29).
- **Never lie to God or play the hypocrite** (5:3-4).
- **Obey God rather than men** (5:29).
- **Rejoice to suffer for Christ's name** (5:41).
- **Give priority to prayer and the Word** (6:4).
- **Forgive those who hurt you, like Stephen** (7:60).
- **Let persecution scatter you as a witness** (8:4).
- **Guard against wanting spiritual power for selfish reasons** (8:18-22).
- **Start where people are, and preach Jesus from the Scriptures** (8:35).
- **Ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"** (9:6).
- **Be a Barnabas: stand by new and struggling believers** (9:27; 11:23-24).
- **Don't call anyone God has cleansed common or unclean** (10:15, 28).
- **Pray without ceasing for those in trouble** (12:5).
- **Give God the glory; never take it yourself** (12:23).
- **Send out missionaries from your church** (13:2-3).
- **Expect tribulation on the way to the kingdom** (14:22).
- **Hold firmly to salvation by grace alone** (15:11).
- **Follow the Spirit's closed and open doors** (16:6-10).
- **Sing praises at midnight** (16:25).
- **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ** (16:31).
- **Search the Scriptures daily** (17:11).
- **Let idolatry stir your spirit to witness** (17:16).
- **Correct others privately and gently, like Priscilla and Aquila** (18:26).
- **Burn whatever belongs to your old life** (19:19).
- **Finish your course with joy** (20:24).

- **Declare the whole counsel of God** (20:27).
- **Remember: it is more blessed to give than to receive** (20:35).
- **Say, "The will of the Lord be done"** (21:14).
- **Don't wait for a "convenient season"** (24:25).
- **Don't be "almost" persuaded** (26:28).
- **Believe God in the storm** (27:25).
- **Keep preaching Christ with confidence** (28:31).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:8	But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
1:11	This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.
2:42	And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
3:19	Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out
4:12	Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
4:20	For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.
5:29	We ought to obey God rather than men.
10:34	Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons
13:38-39	Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things
16:31	Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.
17:11	They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.
17:30	But now commandeth all men every where to repent
20:24	But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy
20:28	Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
20:35	It is more blessed to give than to receive.
26:28	Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
27:25	For I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Conclusion

Acts tells how the risen Christ, through His Holy Spirit, took a small group of frightened disciples in an upper room and turned the world upside down. At Pentecost the Spirit came, Peter preached Christ crucified and risen, and three thousand believed and were baptized. The church devoted itself to the Word, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer; it faced threats with prayer for boldness, guarded its purity, appointed servants, and gave its first martyr, Stephen, who saw the Son of man standing to receive him. Persecution scattered the believers, and the gospel crossed every barrier: to Samaritans, to an Ethiopian on a desert road, to a Roman centurion. The greatest persecutor became the greatest missionary. The church at Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas; the Jerusalem council affirmed salvation by grace alone; the gospel crossed into Europe, reached philosophers at Athens and sorcerers at Ephesus, and stood before governors and kings. Through riots, prisons, plots, storms and shipwreck, God kept His word, and Acts ends with Paul in Rome, preaching the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him. The story is unfinished, because Christ's witnesses are still carrying it to the uttermost part of the earth.

> *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me*
>
> **Acts 1:8**

Romans

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 57 • Chapters: 16

> *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*
>
> **Romans 1:16**

Part One: Introduction to Romans

The Epistles

With Romans, the New Testament moves from history to letters. Twenty-one of its twenty-seven books are epistles: thirteen by Paul (Romans to Philemon), and eight general letters (Hebrews to Jude). The Gospels record the life of Christ; Acts records the spread of the church; the epistles explain the meaning of Christ's work and how believers and churches should live. Romans stands first among them because it is the fullest and most systematic statement of the gospel in Scripture.

The Author

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God" (1:1). Paul was born in Tarsus, a Roman citizen, a Pharisee trained under Gamaliel, and once the church's fiercest persecutor, until the risen Christ met him on the Damascus road (Acts 9). He dictated Romans to a scribe named Tertius, who adds his own greeting (16:22).

Date and Place

Paul wrote Romans from Corinth around AD 56-57, near the end of his third missionary journey, during his three months in Greece (Acts 20:2-3). Several details confirm this: he commends Phebe of Cenchrea, Corinth's port, who probably carried the letter (16:1-2); he sends greetings from Gaius, his host, whom he baptized at Corinth (16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14); and from "Erastus the chamberlain of the city" (16:23). A first-century paving stone found at Corinth bears an inscription naming an Erastus who laid the pavement at his own expense as a city official. Paul was about to take a financial gift from the Gentile churches to the poor believers in Jerusalem (15:25-26).

The Church at Rome

Paul had not founded the church at Rome or visited it yet (1:10-13). It may have begun with Jews and converts from Rome who were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:10) and returned home. Its faith was "spoken of throughout the whole world" (1:8). It included both Jewish and Gentile believers. The emperor Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome around AD 49 (Acts 18:2); when they returned after his death in AD 54, Gentile believers had probably taken the lead, which may explain Paul's concern for unity between Jew and Gentile in chapters 9-11 and 14-15.

Purpose

Paul wrote to:

- set out the gospel he preached, fully and clearly, for a church he had not yet taught in person (1:15-17);
- prepare for his visit and enlist their support for a mission to Spain (15:23-24, 28);
- explain God's purposes for Israel and the Gentiles (9-11);
- promote unity and mutual acceptance between strong and weak, Jew and Gentile (14-15);

- answer objections to the gospel of grace (3:5-8; 6:1, 15; 9:14, 19).

Theme: The Righteousness of God

> *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
>
> **Romans 1:16-17**

The "righteousness of God" is both God's own perfect righteousness and the righteous standing He gives to sinners who believe in Christ. Romans shows that all people are unrighteous, that God provides righteousness as a free gift through faith in Christ's death and resurrection, that this righteousness transforms the believer's life, that God remains righteous in His dealings with Israel, and that it must be lived out in everyday relationships.

The Influence of Romans

Few books have shaped history like Romans. In AD 386 Augustine, struggling with sin, heard a child's voice saying "Take up and read," opened to Romans 13:13-14, and was converted. In the sixteenth century Martin Luther, studying Romans 1:17, came to understand that God's righteousness is given to sinners by faith, and the Protestant Reformation followed. In 1738 John Wesley, hearing Luther's preface to Romans read in London, felt his "heart strangely warmed" and trusted Christ alone for salvation. Countless believers since have come to Christ through "the Romans Road."

The Romans Road

Step	Verse	Truth
The problem	3:23	"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"
The penalty	6:23	"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"
The provision	5:8	"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"
The response	10:9-10	"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"
The promise	10:13	"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"
The assurance	5:1; 8:1	"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God"; "There is therefore now no condemnation"

Key Words of Romans

Term	Meaning	Key Reference
Righteousness	God's perfect standard, and the right standing He gives believers	1:17; 3:21-22
Justify, justification	To declare righteous, a legal verdict of acquittal	3:24, 28; 5:1
Impute, count, reckon	To credit to someone's account	4:3-8, 22-24
Grace	God's undeserved favour	3:24; 5:20-21; 11:6
Faith	Trusting God and His promise in Christ	1:17; 4:5; 10:17
Propitiation	A sacrifice that satisfies God's righteous wrath (the word is used for the mercy seat)	3:25
Redemption	Release by payment of a price	3:24; 8:23
Reconciliation (atonement)	Restoring a broken relationship; enemies made friends	5:10-11
Sanctification	Being made holy in life	6:19, 22
Adoption	Placement as God's sons and heirs	8:15, 23
Glorification	Final perfection in body and soul	8:17-18, 30
Election	God's gracious choice	8:33; 9:11; 11:5
Law	God's commands, which reveal sin but cannot save	3:20; 7:7-12; 10:4

The Structure of Romans

Movement of Romans	Chapters	Subject	Key Thought
Sin	1:18-3:20	The need for righteousness	"All the world... guilty before God"
Salvation	3:21-5:21	Righteousness given (justification)	"Being justified freely by his grace"
Sanctification	6-8	Righteousness lived (holiness)	"No condemnation"; "no separation"
Sovereignty	9-11	Righteousness and Israel	"All Israel shall be saved"
Service	12-16	Righteousness practised	"Present your bodies a living sacrifice"

Outline of Romans

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Introduction	1:1-17	The gospel of God; the theme
II. Condemnation: The Need for Righteousness	1:18-3:20	All are guilty
The Gentiles	1:18-32	Suppressing the truth; God gave them up
The moralist and the Jew	2:1-3:8	Judging others; privilege without obedience

Section	Chapters	Theme
The whole world	3:9-20	"None righteous, no, not one"
III. Justification: Righteousness Provided	3:21-5:21	Through faith in Christ
Righteousness through faith	3:21-31	Propitiation; justified freely
Abraham the example	4	Faith counted for righteousness
The results of justification	5:1-11	Peace, access, hope, love
Adam and Christ	5:12-21	Grace much more abounding
IV. Sanctification: Righteousness Lived	6-8	Freedom from sin, law and condemnation
Dead to sin, alive to God	6	Union with Christ
Released from the law	7	The struggle with sin
Life in the Spirit	8	No condemnation; no separation
V. Vindication: Righteousness and Israel	9-11	God's faithfulness
Israel's past: election	9	God's sovereign mercy
Israel's present: rejection	10	Seeking righteousness by works
Israel's future: restoration	11	"All Israel shall be saved"
VI. Application: Righteousness Practised	12:1-15:13	The transformed life
In the church	12	A living sacrifice; gifts; love
In society	13	Government; love; the coming day
Among weak and strong	14:1-15:13	Receiving one another
VII. Conclusion	15:14-16:27	Plans, greetings, warnings, doxology

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Introduction (1:1-17)

Chapter 1:1-17 — The Gospel of God

Paul introduces himself as a "servant" (literally a bondslave) of Jesus Christ, "separated unto the gospel of God" (1:1). This gospel was "promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures" (1:2): it is not new but the fulfilment of the Old Testament. It concerns God's Son:

> *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead*
>
> **Romans 1:3-4**

Christ is truly man, descended from David, and truly God, declared Son of God by His resurrection. Paul's apostleship aimed at "obedience to the faith among all nations" (1:5). He thanked God that the Romans' faith was known everywhere (1:8), and longed to visit them, "that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift... That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (1:11-12). "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (1:14): having received the gospel, he owed it to everyone.

Then the theme (1:16-17). Paul is "not ashamed" of a message the world despised (1 Corinthians 1:23). The gospel is not merely good advice; it is "the power of God unto salvation." It is for "every one that believeth," without distinction, though historically offered "to the Jew first." In it "the righteousness of God" is revealed "from faith to faith," by faith from beginning to end, as Habakkuk wrote: "The just shall live by faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

Section II: Condemnation — The Need for Righteousness (1:18-3:20)

Before Paul explains the good news, he shows why it is needed. Everyone, pagan, moral and religious, stands guilty before God.

Chapter 1:18-32 — The Guilt of the Gentile World

> *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness*
>
> **Romans 1:18**

God's wrath is His settled, righteous opposition to sin. People "hold" (suppress) the truth they know. God has revealed Himself to everyone through creation:

> *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*

> **Romans 1:20**

No one can plead total ignorance of God. The problem is not lack of evidence but rebellion: "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (1:21-23). Ingratitude led to idolatry.

Three times Paul says "God gave them up" (1:24, 26, 28). God's wrath is revealed in part by letting people have what they choose and suffer its consequences:

- **To uncleanness (1:24-25):** they "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."
- **To vile affections (1:26-27):** women and men exchanged "the natural use" for that which is "against nature," burning in lust toward their own sex. Homosexual practice is presented as a result of rejecting the Creator and His design.
- **To a reprobate mind (1:28-31):** a mind that can no longer discern right from wrong, producing a flood of sins: unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malice, gossip, hatred of God, pride, disobedience to parents, and being "without natural affection... unmerciful."

"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (1:32). The final stage of moral decline is approving and celebrating sin.

Chapter 2 — The Guilt of the Moralist and the Jew

The moral judge (2:1-16). The moral person who condemns pagan sins may feel superior, but "thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (2:1). God's judgment is "according to truth" (2:2).

> *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*
>
> **Romans 2:4-5**

God's patience is meant to lead to repentance, not to presumption. God "will render to every man according to his deeds": eternal life to those who persistently do good, wrath to those who obey unrighteousness (2:6-10). This states the standard of judgment by works; the following chapters show that, measured by that standard, no one succeeds (3:10-20). "For there is no respect of persons with God" (2:11). Those without the written law will be judged without it, and those under the law by it (2:12). Gentiles who do by nature things the law requires show that the law is "written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness" (2:14-15). On judgment day "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (2:16).

The religious Jew (2:17-29). The Jew rested in the law, boasted in God, knew His will, and taught others (2:17-20). "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" (2:21). Preaching

against stealing, adultery and idolatry while committing them causes "the name of God" to be "blasphemed among the Gentiles" (2:21-24). Circumcision has value only with obedience (2:25).

> *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*
>
> **Romans 2:28-29**

Religious heritage and rituals cannot save. God looks at the heart.

Chapter 3:1-20 — The Whole World Guilty

What advantage then has the Jew? "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (3:1-2). Their unbelief cannot cancel God's faithfulness: "let God be true, but every man a liar" (3:3-4). Paul rejects the twisted argument that if human sin magnifies God's righteousness, we should "do evil, that good may come" (3:5-8).

Are Jews better than Gentiles, then? "No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" (3:9). Paul strings together quotations from the Psalms and Isaiah:

> *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*
>
> **Romans 3:10-12**

Every part of human nature is affected: "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood" (3:13-15). "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (3:18). This is the doctrine of total depravity: not that people are as bad as they could be, but that sin has corrupted every part of human nature, so that no one seeks God or can earn His favour.

> *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*
>
> **Romans 3:19-20**

The courtroom falls silent. Every mouth is stopped. The law cannot save; it can only expose sin, as a mirror shows dirt but cannot wash it away.

Section III: Justification — Righteousness Provided (3:21-5:21)

Chapter 3:21-31 — Justified Freely by His Grace

After the darkness, two words bring light: "But now."

> *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*
>
> **Romans 3:21-26**

This passage is the heart of the gospel:

- **"The righteousness of God without the law":** God provides a righteousness apart from law-keeping, though the Old Testament pointed to it.
- **"By faith of Jesus Christ unto all... that believe":** it is received by faith in Christ, available to all.
- **"There is no difference: For all have sinned":** the ground is level; everyone needs the same salvation.
- **"Justified":** declared righteous by God the Judge, a legal verdict.
- **"Freely":** without any cause in us (the same word is translated "without a cause" in John 15:25).
- **"By his grace":** God's undeserved favour is the source.
- **"Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus":** the price of our release was paid by Christ.
- **"A propitiation through faith in his blood":** Christ's death satisfied God's righteous wrath against sin. The Greek word is used for the mercy seat, the lid of the ark where the blood of atonement was sprinkled (Leviticus 16:14-15; Hebrews 9:5).
- **"That he might be just, and the justifier":** God did not ignore sin; He punished it fully in Christ. He is therefore both perfectly just and able to declare sinners righteous. The cross shows God's justice and mercy together.

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded" (3:27). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (3:28). God is the God of both Jews and Gentiles and justifies both by faith (3:29-30). "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (3:31): faith upholds the law by honouring its demand for righteousness, fully met in Christ.

Chapter 4 — Abraham, Justified by Faith

Paul proves from the Old Testament that justification by faith is not new. Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, was justified by faith:

> *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*
>
> **Romans 4:3-5**

(Genesis 15:6.) Wages are earned; gifts are received. God "justifieth the ungodly": He saves sinners, not good people. David also described "the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works": "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (4:6-8; Psalm 32:1-2). The word translated "counted," "reckoned" and "imputed" appears eleven times in this chapter: God credits righteousness to the believer's account and does not credit his sins.

Abraham was declared righteous in Genesis 15, years before he was circumcised in Genesis 17. Circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised" (4:9-11). So Abraham is the father of all who believe, Gentiles as well as Jews (4:11-12). The promise came through faith, not the law (4:13-15). "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed" (4:16).

Abraham believed God, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (4:17).

> *Who against hope believed in hope... And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*
>
> **Romans 4:18-21**

Faith looks away from natural impossibility to God's power and promise. This was written for us also, who believe on God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (4:23-25). Christ's resurrection is God's proof that His payment for sin was accepted.

Chapter 5:1-11 — The Blessings of Justification

> *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
>
> **Romans 5:1-2**

The results of justification are:

- **Peace with God:** the war is over; enmity is removed.
- **Access into grace:** a secure standing in God's favour.
- **Hope of glory:** confident expectation of sharing God's glory.
- **Joy in tribulations:** "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed" (5:3-5).
- **God's love in our hearts:** "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (5:5).

The proof of God's love is the cross:

> *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die... But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
>
> **Romans 5:6-8**

Christ died for us when we were weak, ungodly, sinners and enemies (5:6, 8, 10). Paul argues from the greater to the lesser: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (5:9-10). If God saved us when we were His enemies, He will certainly keep us now that we are His friends. "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement [reconciliation]" (5:11).

Chapter 5:12-21 — Adam and Christ

Paul now explains how one man's act can affect all humanity, comparing Adam and Christ, the two heads of the human race:

> *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*
>
> **Romans 5:12**

Through Adam's sin, sin and death entered the world, and all humanity, represented by Adam and descended from him, came under sin's guilt and death's power. Even before the law of Moses, "death reigned from Adam to Moses" (5:13-14). Adam "is the figure of him that was to come" (5:14): Christ is the second representative head, the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45).

Adam	Christ
One man's offence brought death to many (5:15)	The grace of God and the gift by grace through one man abounded to many (5:15)
Judgment came by one to condemnation (5:16)	The free gift brought justification from many offences (5:16)

Adam	Christ
By one man's offence death reigned (5:17)	They which receive abundance of grace shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ (5:17)
By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation (5:18)	By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life (5:18)
By one man's disobedience many were made sinners (5:19)	By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (5:19)

In each comparison, Christ's work is "much more" than Adam's: grace does not merely undo the damage but superabounds. The law came in "that the offence might abound," exposing sin, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (5:20-21).

Section IV: Sanctification — Righteousness Lived (Chapters 6-8)

Chapter 6 — Dead to Sin, Alive to God

If grace abounds where sin abounds, someone might ask, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (6:1).

> *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*
>
> **Romans 6:2-4**

Grace does not encourage sin; it breaks sin's power. Believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Baptism by immersion pictures this union: going under the water represents burial with Christ, and coming up represents resurrection to a new life. (Colossians 2:12 uses the same picture.) Baptism does not create the union; it portrays and confesses a union already established by faith.

Paul gives three key verbs for living out this truth:

- **Know (6:3, 6, 9):** "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed [rendered powerless], that henceforth we should not serve sin" (6:6). The "old man" is the person we were in Adam; that person died with Christ.
- **Reckon (6:11):** "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Count it as true, because it is.
- **Yield (6:13):** "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

> *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof... For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*
>
> **Romans 6:12, 14**

Slaves of righteousness (6:15-23). Again the objection: "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (6:15). Everyone serves some master: "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are" (6:16). The Romans had "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (6:17-18). The old service produced shame and death; the new produces "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (6:21-22).

> *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
>
> **Romans 6:23**

Sin pays a wage, and the wage is death; eternal life is not a wage but a gift.

Chapter 7 — Released from the Law; the Struggle with Sin

Married to another (7:1-6). The law has authority over a person only as long as he lives. A wife is bound to her husband while he lives, but if he dies she is free to marry another (7:1-3). "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (7:4). Believers now "serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (7:6).

The law and sin (7:7-13). "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (7:7). The law reveals sin and even provokes it, as forbidding something can make it more attractive. "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me" (7:11). The fault is not in the law: "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (7:12). The fault is in sinful human nature.

The inner conflict (7:14-25). Paul describes, in the present tense, an intense struggle:

> *For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*
>
> **Romans 7:15, 18**

"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (7:22-23). Interpreters differ on whether Paul describes his experience as an unbeliever under conviction or as a believer. Augustine, Luther, Calvin and many Baptists have understood it as the experience of a genuine believer, who delights in God's law in his inner man, yet still finds the pull of indwelling sin, especially when trying to overcome it by his own strength and resolve. The cry of defeat becomes a cry of thanksgiving:

> *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
>
> **Romans 7:24-25**

Deliverance comes not by trying harder but through Christ, and chapter 8 shows how: by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 8 — Life in the Spirit

Chapter 8 is often called the summit of Romans. It begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation." The Holy Spirit, mentioned only once in chapters 1-7, is named about twenty times.

No condemnation (8:1-4).

> *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*
>
> **Romans 8:1-2**

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (8:3-4). The law could command but not empower. God sent His Son, truly human but without sin ("in the likeness of sinful flesh"), as a sin offering, and condemned sin in Him. Now the Spirit enables believers to live the righteousness the law required.

Flesh and Spirit (8:5-13). "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God" (8:6-7). "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (8:9): every true believer has the Holy Spirit. The Spirit who raised Jesus will also raise believers' mortal bodies (8:11). "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (8:13).

Children and heirs (8:14-17).

> *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*
>
> **Romans 8:14-17**

Believers are not slaves but adopted sons, with full rights and an inheritance shared with Christ. The Spirit within assures them they belong to the Father.

Suffering and glory (8:18-27).

> *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*
>
> **Romans 8:18**

The whole creation, subjected to frustration because of the fall, "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and will itself "be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (8:19-21). It groans like a woman in labour (8:22). Believers also groan, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (8:23), the resurrection. "We are saved by hope" (8:24). And the Spirit helps us in weakness:

> *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*
>
> **Romans 8:26**

He intercedes "according to the will of God" (8:27).

God's unbreakable purpose (8:28-30).

> *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*
>
> **Romans 8:28-30**

Not all things are good, but God works all things together for good for His people. The "good" is defined in the next verse: conformity to the image of His Son. Then a "golden chain" of five links: foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, glorified. No one drops out between the links. "Glorified" is in the past tense, so certain that God speaks of it as already done. (Baptists hold different views on the relationship between God's foreknowledge and predestination; some understand election as God's unconditional choice, others as based on His foreknowledge of faith. All agree that salvation is wholly by grace, freely offered to whosoever will, and that those God saves He keeps.)

No separation (8:31-39). Paul ends with a series of triumphant questions:

> *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*
>
> **Romans 8:31-35**

Believers may suffer like sheep for the slaughter (8:36; Psalm 44:22). "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (8:37).

> *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
>
> **Romans 8:38-39**

Nothing in all creation, including ourselves, can separate a believer from God's love in Christ. This is the foundation of the believer's eternal security.

Section V: Vindication — Righteousness and Israel (Chapters 9-11)

If God's promises to Israel seem to have failed, since most Jews rejected their Messiah, how can believers trust His promises to them? Chapters 9-11 answer: God's word has not failed. He is sovereign (9), Israel is responsible (10), and God has a future for Israel (11).

Chapter 9 — God's Sovereign Choice

Paul's heart breaks for his people: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (9:2-3). Israel had immense privileges: "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen" (9:4-5). Christ, a Jew by human descent, is "over all, God blessed for ever," one of the clearest statements of His deity in Paul's letters.

God's word has not failed (9:6-13). "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (9:6): physical descent from Abraham never guaranteed being one of the true children of promise. God chose Isaac, not Ishmael (9:7-9). He chose Jacob, not Esau, before they were born, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" (9:11). "The elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23). "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (9:12-13; Malachi 1:2-3), where "hated" means not chosen for this privilege (see the Malachi study). These choices concern God's purposes in history for Jacob and Esau and the nations descended from them, and they show the principle that God's purposes rest on His free choice, not on human merit.

Is God unjust? (9:14-24). "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (9:14-15; Exodus 33:19). "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (9:16). God raised up Pharaoh to show His power (9:17); He hardened Pharaoh's heart, though Pharaoh also repeatedly hardened his own (Exodus 8:15, 32). Mercy is never owed; if God gave everyone justice, all would perish. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" (9:20). The potter has power over the clay (9:21; Jeremiah 18). God has "endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (the wording does not say God fitted them; their own sin fitted them), "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles" (9:22-24). Hosea foretold that God would call a people "which were not my people" (9:25-26; Hosea 2:23; 1:10), and Isaiah that only "a remnant shall be saved" of Israel (9:27-29; Isaiah 10:22-23).

Why Israel stumbled (9:30-33). The Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained it by faith. Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain it, "Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone" (9:30-32). Christ is that stone: "whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (9:33; Isaiah 8:14; 28:16).

Chapter 10 — Israel's Responsibility and the Word of Faith

> *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*
>
> **Romans 10:1-4**

Sincere religious zeal cannot save if it trusts its own righteousness. Christ is the "end" of the law: its goal and its termination as a way of righteousness for all who believe.

The righteousness of faith does not require climbing to heaven or descending to the deep to bring Christ; God has already sent Him and raised Him. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach" (10:6-8; Deuteronomy 30:12-14).

> *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
>
> **Romans 10:9-10**

Saving faith believes in the heart that God raised Jesus, and confesses with the mouth that Jesus is Lord. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (10:12-13; Joel 2:32).

The need for preachers (10:14-17).

> *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*
>
> **Romans 10:14-15**

This is the missionary chain: sending, preaching, hearing, believing, calling, saved. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (10:17).

Israel heard (10:18-21). Israel cannot plead ignorance: the message went out into all the earth (10:18; Psalm 19:4). Moses foretold that God would provoke Israel to jealousy by a people who were not a nation (10:19; Deuteronomy 32:21); Isaiah, that God would be found by those who did not seek Him, while to Israel He said, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (10:20-21; Isaiah 65:1-2).

Chapter 11 — Israel's Future

A remnant now (11:1-10). "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite" (11:1). Paul himself is proof that God has not abandoned Israel. In Elijah's day, when Elijah thought he alone was faithful, God had reserved seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal (11:2-4). "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (11:5-6). The rest were hardened, as the Scriptures foretold (11:7-10).

The purpose of Israel's fall (11:11-24). "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy" (11:11). Israel's stumble is neither total nor final. "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world... how much more their fulness?... what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (11:12, 15).

Paul uses the picture of an olive tree. The root represents the patriarchs and God's covenant promises; the natural branches are Israel; the wild olive branches are Gentile believers. Some natural branches were broken off because of unbelief, and wild branches were grafted in by faith (11:16-17).

> *Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee... Be not highminded, but fear... Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*
>
> **Romans 11:18-22**

Gentile believers must not be proud or despise the Jews; they are sustained by Israel's root. (The warning concerns the Gentiles as a group and their privileged position, not the loss of individual salvation.) If God could graft in wild branches, He can much more graft back the natural branches, "if they abide not still in unbelief" (11:23-24).

All Israel shall be saved (11:25-32).

> *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 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.*
>
> **Romans 11:25-27**

Israel's blindness is partial (there is always a remnant) and temporary ("until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"). Then "all Israel shall be saved," the nation as a whole turning to its Messiah at His return (Zechariah 12:10; 13:1; Isaiah 59:20-21). This study understands this, with most Baptists, as a future national conversion of the Jewish people. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (11:28-29): God never revokes His promises. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all" (11:32).

Doxology (11:33-36). Contemplating God's plan, Paul bursts into praise:

> *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*
>
> **Romans 11:33-36**

All things come from God, exist through God, and lead to God. Doctrine leads to doxology.

Section VI: Application — Righteousness Practised (12:1-15:13)

Chapter 12 — The Living Sacrifice

Romans now turns from doctrine to duty. The "therefore" connects everything that follows to everything before: we live this way because of God's mercies.

> *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
>
> **Romans 12:1-2**

In the Old Testament, sacrifices died on the altar; believers give themselves as living sacrifices, wholly devoted to God. This is "reasonable" (logical, spiritual) worship in view of His mercy. We must not be pressed into the mould of the world, but transformed from within by a renewed mind, shaped by God's Word, so that we discern and do God's will.

Gifts in the body (12:3-8). "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly" (12:3). The church is one body with many members, each with a different function (12:4-5). God gives differing gifts by grace, and each should be used faithfully: prophecy according to faith, ministry (serving), teaching, exhorting, giving "with simplicity" (generosity, without ulterior motive), ruling "with diligence," and showing mercy "with cheerfulness" (12:6-8).

Love in action (12:9-21). A series of short commands describes genuine Christian love:

> *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*
>
> **Romans 12:9-13**

"Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (12:14-15). Live in harmony, humbly (12:16). "Recompense to no man evil for evil... If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (12:17-18).

> *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*
>
> **Romans 12:19-21**

Leave justice to God (Deuteronomy 32:35). Kindness to an enemy may produce burning shame that leads to repentance (Proverbs 25:21-22).

Chapter 13 — Government, Love and the Coming Day

Submission to government (13:1-7).

> *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God*
>
> **Romans 13:1-2**

Paul wrote this under Nero. Civil government is God's institution for maintaining order: the ruler "is the minister of God to thee for good... for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (13:4). God has given the state the authority to punish wrongdoers, including by the sword (Genesis 9:6). Believers submit "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake," and pay taxes (13:5-6). "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (13:7; Matthew 22:21). Submission is the general rule; when rulers command what God forbids or forbid what God commands, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

The debt of love (13:8-10).

> *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*
>
> **Romans 13:8**

The commandments against adultery, murder, theft, false witness and coveting are summed up in "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (13:9-10).

The coming day (13:11-14).

> *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*
>
> **Romans 13:11-12**

Every day brings Christ's return closer. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus

Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (13:13-14). These were the verses through which Augustine was converted.

Chapter 14 — The Weak and the Strong

The Roman church was divided over matters of conscience: whether to eat meat (some, perhaps fearing it had been offered to idols or was not kosher, ate only vegetables) and whether to observe certain days. These were matters of indifference, not of clear moral command or essential doctrine.

- **Accept one another (14:1-4):** "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations" (14:1). "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth" (14:3-4).
- **Live to the Lord (14:5-9):** "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (14:5). "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (14:7-8).
- **We will all give account (14:10-12):** "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ... So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (14:10-12; Isaiah 45:23).
- **Don't cause others to stumble (14:13-23):** "that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (14:13). Though "there is nothing unclean of itself," flaunting your liberty may destroy a brother "for whom Christ died" (14:14-15).

> *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
>
> **Romans 14:17**

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (14:19). "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (14:21). "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (14:23): acting against one's conscience is sin.

Chapter 15:1-13 — Bearing with One Another

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (15:1), "For even Christ pleased not himself" (15:3; Psalm 69:9).

> *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*
>
> **Romans 15:4**

The Old Testament was written for Christians too. Paul prays that they may be "likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God" (15:5-6). "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (15:7). Christ came as a servant to the Jews to confirm God's promises to the fathers, and so that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as four Old Testament texts foretold (15:8-12; Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 117:1; Isaiah 11:10).

> *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*
>
> **Romans 15:13**

Section VII: Conclusion (15:14-16:27)

Chapter 15:14-33 — Paul's Ministry and Plans

Paul was confident of the Romans' goodness and knowledge, but wrote boldly as "the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (15:14-16). He pictures his evangelism as priestly service, presenting converted Gentiles to God as an offering. He would boast only in what Christ had done through him "by mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (15:18-19).

> *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation*
>
> **Romans 15:20**

His ambition was pioneer evangelism, reaching those who had never heard (15:21; Isaiah 52:15). Now he planned to visit Rome on his way to Spain, the western edge of the known world (15:23-24, 28). First he must take the gift from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in Jerusalem: the Gentiles, having shared in Israel's spiritual blessings, owed it to them to share material things (15:25-27). He asked the Romans to pray that he would be delivered from unbelievers in Judea and that his service would be accepted (15:30-31). His prayer was answered, though not as he expected: he reached Rome as a prisoner (Acts 21-28).

Chapter 16 — Greetings, Warnings and Doxology

Phebe (16:1-2). "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant [Greek diakonos] of the church which is at Cenchrea... for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." She probably carried the letter to Rome.

Greetings (16:3-16). Paul greets about twenty-six people by name, showing his personal love for believers he had met in his travels. They include Priscilla and Aquila, "who have for my life laid down their own necks," with "the church that is in their house" (16:3-5); Andronicus and Junia, his kinsmen and fellow prisoners, "of note among the apostles" (16:7); and "Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine" (16:13), probably the son of Simon of Cyrene (Mark 15:21). Many are women, honoured for their labour in the Lord. "Salute one another with an holy kiss" (16:16).

Warning (16:17-20).

> *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

> **Romans 16:17-18**

"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" (16:19).

> *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*
>
> **Romans 16:20**

The first gospel promise was that the woman's Seed would bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15); Christ has done so, and His people will share His victory.

Greetings from Corinth (16:21-24). Timothy, Paul's kinsmen, "I Tertius, who wrote this epistle," Gaius the host of the whole church, and "Erastus the chamberlain of the city" (16:21-23).

Doxology (16:25-27).

> *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*
>
> **Romans 16:25-27**

The letter ends where it began (1:5): the gospel made known "to all nations for the obedience of faith," and all glory to God.

Part Three: Christ in Romans

Christ the Centre of the Gospel

Text	Christ Revealed
1:3-4	The Son of God, of David's seed, declared with power by the resurrection
3:24	The Redeemer in whom is redemption
3:25	The propitiation through faith in His blood
4:25	Delivered for our offences, raised again for our justification
5:6-8	Died for the ungodly, for sinners
5:9-10	Saves us from wrath; reconciles us by His death and saves by His life
5:12-21	The last Adam, whose obedience makes many righteous
6:3-11	The One with whom believers died, were buried and rose
7:4	The risen Husband to whom believers are joined
8:3	God's Son sent in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering
8:29	The firstborn among many brethren, whose image believers will bear
8:34	Risen, at God's right hand, interceding for us
9:5	"Over all, God blessed for ever"
9:33	The stumblingstone and rock of offence; the foundation of faith
10:4	The end of the law for righteousness
10:9	The Lord whom believers confess
11:26	The Deliverer who will come out of Sion
14:9	Lord of both the dead and the living
14:10	The Judge at whose judgment seat all will stand
15:3	The One who pleased not Himself
15:8, 12	Minister of the circumcision; the Root of Jesse in whom the Gentiles trust
16:20	The Seed who bruises Satan

Old Testament Scriptures in Romans

Romans quotes the Old Testament about sixty times, more than any of Paul's other letters, showing that the gospel was "witnessed by the law and the prophets" (3:21).

Romans	Old Testament	Truth
1:17	Habakkuk 2:4	The just shall live by faith
3:10-18	Psalms 14, 53, 5, 140, 10, 36; Isaiah 59	All are sinners
4:3	Genesis 15:6	Abraham justified by faith

Romans	Old Testament	Truth
4:7-8	Psalm 32:1-2	The blessedness of forgiveness
4:17	Genesis 17:5	Father of many nations
8:36	Psalm 44:22	Sheep for the slaughter
9:7-13	Genesis 21:12; 18:10; 25:23; Malachi 1:2-3	God's sovereign choice
9:15	Exodus 33:19	Mercy on whom He will
9:25-26	Hosea 2:23; 1:10	Gentiles called God's people
9:27-29	Isaiah 10:22-23; 1:9	A remnant saved
9:33; 10:11	Isaiah 8:14; 28:16	The stumblingstone; whoever believes not ashamed
10:5-8	Leviticus 18:5; Deuteronomy 30:12-14	Law-righteousness versus faith-righteousness
10:13	Joel 2:32	Whosoever shall call
10:15	Isaiah 52:7	Beautiful feet
10:16	Isaiah 53:1	Who hath believed our report?
10:18	Psalm 19:4	Their sound went into all the earth
10:19-21	Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 65:1-2	Israel provoked to jealousy; God's outstretched hands
11:3-4	1 Kings 19:10, 18	The seven thousand
11:26-27	Isaiah 59:20-21; 27:9	The Deliverer out of Sion
12:19-20	Deuteronomy 32:35; Proverbs 25:21-22	Vengeance is God's; feed your enemy
13:9	Exodus 20:13-17; Leviticus 19:18	The commandments summed up in love
14:11	Isaiah 45:23	Every knee shall bow
15:9-12	Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 117:1; Isaiah 11:10	The Gentiles praise God
15:21	Isaiah 52:15	They shall see who were not told

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Romans	Fulfillment
The gospel promised in the prophets	1:2; 3:21; 16:26	Fulfilled in Christ's death and resurrection
The Gentiles called God's people	9:24-26; 15:9-12	Gentiles saved by the gospel (Acts 10-28)
A remnant of Israel saved	9:27; 11:5	Jewish believers in every age
Israel's partial blindness	11:7-10, 25	Israel's national rejection of Christ
The stumblingstone laid in Zion	9:33	Christ rejected by Israel
The gospel to all the earth	10:18; 16:26	The spread of the gospel worldwide
Israel's future national salvation	11:25-27	Still future, at Christ's return
Creation delivered from corruption	8:19-22	Still future, at the redemption of the body
The redemption of the body	8:23	Still future, at the resurrection
Satan bruised under believers' feet	16:20	Christ's victory, completed at His return
Every knee bowing to God	14:11	Still future, at the judgment

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Romans 1:16-17 — Not Ashamed of the Gospel

The gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, revealing a righteousness received by faith. No believer should be ashamed of it.

Romans 1:18-32 — The Downward Spiral

Rejecting God's revelation leads to ingratitude, futile thinking, idolatry, sexual perversion, a reprobate mind and the celebration of sin. This passage describes the state of every culture that turns from its Creator.

Romans 3:21-26 — The Heart of the Gospel

God declares sinners righteous freely, by His grace, through the redemption in Christ, whose blood satisfied God's justice. God is both just and the justifier of the one who believes in Jesus.

Romans 4 — Justified Like Abraham

Abraham was declared righteous by believing God's promise, not by circumcision or law-keeping. God credits righteousness to all who believe in the One who raised Jesus from the dead.

Romans 5:1-11 — Peace with God

Justification brings peace, access, hope, joy even in trials, and the assurance of God's love demonstrated at the cross. If God saved us as enemies, He will certainly keep us as friends.

Romans 5:12-21 — Two Heads, Two Destinies

In Adam all are condemned; in Christ believers are justified. Where sin abounded, grace much more abounded.

Romans 6 — Know, Reckon, Yield

Believers died with Christ to sin and rose to new life. They must know it, count it true, and offer themselves to God. Grace is never a licence to sin.

Romans 7:14-25 — The Struggle with Sin

Even believers who love God's law feel the pull of indwelling sin. Victory comes not by willpower but through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 8:1-17 — Life in the Spirit

No condemnation; freedom from sin's law; the indwelling Spirit; adoption as sons; the inner witness that we are God's children and heirs.

Romans 8:28-39 — Unbreakable Security

God works all things for good to those who love Him, carries His purpose from foreknowledge to glory, and allows nothing to separate His people from His love in Christ.

Romans 9-11 — God's Faithfulness to Israel

God's word has not failed. He is sovereign in mercy, Israel is responsible for its unbelief, a remnant is saved now, Gentiles are grafted in, and all Israel will be saved in the future. God's gifts and calling are irrevocable.

Romans 10:9-17 — How to Be Saved, and How Others Will Hear

Believe in the heart that God raised Jesus, confess Him as Lord, and call upon His name. But people cannot call without believing, believe without hearing, or hear without a preacher sent to them.

Romans 12:1-2 — The Living Sacrifice

In view of God's mercies, believers give their whole selves to God, refuse to be conformed to the world, and are transformed by renewed minds.

Romans 13:1-7 — The Christian and Government

Government is ordained by God to restrain evil and reward good; believers submit, pay taxes and honour rulers, while always obeying God first.

Romans 14 — Liberty and Love

In matters of conscience, believers must not despise or judge one another, must live to the Lord, and must limit their liberty out of love rather than cause a brother to stumble.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Romans

1. The Universality of Sin

All people, Jew and Gentile, moral and immoral, are sinners, guilty before God (1:18-3:20; 3:23).

2. The Revelation of God in Creation and Conscience

God has revealed Himself to all, leaving them without excuse (1:19-20; 2:14-15).

3. Justification by Grace Through Faith

God declares sinners righteous freely, by grace, through faith in Christ, apart from works (3:21-28; 4:5; 5:1).

4. The Atonement

Christ's death was a propitiation satisfying God's justice, a redemption paying the price, and a reconciliation restoring sinners to God (3:24-25; 5:10-11).

5. Imputation

Adam's sin brought condemnation to all; Christ's righteousness is credited to all who believe (4:3-8; 5:12-21).

6. Union with Christ

Believers died, were buried and rose with Christ, and are now alive to God (6:1-11).

7. Sanctification

Believers must not let sin reign but yield themselves to God, mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit (6:12-23; 8:13).

8. The Role of the Law

The law is holy, reveals sin and condemns, but cannot save or sanctify (3:20; 7:7-12; 8:3).

9. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit indwells every believer, gives life, leads, assures, helps in prayer, and will raise our bodies (8:1-27).

10. Adoption and Inheritance

Believers are God's children and heirs with Christ (8:14-17).

11. Eternal Security

Nothing can separate believers from God's love in Christ (8:28-39).

12. God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

God's mercy and purposes are sovereign (9); people are responsible to believe (10).

13. God's Faithfulness to Israel

A remnant is saved now; all Israel will be saved in the future (11).

14. The Missionary Mandate

Salvation requires preachers sent to those who have not heard (10:14-15; 15:20).

15. The Transformed Life

Living sacrifices, renewed minds, spiritual gifts, sincere love, submission to authority, and the fulfilling of the law through love (12-13).

16. Christian Liberty and Love

Accepting one another in matters of conscience, and refusing to cause others to stumble (14-15).

Part Seven: Connections — How Romans Links to the Rest of the Bible

Romans and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Adam's sin and death (3; Romans 5:12-21); the serpent bruised (3:15; Romans 16:20); Abraham's faith counted for righteousness (15:6; Romans 4); Isaac, Jacob and Esau (21; 25; Romans 9:7-13)
Exodus	Pharaoh raised up (9:16; Romans 9:17); "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (33:19; Romans 9:15); the commandments (20; Romans 7:7; 13:9)
Leviticus	Love your neighbour (19:18; Romans 13:9); the mercy seat and atonement (16; Romans 3:25)
Deuteronomy	The word near you (30:12-14; Romans 10:6-8); provoking to jealousy (32:21; Romans 10:19); vengeance is mine (32:35; Romans 12:19)
1 Kings	Elijah and the seven thousand (19; Romans 11:2-4)
Psalms	14 and 53 (Romans 3:10-12); 19:4 (10:18); 32:1-2 (4:7-8); 44:22 (8:36); 69:9 (15:3); 117:1 (15:11)
Proverbs	Feeding your enemy (25:21-22; Romans 12:20)
Isaiah	1:9 (Romans 9:29); 8:14 and 28:16 (9:33); 10:22 (9:27); 11:10 (15:12); 45:23 (14:11); 52:7 (10:15); 53:1 (10:16); 59:20-21 (11:26); 65:1-2 (10:20-21)
Jeremiah	The potter and the clay (18; Romans 9:21); the new covenant (31:33-34; Romans 11:27)
Hosea	"Not my people... my people" (1:10; 2:23; Romans 9:25-26)
Joel	Whosoever shall call (2:32; Romans 10:13)
Habakkuk	The just shall live by faith (2:4; Romans 1:17)
Malachi	Jacob loved, Esau hated (1:2-3; Romans 9:13)

Romans and the New Testament

Book	Link
Acts	Paul's visit to Corinth and plan to go to Rome (19:21; 20:2-3); his arrival in Rome as a prisoner (28); the collection for Jerusalem (24:17)
1 Corinthians	Adam and Christ (15:21-22, 45); the body and its gifts (12; Romans 12:4-8); liberty and the weaker brother (8; 10:23-33; Romans 14)
2 Corinthians	Reconciliation (5:17-21; Romans 5:10-11); the collection (8-9; Romans 15:25-27)
Galatians	The "twin" of Romans: justification by faith, Abraham, the law, the Spirit, adoption ("Abba, Father," 4:6)
Ephesians	Saved by grace through faith, not of works (2:8-9); Jew and Gentile made one (2:11-22; Romans 11)
Philippians	The righteousness which is of God by faith (3:9)

Book	Link
Colossians	Buried with Christ in baptism and risen with Him (2:12; Romans 6:4)
1 Timothy	Prayer for rulers (2:1-2; Romans 13:1)
Titus	Submission to authorities (3:1); justified by His grace (3:7)
Hebrews	"The just shall live by faith" (10:38); Abraham's faith (11:8-19)
James	Abraham justified by works (2:21-24): James shows that saving faith produces works; Paul shows that works do not produce salvation. Both quote Genesis 15:6.
1 Peter	Submission to government (2:13-17; Romans 13); the stumbling stone (2:6-8; Romans 9:33)
2 Peter	Paul's letters contain "things hard to be understood" (3:15-16)
1 John	Christ the propitiation for our sins (2:2; 4:10; Romans 3:25)
Revelation	Creation renewed (21-22; Romans 8:19-23); every knee bowing (5:13)

Themes That Run from Romans Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Romans	Developed in the New Testament
Justification by faith	Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4	3:21-5:1	Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9
Propitiation	Leviticus 16	3:25	Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10
Adam and Christ	Genesis 2-3	5:12-21	1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49
The Spirit-filled life	Ezekiel 36:26-27	8	Galatians 5:16-25
The redemption of creation	Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:17	8:19-23	2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21-22
Israel's future	Jeremiah 31:31-37; Zechariah 12:10	11:25-27	Revelation 7:4-8
The living sacrifice	Leviticus 1	12:1	Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Never be ashamed of the gospel** (1:16).
- **Recognise that you owe the gospel to everyone** (1:14).
- **Thank God and glorify Him as God** (1:21).
- **Don't judge others while doing the same things** (2:1).
- **Let God's goodness lead you to repentance** (2:4).
- **Seek God's praise, not man's** (2:29).
- **Admit that you are a sinner, without excuse** (3:23).
- **Stop trying to earn God's favour; receive His righteousness by faith** (3:28; 4:5).
- **Believe God's promises against all odds, like Abraham** (4:20-21).
- **Rejoice in peace with God** (5:1).
- **Glory in tribulations; they produce patience and hope** (5:3-4).
- **Never forget that Christ died for you while you were a sinner** (5:8).
- **Reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God** (6:11).
- **Yield your body to God as an instrument of righteousness** (6:13).
- **Look to Christ, not to your own strength, for victory over sin** (7:24-25).
- **Live by the Spirit, putting to death the deeds of the flesh** (8:13).
- **Cry "Abba, Father" with confidence** (8:15).
- **Keep your present sufferings in perspective** (8:18).
- **Trust God to work all things for good** (8:28).
- **Rest secure in His unbreakable love** (8:38-39).
- **Pray earnestly for the salvation of the Jewish people** (10:1).
- **Confess Jesus as Lord and believe He rose** (10:9).
- **Send and support preachers** (10:14-15).
- **Hear and read God's Word to build faith** (10:17).
- **Don't be proud; you stand by faith** (11:20).
- **Praise God for His unsearchable wisdom** (11:33-36).
- **Present your body as a living sacrifice** (12:1).
- **Refuse to be conformed to the world** (12:2).
- **Use your spiritual gift faithfully** (12:6-8).
- **Love sincerely, hate evil, cling to good** (12:9).
- **Never take revenge; overcome evil with good** (12:19-21).
- **Submit to government and pay your taxes** (13:1-7).
- **Owe nothing but love** (13:8).
- **Wake up; the day of Christ is near** (13:11-12).

- **Put on the Lord Jesus Christ; make no provision for the flesh** (13:14).
- **Don't judge or despise believers over matters of conscience** (14:3-4).
- **Limit your liberty for love of your brother** (14:21).
- **Find hope and comfort in the Scriptures** (15:4).
- **Receive one another as Christ received you** (15:7).
- **Mark and avoid those who cause division contrary to sound doctrine** (16:17).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:16	For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth
3:10	There is none righteous, no, not one
3:23	For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God
3:24	Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus
4:5	But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.
5:1	Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
5:8	But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
6:23	For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
8:1	There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus
8:28	And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.
8:31	If God be for us, who can be against us?
8:38-39	Neither death, nor life... shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
10:9	If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
10:13	For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
10:17	So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
12:1	Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
12:2	And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind
12:21	Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
15:13	Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing

Conclusion

Romans is the fullest explanation of the gospel in the Bible. Paul, not ashamed of the message that is God's power to save, begins by showing that the whole world stands guilty before God: pagans who suppressed the truth, moralists who condemned others, and religious Jews who broke the law they taught. Every mouth is stopped. "But now" God has revealed a righteousness apart from the law, given freely by grace to all who believe, through the redemption in Christ, whose blood satisfied God's justice. Abraham was justified this way, and so is every believer, who now has peace with God, hope of glory, and the love of God poured into his heart. As in Adam all were condemned, so in Christ grace reigns much more. Believers have died to sin and risen with Christ; they struggle with indwelling sin but find victory through Christ and His Spirit; they are God's children and heirs, and nothing can separate them from His love. God has not forgotten Israel: a remnant is saved now, and all Israel will be saved. So believers present their bodies as living sacrifices, use their gifts, love sincerely, honour authorities, wake to the coming day, and receive one another as Christ received them, all to the glory of God, "of him, and through him, and to him" are all things.

> *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*
>
> **Romans 11:36**

1 Corinthians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 55 • Chapters: 16

> *Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Corinthians

The Author and Date

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother" (1:1). Sosthenes may be the former ruler of the Corinthian synagogue who was beaten before Gallio (Acts 18:17) and later became a believer. Paul wrote from Ephesus (16:8, 19) around AD 55-56, during his three-year ministry there on his third missionary journey (Acts 19), intending to stay until Pentecost. He had written an earlier letter, now lost (5:9).

The City of Corinth

Corinth stood on the narrow isthmus joining mainland Greece to the Peloponnese, with a port on each side: Cenchrea to the east and Lechaeum to the west. Ships and goods were hauled across the isthmus, making Corinth a wealthy centre of trade. The old Greek city was destroyed by Rome in 146 BC and rebuilt by Julius Caesar as a Roman colony in 44 BC; it became the capital of the province of Achaia. It hosted the Isthmian Games, second only to the Olympics (compare 9:24-27). Above the city rose the Acrocorinth with its temple of Aphrodite, goddess of love. Corinth was so notorious for immorality that the Greeks coined a verb, "to Corinthianize," meaning to practise sexual immorality. It was cosmopolitan, proud, materialistic and religiously diverse.

The Church at Corinth

Paul founded the church on his second missionary journey and stayed eighteen months (Acts 18:1-18). Converts included Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and many Gentiles, mostly from the lower classes (1:26), along with a few prominent people. After Paul left, Apollos ministered there with great effect (Acts 18:27-19:1). The church was richly gifted (1:5-7), but spiritually immature and deeply influenced by the culture around it.

The Occasion

Paul had received two kinds of information:

- **Reports** from "them which are of the house of Chloe" about divisions and other problems (1:11; compare 5:1; 11:18).
- **A letter** from the church asking questions, which Paul answers with the phrase "Now concerning" (7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12). The letter was probably brought by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (16:17).

Purpose and Theme

1 Corinthians corrects the problems of a carnal church by applying the cross of Christ to every area of life. Paul addresses divisions, pride, immorality, lawsuits, marriage, Christian liberty, worship, the Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts and the resurrection. Throughout, he calls the church to holiness ("sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," 1:2), to unity in Christ, and to love.

> *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 1:18**

> *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 6:20**

> *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 13:13**

Problems and Paul's Answers

Problem	Chapters	Paul's Answer
Divisions around leaders	1-4	Christ is not divided; the cross humbles human wisdom; leaders are servants; God gives the increase
Tolerated incest	5	Mourn, discipline the offender, purge the leaven
Lawsuits between believers	6:1-11	Settle disputes within the church; better to suffer wrong
Sexual immorality	6:12-20	The body is the Lord's, the temple of the Holy Ghost; flee fornication
Questions about marriage and singleness	7	Marriage is good and binding; singleness is a gift; abide in your calling
Food offered to idols; Christian liberty	8-10	Knowledge must be governed by love; avoid idolatry; do all to God's glory
Conduct in worship	11:2-16	Honour God's order of headship
Abuse of the Lord's Supper	11:17-34	Remember the Lord's death; examine yourselves
Spiritual gifts	12-14	One Spirit, one body, many gifts; love is greater; all for edification and in order
Denial of the resurrection	15	Christ is risen; believers will be raised with glorious bodies
The collection	16	Give regularly and proportionately on the first day of the week

Outline of 1 Corinthians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Introduction	1:1-9	Greeting and thanksgiving
II. Problems Reported	1:10-6:20	Correction
Divisions and the wisdom of the cross	1:10-4:21	"Is Christ divided?"

Section	Chapters	Theme
Immorality and discipline	5	"Purge out therefore the old leaven"
Lawsuits	6:1-11	"Such were some of you"
The body for the Lord	6:12-20	"Ye are bought with a price"
III. Questions Answered	7-16	Instruction
Marriage and singleness	7	"Every man hath his proper gift"
Liberty and idol food	8-10	"Do all to the glory of God"
Order in worship	11	Headship; the Lord's Supper
Spiritual gifts and love	12-14	"The greatest of these is charity"
The resurrection	15	"Now is Christ risen"
The collection and closing	16	"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Introduction (1:1-9)

Chapter 1:1-9 — Saints in Corinth

Paul addresses "the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (1:2). Despite all their problems, they were saints: set apart to God in Christ. Their position was holy; their practice needed to catch up. Paul thanked God for His grace to them: "That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge... So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:5-7). Christ would confirm them "unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1:8-9). Their security rested on God's faithfulness, not their own.

Section II: Problems Reported (1:10-6:20)

Chapter 1:10-31 — Divisions and the Foolishness of the Cross

"I beseech you... that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you" (1:10). The church had split into parties: "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1:12). Even the "Christ" party used His name as a badge against others.

> *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*
>
> **1 Corinthians 1:13**

Paul was glad he had baptized only a few of them, Crispus, Gaius and the household of Stephanas, so no one could claim to have been baptized in his name (1:14-16). "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (1:17). Baptism is important, but it is not part of the gospel itself; if it were necessary for salvation, Paul could not have said this.

The root of division was human pride in wisdom and personalities. Paul answered with the message of the cross:

> *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 1:18**

God has made worldly wisdom foolish (1:19-20; Isaiah 29:14). "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1:21).

> *For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 1:22-24**

To Jews, a crucified Messiah was a contradiction (Deuteronomy 21:23); to Greeks, a crucified God was absurd. Yet "the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1:25).

God proved this by whom He called: "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty... That no flesh should glory in his presence" (1:26-29).

> *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 1:30-31**

Everything the believer needs is found in Christ. There is no room for boasting in men.

Chapter 2 — The Wisdom of God Revealed by the Spirit

Paul had not come to Corinth with impressive oratory or philosophy:

> *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 2:2-5**

Yet the gospel is the deepest wisdom, "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (2:7-8). The crucified Jesus is "the Lord of glory," God Himself.

> *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 2:9-10**

This verse is often quoted only of heaven, but Paul's point is that God's wisdom, which human beings could never discover, has now been revealed by His Spirit. Only God's Spirit knows the things of God (2:11). The apostles received the Spirit "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (2:12-13). This describes the inspiration of

Scripture: the Spirit gave the very words.

> *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 2:14**

The unsaved person, however intelligent, cannot grasp spiritual truth without the Spirit. The spiritual person discerns all things, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord...? But we have the mind of Christ" (2:15-16).

Chapter 3 — Carnal Christians and God's Building

Paul had to speak to the Corinthians "as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat" (3:1-2). Their envy, strife and divisions proved their immaturity; they were behaving like unconverted men (3:3-4). Believers can be genuinely saved yet carnal, controlled by the flesh rather than the Spirit.

Paul and Apollos were only servants: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (3:6-7). "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (3:9).

> *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 3:11**

On that foundation each builder builds with different materials: "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble" (3:12).

> *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 3:13-15**

At the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10), believers' works will be tested for quality, not quantity. Lasting work will be rewarded; worthless work will be burned up. The believer whose work burns "shall suffer loss" of reward, "but he himself shall be saved." This judgment concerns rewards, not salvation.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (3:16-17). The "ye" is plural: the local church is God's temple, and those who wreck it with division will face God's judgment. "Let no man deceive himself... the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (3:18-20; Job 5:13; Psalm 94:11). There is no reason to boast in men, "For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas... And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (3:21-23).

Chapter 4 — Faithful Stewards

> *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 4:1-2**

A steward managed his master's household and was accountable to him. Paul did not care about the Corinthians' judgment or even his own; "he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (4:3-5).

> *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*
>
> **1 Corinthians 4:7**

Every gift is from God; there is no room for pride. With sharp irony Paul wrote, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us" (4:8). In contrast, the apostles were "made a spectacle unto the world... We are fools for Christ's sake... we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day" (4:9-13). The Corinthians acted as if they had already reigned; the apostles were following the path of the cross.

Paul wrote not to shame them but to warn them as a father: "though ye have ten thousand instructers in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (4:14-16). He was sending Timothy to remind them of his ways (4:17). "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (4:20). "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" (4:21).

Chapter 5 — Immorality and Church Discipline

> *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned*
>
> **1 Corinthians 5:1-2**

A man was living with his stepmother, a sin condemned even by pagans (Leviticus 18:8). Worse, the church was proud, perhaps of its tolerance. Paul, though absent, had judged the matter: in the name of the Lord Jesus, when gathered together, they were "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:3-5). This means removing him from the church's fellowship and protection into the realm of Satan's domain, the world, so that he might come to repentance. The goal of discipline is restoration, and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8 suggests he did repent and was restored.

> *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**

At Passover, Israel removed all leaven from their homes (Exodus 12:15). Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed; His people must remove the leaven of tolerated sin, which spreads through the whole church.

Paul clarified his earlier letter: he did not mean believers should avoid all contact with immoral unbelievers, "for then must ye needs go out of the world" (5:9-10). But they must not keep company with anyone "that is called a brother" who lives in fornication, covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness or extortion, "with such an one no not to eat" (5:11). "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?... But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (5:12-13). The church judges its own members; God judges the world. (Compare Matthew 18:15-17.)

Chapter 6 — Lawsuits and the Body's Purity

Lawsuits (6:1-11). Believers were taking each other to pagan courts. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?... Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (6:2-3). Surely they could settle ordinary disputes among themselves. "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (6:7). Yet some were doing wrong and defrauding their brothers (6:8).

> *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

Those whose lives are characterised by these sins, including homosexual practice, will not inherit God's kingdom. But "such were some of you": the gospel transforms sinners of every kind. They had been washed (cleansed from sin), sanctified (set apart to God) and justified (declared righteous). This is a message of hope as well as warning.

The body is for the Lord (6:12-20). Some Corinthians justified immorality with slogans: "All things are lawful unto me" and "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats" (6:12-13), as if sexual appetite were no more significant than hunger. Paul answered: "all things are not expedient... I will not be brought under the power of any" (6:12). "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (6:13). God will raise the body (6:14). Believers' bodies are members of Christ; uniting them with a prostitute is unthinkable, for "two, saith he, shall be one flesh" (6:15-16; Genesis 2:24). "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (6:17).

> *Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 6:18-20**

Sexual sin is uniquely destructive because it involves the whole person. The believer's body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and has been purchased by Christ's blood. The right response to sexual temptation is to flee, like Joseph (Genesis 39:12).

Section III: Questions Answered (Chapters 7-16)

Chapter 7 — Marriage and Singleness

"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (7:1). Some Corinthians, reacting against immorality, apparently thought even marriage and marital relations were unspiritual.

Within marriage (7:1-7). "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (7:2). Husband and wife owe each other marital affection; neither has exclusive authority over his or her own body. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not" (7:3-5). Marriage and its physical union are good gifts of God. Paul wished all could be single as he was, "But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that" (7:7). Both marriage and singleness are gifts.

The unmarried and widows (7:8-9). It is good for them to remain single, "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" with passion (7:9).

The married (7:10-16). "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife" (7:10-11), repeating Jesus' teaching. To those married to unbelievers (a situation Jesus had not addressed), Paul said the believer should not leave if the unbeliever is willing to stay, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife... else were your children unclean; but now are they holy" (7:12-14). The believing spouse brings a godly influence into the home and the family is set apart for God's blessing; this does not mean the unbeliever or the children are saved without faith. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace" (7:15). Baptists differ on whether this permits remarriage after desertion by an unbelieving spouse. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" (7:16).

Remain in your calling (7:17-24). Becoming a Christian does not require changing one's outward circumstances. The circumcised and uncircumcised, slave and free, should serve God where they are. "Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather" (7:21). "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (7:23).

Virgins and the unmarried (7:25-40). "Because of the present distress" (perhaps a time of persecution or famine), Paul advised remaining as they were, though marriage is no sin (7:26-28). "The time is

short... the fashion of this world passeth away" (7:29-31). The unmarried can care "for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord," while the married must also care for their spouse (7:32-34). Paul wrote this not to restrict them, "but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" (7:35). A widow is free to remarry, "only in the Lord" (7:39): believers must marry only believers.

Chapter 8 — Knowledge, Love and Idol Food

"Now as touching things offered unto idols" (8:1). Much of the meat sold in Corinth's market had first been offered in pagan temples. Some believers knew idols were nothing and ate freely; others, recently converted from idolatry, felt that eating such meat was participating in idol worship.

> *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 8:1**

Paul agreed with the theology of the "strong": "an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one... But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (8:4-6). Here Jesus is named alongside the Father as the one Lord through whom all things were created. But "there is not in every man that knowledge" (8:7); the weak brother's conscience could be defiled. Food itself is spiritually neutral (8:8). "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (8:9). If a weak believer sees a strong one eating in an idol's temple and is encouraged to act against his conscience, "through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" (8:10-11). Sinning against a brother is sinning against Christ (8:12).

> *Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 8:13**

Love limits liberty for the sake of others.

Chapter 9 — Paul's Example: Rights Given Up for the Gospel

Paul illustrated the principle from his own life. "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (9:1). He had every right to food and drink, to travel with a believing wife "as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas" (9:5), and to be financially supported. Soldiers, vineyard workers and shepherds are paid (9:7). The law says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (9:9; Deuteronomy 25:4); priests live from the temple (9:13). "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (9:14). Churches should support their pastors (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

But Paul gave up this right at Corinth so as not to hinder the gospel (9:12, 15). "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (9:16).

> *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews... To them that are without law, as without law... To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 9:19-22**

Paul adapted his customs and approach (never his message or morals) to reach different people (9:21: "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ").

He drew on the Isthmian Games:

> *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 9:24-25**

Athletes trained with strict discipline for a wreath of pine leaves that soon withered. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (9:26-27). "Castaway" (Greek adokimos) means "disqualified," an athlete disapproved for the prize. Paul feared losing his reward and usefulness, not his salvation.

Chapter 10 — Warnings from Israel and the Glory of God

Israel's example (10:1-13). All Israel experienced God's blessings: under the cloud, through the sea, "baptized unto Moses," eating manna and drinking from the rock, "for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (10:1-4). "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness" (10:5). Privileges did not protect them from judgment when they sinned. They lusted after evil things (Numbers 11), committed idolatry: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (Exodus 32:6), committed fornication with Moabite women, so that "fell in one day three and twenty thousand" (Numbers 25:9 records 24,000 in total, so Paul's number may count those who died in one day), tempted Christ and were destroyed by serpents (Numbers 21), and murmured (10:6-10).

> *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 10:11-13**

The Old Testament stories are warnings for believers. Overconfidence is dangerous. Yet no temptation is unique; God is faithful, limits every temptation, and always provides a way of escape.

No fellowship with demons (10:14-22). "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" (10:14). The Lord's Supper expresses fellowship with Christ and with one another: "The cup of blessing which

we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body" (10:16-17). Pagan sacrifices, though idols are nothing, are offered "to devils, and not to God" (10:20). "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (10:21). Eating at pagan temple feasts was participation in idolatry.

Liberty governed by love and God's glory (10:23-33). "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (10:23-24). Meat bought in the market could be eaten without questions, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (10:25-26; Psalm 24:1). At an unbeliever's dinner, eat what is served; but if someone points out that it was offered to idols, don't eat it, for his conscience' sake (10:27-29).

> *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God*
>
> **1 Corinthians 10:31-32**

The ultimate test of any activity is whether it glorifies God and helps others.

Chapter 11 — Headship in Worship and the Lord's Supper

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (11:1).

Headship and head coverings (11:2-16).

> *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 11:3**

God has established an order of headship. It does not imply inferiority: Christ is fully equal with the Father, yet the Father is His head. Similarly, man and woman are equal in worth and in Christ (Galatians 3:28), but have different roles. In Corinth, a man praying with his head covered dishonoured Christ, and a woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonoured her husband, because in that culture the covering signified respect for this God-given order (11:4-6). Paul grounds the principle in creation: the man "is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man" (11:7-9; Genesis 2:21-23). The woman should have "power [a sign of authority] on her head because of the angels" (11:10), who observe the church's worship. Yet man and woman are interdependent: "neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (11:11-12). "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (11:14-15). Baptists apply this passage in different ways: some practise head coverings in worship, while many understand the woman's long hair as the covering (11:15), or see the permanent principle of headship expressed through culturally appropriate forms.

The Lord's Supper (11:17-34). The Corinthians' gatherings did "more harm than good" (11:17). There were divisions, and at the fellowship meal that accompanied the Supper, the wealthy ate and drank to excess while the poor went hungry: "one is hungry, and another is drunken... despise ye the church of

God, and shame them that have not?" (11:18-22). Paul reminded them of what the Lord instituted:

> *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

The Lord's Supper looks back ("in remembrance of me"), proclaims the present ("ye do shew the Lord's death"), and looks forward ("till he come"). Baptists understand it as a memorial ordinance: the bread and cup represent Christ's body and blood, received by faith, not a sacrifice or a means of saving grace.

> *Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 11:27-28**

"Unworthily" describes the manner, not the person: no one is worthy in himself, but all must come reverently, self-examined, and in love for the body of believers. Those who ate "not discerning the Lord's body" brought judgment on themselves: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (11:29-30). God disciplined them with illness and even death. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (11:31-32). Believers are disciplined as children, not condemned. They should wait for one another and eat at home if hungry (11:33-34).

Chapter 12 — One Body, Many Gifts

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (12:1). The Corinthians were fascinated with spectacular gifts, especially tongues.

One Spirit, many gifts (12:1-11). The test of genuine spiritual activity is its confession of Christ: "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (12:3).

> *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 12:4-7**

The Spirit, the Lord (Christ) and God (the Father) work together, the Trinity in action. Every believer has a gift, given for the common good. Paul lists nine gifts: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues (12:8-10). "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame

Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (12:11). The Spirit decides who receives which gift.

One body (12:12-27).

> *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 12:12-13**

Every believer, at the moment of salvation, is baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ. This is not a later experience for a few but the common experience of "all." The body needs every member: the foot should not feel excluded because it is not a hand, nor the eye despise the hand (12:15-21). "God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (12:18). The weaker and less honourable members are indispensable and deserve greater honour (12:22-24). "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (12:26-27).

Ranking the gifts (12:28-31). "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (12:28). Tongues, which the Corinthians prized most, come last. "Are all apostles?... do all speak with tongues?" (12:29-30). The expected answer is no: no single gift is given to every believer. "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (12:31).

Chapter 13 — The More Excellent Way: Love

The famous chapter on love stands between two chapters on gifts, showing that gifts without love are worthless. "Charity" (from the Latin caritas) translates the Greek agape: self-giving love.

The necessity of love (13:1-3).

> *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

The character of love (13:4-7).

> *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

Love is described by its actions. Each description corrected a Corinthian fault: impatience, envy, boasting, pride, rudeness, selfishness, irritability, keeping records of wrongs, and rejoicing in sin (5:2). This is a portrait of Christ Himself, and of what He produces in believers.

The permanence of love (13:8-13).

> *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 13:8-10**

Gifts are temporary; love is eternal. "That which is perfect" (complete) has been understood as the completed New Testament Scriptures, after which partial revelatory gifts would cease (a view held by many Baptists who believe the sign gifts ended with the apostolic age); as the maturity of the church; or as the return of Christ and the eternal state, when we will see "face to face" (13:12). On any view, the partial gives way to the complete. "When I was a child, I spake as a child... but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (13:11-12). Ancient mirrors of polished metal gave only a dim reflection.

> *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 13:13**

Chapter 14 — Edification and Order in Worship

"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy" (14:1). Love seeks the good of others, so the gift that edifies the church is to be preferred.

Prophecy over tongues (14:1-25). Tongues spoken without interpretation edify only the speaker, since no one understands; prophecy speaks to people "to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (14:2-4). Speech must be intelligible: "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (14:8). "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (14:15). "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue" (14:19). "Brethren, be not children in understanding" (14:20). Quoting Isaiah 28:11-12, where foreign languages signalled judgment on unbelieving Israel, Paul says, "tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (14:21-22). If unbelievers walk into a church where everyone speaks in tongues, they will say, "ye are mad"; but clear prophetic preaching convicts them, "and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth" (14:23-25).

Order (14:26-40). "Let all things be done unto edifying" (14:26). At most two or three should speak in tongues, in turn, and only with an interpreter; otherwise they should keep silent (14:27-28). Two or three prophets should speak, and the others judge what is said (14:29). "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (14:32-33). True spiritual gifts are under the speaker's control.

> *Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home*
>
> **1 Corinthians 14:34-35**

Since women prayed and prophesied in some form (11:5), this cannot forbid every word. In context, it concerns the evaluation of prophecy and disruptive questioning in the assembly, and it agrees with 1 Timothy 2:11-12, where women are not to teach or exercise authority over men in the church. Baptists therefore understand the pastoral and teaching office over men as reserved for qualified men. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (14:37).

> *Let all things be done decently and in order.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 14:40**

Chapter 15 — The Resurrection

Some Corinthians, influenced by Greek thought that despised the body, said "there is no resurrection of the dead" (15:12). Paul's answer is the greatest chapter in Scripture on the resurrection.

The gospel and its witnesses (15:1-11).

> *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved... For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

This is the core of the gospel: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, all "according to the scriptures" (Isaiah 53; Psalm 16:10). Many scholars believe Paul is quoting an early Christian creed he received within a few years of the resurrection. Then he lists the witnesses: Cephas, the twelve, "above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present" (anyone could check with them), James, all the apostles, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (15:5-8). "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (15:10).

If Christ is not raised (15:12-19). If there is no resurrection, then Christ is not risen; preaching is empty; faith is empty; the apostles are liars; "ye are yet in your sins"; dead believers have perished; "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (15:14-19). Christianity stands or falls with the resurrection.

Christ the firstfruits (15:20-28).

> *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

The firstfruits were the first sheaf of harvest, offered to God as a pledge of the full harvest to come (Leviticus 23:10-11). Christ rose on the day of firstfruits; His resurrection guarantees the resurrection of His people. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to the Father, having put down all opposition. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (15:25-26; Psalm 110:1; 8:6). Then the Son Himself will be subject to the Father, "that God may be all in all" (15:28), a subjection of role in the plan of redemption, not of nature.

Practical arguments (15:29-34). Some were "baptized for the dead" (15:29), a much-debated phrase with dozens of interpretations; whatever it meant, Paul neither endorses it as a practice nor teaches proxy baptism, but uses it to show that their own actions assumed a resurrection. Why would Paul face daily danger and fight "beasts at Ephesus" if there is no resurrection? "Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die" would be the only sensible philosophy (15:30-32; Isaiah 22:13). "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not" (15:33-34).

The resurrection body (15:35-49). "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (15:35). A seed must die before it springs to life, and the plant is different from the seed, though continuous with it (15:36-38). There are different kinds of bodies and glories (15:39-41).

> *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:42-44**

A "spiritual body" is not a non-physical body but a body fully empowered and governed by the Spirit, like Christ's resurrection body (Luke 24:39). "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (15:45; Genesis 2:7). "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (15:49).

The victory (15:50-58). "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (15:50): our bodies must be transformed.

> *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:51-52**

At Christ's coming for His people, dead believers will be raised and living believers instantly transformed (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (15:53). Then:

> *Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:54-57**

(Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14.) Christ has drawn death's sting by bearing our sin. The doctrine of the resurrection ends with a practical call:

> *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:58**

Chapter 16 — The Collection and Closing Charge

"Now concerning the collection for the saints," the gift for the poor believers in Jerusalem (16:1):

> *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 16:2**

Giving should be regular ("upon the first day of the week," the day the church gathered), personal ("every one of you"), planned ("lay by him in store") and proportionate ("as God hath prospered him").

Paul planned to come through Macedonia and perhaps winter with them, but would stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (16:5-9). Opportunity and opposition often come together. He commended Timothy (16:10-11) and noted that Apollos was unwilling to come at that time (16:12).

> *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 16:13-14**

He commended the household of Stephanas, "the firstfruits of Achaia," who "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (16:15-18), and sent greetings from the churches of Asia and from Aquila and Priscilla, "with the church that is in their house" (16:19). Writing the closing with his own hand (16:21), he added a solemn word:

> *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 16:22**

"Anathema" means accursed; "Maranatha" is Aramaic for "Our Lord, come" or "The Lord cometh." The letter that began "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7) ends with that same longing, and with grace and love (16:23-24).

Part Three: Christ in 1 Corinthians

Christ the Answer to Every Problem

Paul answers every Corinthian problem by pointing to Christ: divisions by the cross (1:13); pride by Christ our wisdom (1:30); immorality by Christ our Passover and our body's Owner (5:7; 6:15, 20); idolatry by the one Lord (8:6); disorder by remembering His death (11:26); gift-envy by the one body of Christ (12:27); and doubt by His resurrection (15:20).

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:7-8	The coming Lord who confirms His people to the end
1:23-24	Christ crucified, the power and wisdom of God
1:30	Made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption
2:8	The Lord of glory, crucified
3:11	The only foundation
5:7	Christ our passover, sacrificed for us
6:11	The name in which believers are washed, sanctified and justified
6:20	The One who bought us with a price
8:6	The one Lord by whom are all things (Creator)
10:4	The spiritual Rock that followed Israel
10:16	The One whose body and blood the Supper represents
11:3	The head of every man, under the headship of God
11:23-26	The Lord whose death we show until He comes
12:3	The Lord whom the Spirit enables believers to confess
12:12, 27	The Head whose body is the church
15:3-4	Died for our sins, buried, raised the third day
15:20, 23	The firstfruits of the resurrection
15:25	The reigning King who will subdue all enemies
15:45, 47	The last Adam, a quickening spirit; the Lord from heaven
15:57	The giver of victory over death
16:22	The coming Lord: Maranatha

The Witnesses of the Resurrection

Resurrection Witness	1 Corinthians 15	Other Accounts
Cephas (Peter)	15:5	Luke 24:34
The twelve	15:5	Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-29
Above five hundred brethren at once	15:6	Probably the Galilee appearance (Matthew 28:16-17)
James, the Lord's brother	15:7	Once an unbeliever (John 7:5); later leader of the Jerusalem church
All the apostles	15:7	Acts 1:3-9
Paul himself	15:8	Acts 9:3-6

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	1 Corinthians	Fulfillment
Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures	15:3	Isaiah 53:5-12; fulfilled at the cross
Raised the third day according to the scriptures	15:4	Psalm 16:10; Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17; fulfilled at the empty tomb
God will destroy the wisdom of the wise	1:19	Isaiah 29:14; shown in the gospel's triumph
Tongues as a sign to unbelieving Israel	14:21	Isaiah 28:11-12; fulfilled at Pentecost and in the apostolic age
Christ reigning until all enemies are subdued	15:25-27	Psalm 110:1; Psalm 8:6; in progress, completed at the end
The resurrection of believers at Christ's coming	15:23, 51-52	Still future
Living believers changed in a moment	15:51-52	Still future (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
Death swallowed up in victory	15:54-55	Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14; still future
Believers' works tested by fire	3:13-15	At the judgment seat of Christ (future)
The saints will judge the world and angels	6:2-3	Still future
Partial gifts done away when the perfect comes	13:8-10	Interpreted as the completed canon, or Christ's return

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 — The Wisdom of the Cross

The message of a crucified Saviour looks foolish to the world but is God's power and wisdom. God deliberately chooses the weak and lowly so that no one can boast except in the Lord. Christ is all the believer's wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5, 14 — Spirit-Empowered Preaching

Paul relied not on eloquence but on the Spirit's power, preaching Christ crucified. The natural man cannot understand spiritual truth unless the Spirit enables him.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 — Building on Christ

Christ is the only foundation. Every believer is building on it, and the quality of each one's work will be tested at the judgment seat. Some will receive rewards; others will be saved "as by fire," with nothing to show.

1 Corinthians 5 — Church Discipline

A church that tolerates open, unrepentant sin is like dough spreading with leaven. Loving discipline aims at the sinner's restoration and the church's purity.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 — Such Were Some of You

God's kingdom excludes the unrepentant, but the gospel washes, sanctifies and justifies sinners of every kind.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 — The Temple of the Holy Ghost

The believer's body belongs to God, bought by Christ's blood and indwelt by the Spirit. Flee sexual sin, and glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 7 — Marriage and Singleness

Marriage is good, holy and permanent; marital intimacy is a mutual duty; singleness is a gift that allows undistracted devotion. Believers must marry "only in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 8-10 — Liberty Limited by Love

Knowledge alone puffs up; love builds up. Christians should limit their liberty rather than cause a brother to stumble, avoid any participation in idolatry, and do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 — Running to Win

The Christian life requires discipline, purpose and self-control, with an eternal crown in view.

1 Corinthians 10:13 — The Way of Escape

Every temptation is common to man, limited by a faithful God, and accompanied by a way of escape.

1 Corinthians 11:23-32 — The Lord's Supper

The Supper remembers Christ's death, proclaims it, and looks forward to His return. Believers must partake reverently, examining themselves and honouring the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12 — The Body of Christ

Every believer is baptized by the Spirit into one body and given a gift for the common good. Every member is needed, honoured and cared for.

1 Corinthians 13 — The Supremacy of Love

Without love, the greatest gifts and sacrifices are worthless. Love is patient, kind, humble and enduring. Gifts will pass away; love never fails.

1 Corinthians 15 — The Resurrection

The gospel rests on Christ's death, burial and resurrection, attested by Scripture and hundreds of witnesses. Because He rose, believers will rise with glorious bodies, and death will be swallowed up in victory. Therefore our labour in the Lord is never in vain.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Corinthians

1. The Centrality of the Cross

The message of Christ crucified is God's wisdom and power (1:18-2:5).

2. The Unity of the Church

Divisions around leaders are carnal; believers are one in Christ (1:10-13; 3:3-9; 12:12-27).

3. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit reveals God's truth, inspires Scripture, indwells believers, baptizes them into Christ's body, and gives gifts (2:10-14; 3:16; 6:19; 12:4-13).

4. Rewards and the Judgment Seat of Christ

Believers' works will be tested and rewarded (3:10-15; 4:5; 9:24-27).

5. Church Discipline

The church must judge unrepentant sin among its members for their restoration (5:1-13).

6. Sexual Purity

The body belongs to the Lord; sexual sin is forbidden; marriage is the God-given setting for sexual union (6:12-20; 7:1-5).

7. Marriage, Divorce and Singleness

Marriage is permanent; singleness is a gift; believers marry believers (7).

8. Christian Liberty and Love

Liberty must be limited by love for weaker believers and devotion to God's glory (8-10).

9. Headship and Order in Worship

God has ordered relationships and worship; all should be done decently and in order (11:3-16; 14:33, 40).

10. The Lord's Supper

A memorial of Christ's death, observed reverently until He comes (10:16-17; 11:23-34).

11. Spiritual Gifts

Given by the Spirit to every believer for the edification of the church, governed by love and order (12-14).

12. Love

The greatest and most enduring virtue (13).

13. The Resurrection

Christ's bodily resurrection guarantees believers' resurrection and transformation at His coming (15).

14. Christian Stewardship

Faithful stewardship of the gospel, of gifts, and of money given regularly and proportionately (4:1-2; 16:1-2).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Corinthians Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Corinthians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Male and female; one flesh (2:18-24; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 11:8-9); Adam a living soul (2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:45); death through Adam (3; 1 Corinthians 15:22)
Exodus	The Passover and unleavened bread (12; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8); the cloud, the sea, manna and the rock (13-17; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4); the golden calf (32:6; 1 Corinthians 10:7)
Leviticus	Incest forbidden (18:8; 1 Corinthians 5:1); the firstfruits (23:10-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20)
Numbers	Lusting, fornication, serpents and murmuring in the wilderness (11; 21; 25; 1 Corinthians 10:6-10); the priests' portion (18; 1 Corinthians 9:13)
Deuteronomy	"Put away the wicked from among you" (17:7; 1 Corinthians 5:13); "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox" (25:4; 1 Corinthians 9:9)
Job	God takes the wise in their own craftiness (5:13; 1 Corinthians 3:19)
Psalms	The earth is the Lord's (24:1; 1 Corinthians 10:26); the Lord knows the thoughts of the wise (94:11; 1 Corinthians 3:20); all things under His feet (8:6; 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:25-27); not leaving His soul in hell (16:10; 1 Corinthians 15:4)
Isaiah	The wisdom of the wise destroyed (29:14; 1 Corinthians 1:19); eye hath not seen (64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9); who hath known the mind of the Lord (40:13; 1 Corinthians 2:16); men of other tongues (28:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:21); "let us eat and drink" (22:13; 1 Corinthians 15:32); death swallowed up (25:8; 1 Corinthians 15:54); the suffering Servant (53; 1 Corinthians 15:3)
Jeremiah	"Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he... knoweth me" (9:24; 1 Corinthians 1:31)
Hosea	"O death, where is thy sting?" (13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:55); raised on the third day (6:2)

1 Corinthians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Church discipline (18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5); marriage and divorce (19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11); the Lord's Supper (26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
Luke	The Supper "in remembrance of me" (22:19-20); the labourer worthy of his hire (10:7; 1 Corinthians 9:14)
John	Love one another (13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13); the resurrection appearances (20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8)
Acts	The founding of the church at Corinth (18); Apollos (18:24-28); Paul at Ephesus (19); Sosthenes (18:17)
Romans	One body, many members (12:4-8); the weak and the strong (14); Adam and Christ (5:12-21)
2 Corinthians	The sequel: the offender restored (2:5-11); the collection (8-9); Paul's ministry defended
Galatians	The flesh versus the Spirit (5:16-25); liberty not a licence (5:13)

Book	Link
Ephesians	Gifts for building up the body (4:7-16); marriage reflecting Christ and the church (5:22-33)
Philippians	The resurrection body like Christ's glorious body (3:20-21)
1 Thessalonians	The dead in Christ raised and the living caught up (4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52)
1 Timothy	Women's roles in the church (2:11-15; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35); support for elders (5:17-18; 1 Corinthians 9:9-14)
2 Timothy	The crown of righteousness for finishing the race (4:7-8; 1 Corinthians 9:24-25)
Hebrews	Running the race (12:1-2); the Old Testament as warning (3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11)
1 Peter	Gifts used as good stewards (4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 12)
Revelation	The final defeat of death (20:14; 21:4; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54)

Themes That Run from 1 Corinthians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 1 Corinthians	Developed in the New Testament
The wisdom of God versus the world	Isaiah 29:14; Jeremiah 9:23-24	1:18-2:16	James 3:13-18; Colossians 2:3, 8
The temple of God	Exodus 40:34; 1 Kings 8	3:16; 6:19	2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21-22
Christ our Passover	Exodus 12	5:7	John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19
The body of Christ	Psalm 133	12:12-27	Romans 12; Ephesians 4; Colossians 1:18
Love	Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:5	13	John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-21
The resurrection	Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2	15	Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
The coming of the Lord	Zechariah 14:5	1:7; 11:26; 15:23; 16:22	Revelation 22:20

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Remember that you are a saint, and live like one** (1:2).
- **Refuse to divide the church around personalities** (1:12-13).
- **Don't be ashamed of the "foolish" message of the cross** (1:18, 23).
- **Glory only in the Lord** (1:31).
- **Preach Christ crucified, depending on the Spirit's power** (2:2-4).
- **Grow out of spiritual infancy** (3:1-3).
- **Build on Christ with materials that will last** (3:11-14).
- **Be found faithful as a steward** (4:2).
- **Remember that every gift you have was received** (4:7).
- **Mourn over sin in the church, and deal with it lovingly** (5:2, 5).
- **Remove the leaven of malice and wickedness** (5:8).
- **Settle disputes between believers within the church** (6:1-7).
- **Rejoice that Christ washes, sanctifies and justifies sinners** (6:11).
- **Flee sexual immorality** (6:18).
- **Glorify God in your body; you are not your own** (6:19-20).
- **Honour marriage and fulfil your duties to your spouse** (7:3-5).
- **Marry only in the Lord** (7:39).
- **Let love govern your liberty** (8:1, 13).
- **Become all things to all men to win some** (9:22).
- **Run with discipline for an incorruptible crown** (9:24-27).
- **Learn from Israel's failures** (10:11).
- **Take heed lest you fall** (10:12).
- **Look for God's way of escape in temptation** (10:13).
- **Flee from idolatry** (10:14).
- **Do all to the glory of God** (10:31).
- **Follow godly examples as they follow Christ** (11:1).
- **Examine yourself before the Lord's Supper** (11:28).
- **Use your spiritual gift for others' good** (12:7).
- **Value every member of the body** (12:21-26).
- **Pursue love above every gift** (13:1-3, 13).
- **Seek to edify the church** (14:12, 26).
- **Let worship be done decently and in order** (14:40).
- **Hold fast the gospel of Christ's death and resurrection** (15:1-4).
- **Live in light of the resurrection** (15:19, 32-34).

- **Be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Lord's work** (15:58).
- **Give regularly and proportionately on the Lord's day** (16:2).
- **Watch, stand fast, quit you like men, be strong** (16:13).
- **Do everything with love** (16:14).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:18	For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
1:27	But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise
2:2	For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
2:9	Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
2:14	But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him
3:11	For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
4:2	Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
6:19-20	Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost... For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body
10:13	There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful
10:31	Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
11:26	For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.
13:4	Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up
13:13	And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.
14:40	Let all things be done decently and in order.
15:3-4	Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day
15:55	O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
15:58	Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
16:13	Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

Conclusion

1 Corinthians is Paul's letter to a church that was rich in gifts but poor in holiness, love and unity. Living in a proud, wealthy and immoral city, the Corinthians had split into factions around their favourite preachers, tolerated incest, sued one another, excused sexual sin, argued over marriage and food offered to idols, turned the Lord's Supper into a scene of selfishness, competed over spiritual gifts, and doubted the resurrection. Paul answered each problem with Christ: Christ crucified, the wisdom and power of God; Christ the only foundation; Christ our Passover; Christ who bought our bodies with His blood; the one Lord through whom all things exist; the Head of the body whose members all need one another; the One whose death we remember until He comes; and the risen Lord, the firstfruits of the resurrection, through whom death will be swallowed up in victory. At the centre stands love, without which all gifts are nothing, and which alone will never fail. The letter ends where Christian hope always ends: "Maranatha," the Lord is coming, and so believers are to be stedfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in His work, knowing it is never in vain.

> *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:58**

2 Corinthians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 56 • Chapters: 13

> *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Corinthians

The Author and Date

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother" (1:1). Paul wrote from Macedonia (2:13; 7:5; 8:1; 9:2-4), probably from Philippi, around AD 56-57, during his third missionary journey, shortly after 1 Corinthians and a few months before he wrote Romans from Corinth.

The Background

Between 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul's relationship with the church went through a painful crisis. The events can be pieced together from the letter itself:

Contact with Corinth	Reference	Description
Founding visit	Acts 18:1-18	Paul spends eighteen months in Corinth
The "previous letter"	1 Corinthians 5:9	A letter now lost
1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians 16:8	Written from Ephesus to correct many problems
The "painful visit"	2 Corinthians 2:1; 12:14; 13:1-2	A brief, sorrowful visit in which Paul was evidently opposed and insulted
The "severe letter"	2 Corinthians 2:3-4; 7:8	Written "with many tears," carried by Titus
Anxiety at Troas	2 Corinthians 2:12-13	Paul could not rest because Titus had not returned
Titus' good news in Macedonia	2 Corinthians 7:5-16	Most of the church had repented and was loyal to Paul
2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians 7:5; 9:2	Written in response, before Paul's third visit
The third visit	2 Corinthians 12:14; 13:1; Acts 20:2-3	Paul spends three months in Greece, writing Romans

Although most of the church had repented, a group of intruders had arrived, claiming to be apostles and attacking Paul. They boasted of their Jewish credentials (11:22), carried letters of recommendation (3:1), compared themselves with one another (10:12), took money from the church (11:20), and preached "another Jesus" (11:4). Paul calls them "false apostles, deceitful workers" (11:13). They accused Paul of being fickle (1:17), weak in person (10:10), unimpressive in speech (11:6), and suspect for refusing financial support (11:7-9; 12:13-16).

Character and Theme

2 Corinthians is the most personal of Paul's letters. In it he opens his heart, describing his sufferings, anxieties, tears, joys and visions. It is a letter about Christian ministry: its glory, its pressures and its power. Its great theme is that God's power is displayed through human weakness.

> *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 4:7**

> *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 12:9**

The letter falls into three parts: Paul's explanation of his ministry, with joy at the church's repentance (1-7); his appeal for the collection for Jerusalem (8-9); and his defence against the false apostles (10-13).

Outline of 2 Corinthians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Paul's Ministry Explained	1-7	Comfort, glory and reconciliation
Comfort in affliction	1:1-11	"The God of all comfort"
Paul's change of plans	1:12-2:4	"All the promises of God in him are yea"
Forgiving the offender	2:5-11	"Lest Satan should get an advantage"
The triumph and fragrance of ministry	2:12-17	"Who is sufficient for these things?"
The glory of the new covenant	3	"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"
Treasure in earthen vessels	4	"We faint not"
The eternal home and the ministry of reconciliation	5	"A new creature"; "made him to be sin for us"
The marks of a true minister; separation	6:1-7:1	"Be ye not unequally yoked"
Joy at the church's repentance	7:2-16	"Godly sorrow worketh repentance"
II. The Collection for Jerusalem	8-9	The grace of giving
The example of Macedonia and of Christ	8	"Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor"
The cheerful giver	9	"God loveth a cheerful giver"
III. Paul's Apostolic Authority Defended	10-13	Strength in weakness
Spiritual warfare and true boasting	10	"Bringing into captivity every thought"
The false apostles and Paul's sufferings	11	"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"
Visions, the thorn and the sufficient grace	12	"When I am weak, then am I strong"
Final warnings and blessing	13	"Examine yourselves"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Paul's Ministry Explained (Chapters 1-7)

Chapter 1 — The God of All Comfort

> *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

The word "comfort" (encouragement, strengthening) appears ten times in five verses (1:3-7). God comforts us in every trouble, not only so that we feel better, but so that we can comfort others. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (1:5). Suffering equips believers for ministry.

Paul then described a recent crisis in Asia:

> *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us*
>
> **2 Corinthians 1:8-10**

God allowed Paul to reach the end of his own strength so that he would trust only in the God who raises the dead. He has delivered, does deliver, and will deliver. Paul valued the Corinthians' prayers (1:11).

Paul's integrity (1:12-2:4). Paul had changed his travel plans, and his critics said he was unreliable, saying "yea, yea" and "nay, nay" at the same time (1:15-17). He answered that his word, like the gospel he preached, was not "yea and nay":

> *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 1:20**

Every promise God has made finds its "Yes" in Christ. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (1:21-22). God establishes believers, anoints them, seals them (marking them as His own, secure), and gives the Holy Spirit as the "earnest," a down payment guaranteeing the full inheritance to come (Ephesians 1:13-14). Paul had changed his plans not out of fickleness but "to spare you": he did not want another painful visit (1:23-2:1). "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy" (1:24). Instead he had written a letter "out of much affliction and anguish of heart... with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you" (2:4).

Chapter 2 — Forgiveness and the Fragrance of Christ

Forgiving the offender (2:5-11). Someone had caused grief, probably the man who opposed Paul during the painful visit, or possibly the immoral man of 1 Corinthians 5. The church had disciplined him, and he had evidently repented.

> *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 2:6-8**

Discipline aims at restoration. Once a sinner repents, the church must forgive, comfort and reaffirm its love. Failing to forgive gives Satan an opportunity: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2:11). Satan uses both tolerance of sin and harshness toward the repentant.

Anxiety and triumph (2:12-17). At Troas, though "a door was opened unto me of the Lord," Paul could not rest because Titus had not arrived with news from Corinth, so he went on to Macedonia (2:12-13). Then, before finishing the story (resumed in 7:5), he bursts into praise:

> *Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?*
>
> **2 Corinthians 2:14-16**

The picture is a Roman triumphal procession, in which a victorious general paraded through the streets with incense burning. Christ is the conquering general; His servants are part of His triumph, spreading the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. To those being saved, the gospel smells of life; to those perishing, of death. "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2:17). "Corrupt" means to peddle, like a merchant watering down wine for profit. Paul did not dilute or sell God's Word.

Chapter 3 — The Glory of the New Covenant

Living letters (3:1-6). Paul's opponents carried letters of recommendation. Paul needed none:

> *Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 3:2-3**

The changed lives of the Corinthians were his credentials. The Spirit writes God's law on the heart, fulfilling the new covenant promise (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-27). "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves... but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament;

not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (3:5-6). "The letter" is the old covenant law written on stone, which commands but cannot empower and so condemns sinners; "the spirit" is the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit, who gives life. (This verse is not about literal versus figurative interpretation of Scripture.)

Two covenants compared (3:7-18). When Moses came down from Sinai, his face shone so brightly that the Israelites could not look at it, and he covered it with a veil (Exodus 34:29-35). Paul compares the old and new covenants:

The Old Covenant	The New Covenant
Written on tables of stone (3:3)	Written on hearts by the Spirit (3:3)
The letter that kills (3:6)	The Spirit who gives life (3:6)
The ministration of death (3:7)	The ministration of the Spirit (3:8)
The ministration of condemnation (3:9)	The ministration of righteousness (3:9)
Glorious, but fading (3:7, 11)	Exceeding in glory, and remaining (3:9-11)
Moses veiled his face (3:13)	Great plainness of speech; open face (3:12, 18)

Moses veiled his face "that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished" (3:13): the glory was fading. "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ" (3:14). When the Jewish people read the Old Testament without Christ, a veil covers their understanding. "Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away" (3:16), whether an individual now or the nation in the future (Romans 11:26).

> *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 3:17-18**

The new covenant brings freedom from condemnation and bondage. Believers behold the glory of Christ, as in a mirror, in the Word of God, and the Spirit gradually transforms them into His likeness. We become like what we behold. This is the process of sanctification.

Chapter 4 — Treasure in Earthen Vessels

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not" (4:1). Paul refused deceptive methods: "not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (4:2).

> *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**

Unbelief is not merely intellectual; Satan, "the god of this world," blinds unbelievers. Only God can open their eyes. "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:5-6). Conversion is a new creation: as God said, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3), so He shines into dark hearts.

> *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 4:7**

The treasure is the gospel; the vessels are frail human servants, like cheap clay jars. The contrast ensures that the power is clearly God's. Then a series of paradoxes:

> *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 4:8-10**

Pressed but not crushed, puzzled but not hopeless, hunted but not abandoned, knocked down but not knocked out. Paul's sufferings displayed both Christ's death and His resurrection life. "So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (4:12). Like the psalmist, "I believed, and therefore have I spoken" (4:13; Psalm 116:10), knowing that God who raised Jesus will raise us also (4:14).

> *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

Paul called his sufferings (listed in 11:23-28) "light" and "for a moment" only by comparison with the eternal weight of glory they were producing. The secret of not losing heart is to fix our eyes on eternal, unseen realities.

Chapter 5 — The Eternal Home and the Ministry of Reconciliation

The heavenly body (5:1-8).

> *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:1**

The present body is a tent, temporary and fragile; the resurrection body will be a permanent building from God. Believers groan, longing to be "clothed upon" with it (5:2-4). God has prepared us for this and given us the Spirit as a guarantee (5:5).

> *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:6-8**

At death, the believer's spirit goes immediately into the Lord's presence (Philippians 1:23; Luke 23:43). There is no soul sleep or purgatory.

The judgment seat of Christ (5:9-10). Paul's ambition was to please the Lord, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (5:10). The "judgment seat" (Greek bema) was the platform from which officials gave verdicts and athletes received prizes. Believers will not be condemned (Romans 8:1), but their lives and works will be evaluated and rewarded (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

The love of Christ constrains (5:11-17). "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (5:11). But Paul's deepest motive was love:

> *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:14-15**

Christ's love grips and drives the believer. Because He died for us, we live for Him. Paul no longer evaluated people by worldly standards (5:16).

> *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Salvation is not reformation but new creation. The person in Christ has a new nature, new desires and a new identity.

The ministry of reconciliation (5:18-21).

> *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:18-20**

Sin made us God's enemies. God took the initiative to reconcile us, in Christ, by not counting our sins against us. Believers are now His ambassadors, representing the King and pleading with people on His behalf: "be ye reconciled to God." How was this possible?

> *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:21**

This is the great exchange. Christ, who never sinned, was treated as sin itself, bearing the guilt and penalty of our sins; believers, who have no righteousness of their own, are counted righteous with God's righteousness in Him. Our sin was put on Him; His righteousness is credited to us.

Chapter 6 — The Marks of a True Minister; Separation

Now is the day of salvation (6:1-2). "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (6:1-2; Isaiah 49:8). The opportunity to respond to God's grace is now, not later.

Commending the ministry (6:3-10). Paul gave no offence, "that the ministry be not blamed" (6:3). He proved himself a true minister "in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left" (6:4-7). Then a series of paradoxes:

> *As deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 6:8-10**

The world's estimate of God's servants is the opposite of reality. Paul opened his heart wide to the Corinthians and asked them to open theirs to him (6:11-13).

Separation from unbelievers (6:14-7:1).

> *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God*
>
> **2 Corinthians 6:14-16**

The image comes from Deuteronomy 22:10, which forbade yoking an ox and an ass together. Believers must not enter binding partnerships with unbelievers that compromise their loyalty to Christ: marriage (1 Corinthians 7:39), business partnerships that require compromise, or religious alliances with false teaching and idolatry. This does not mean avoiding all contact with unbelievers (1 Corinthians 5:10), but refusing to be bound together with them in ways that pull believers away from God. God's promises motivate separation: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (6:16-18; Leviticus 26:12; Isaiah 52:11; 2 Samuel 7:14).

> *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 7:1**

Chapter 7 — Godly Sorrow and Joy

"Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man" (7:2). Paul resumed the story from 2:13:

> *For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus*
>
> **2 Corinthians 7:5-6**

Even the great apostle had fears and was cast down. God comforted him through a friend and through good news: the Corinthians longed for him, mourned over their wrongs, and were zealous for him (7:7). His severe letter had grieved them, but Paul did not regret it, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance" (7:8-9).

> *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 7:10**

There are two kinds of sorrow over sin. Worldly sorrow regrets the consequences and leads to despair and death, like Judas (Matthew 27:3-5). Godly sorrow grieves over offending God, leads to genuine repentance and life, and leaves no regret, like Peter (Luke 22:62). The Corinthians' repentance showed itself in "carefulness" (earnestness), clearing of themselves, indignation at the sin, fear, vehement desire, zeal and "revenge" (readiness to see justice done) (7:11). Titus was refreshed by them and loved them,

and Paul rejoiced: "I have confidence in you in all things" (7:13-16).

Section II: The Collection for Jerusalem (Chapters 8-9)

Chapters 8-9 are the fullest teaching in the New Testament on Christian giving. Paul was collecting money from the Gentile churches for the poor believers in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4). The Corinthians had begun eagerly a year before but had not finished.

Chapter 8 — The Grace of Giving

The example of the Macedonians (8:1-8). The churches of Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea) were poor and persecuted:

> *How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift... And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 8:2-5**

They gave joyfully, sacrificially, voluntarily and eagerly, because they had first given themselves to the Lord. Giving is called a "grace" (8:1, 6, 7), the fruit of God's grace in the heart. Paul urged the Corinthians, who abounded in faith, utterance, knowledge and love, to "abound in this grace also" (8:7). He did not command it, but used others' example to prove the sincerity of their love (8:8).

The example of Christ (8:9).

> *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 8:9**

The eternal Son, possessing all the riches of heaven, became poor in His incarnation and death, so that we might share His spiritual riches (Philippians 2:5-8). This is the ultimate motive for generosity.

Principles of giving (8:10-15). Finish what you began (8:10-11). "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (8:12): God looks at willingness and proportion, not amount. The goal was "equality": the Corinthians' abundance would supply Jerusalem's need now, and one day the situation might be reversed, as with the manna: "He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack" (8:13-15; Exodus 16:18).

Handling the money (8:16-24). Paul sent Titus and two respected brothers, one "whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches," chosen by the churches to travel with the gift (8:18-19). "Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (8:20-21). Church finances must be handled with transparency and accountability.

Chapter 9 — The Cheerful Giver

Paul had boasted to the Macedonians about the Corinthians' readiness, and did not want them embarrassed if Macedonians came with him and found them unprepared. So he sent the brothers ahead to arrange "your bounty... as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness" (9:1-5).

> *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 9:6-7**

Giving is like sowing seed: the harvest corresponds to the sowing (Proverbs 11:24-25; Luke 6:38). Giving should be deliberate ("as he purposeth in his heart"), willing ("not grudgingly"), free ("or of necessity") and joyful ("cheerful"; the Greek word gives us "hilarious").

> *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work*
>
> **2 Corinthians 9:8**

God supplies givers so that they can keep giving (9:8-10; Psalm 112:9; Isaiah 55:10). "Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God" (9:11). Generosity meets needs, produces thanksgiving to God, proves the genuineness of faith, and creates bonds of love and prayer between believers (9:12-14). Paul ends with praise for the greatest Gift of all:

> *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 9:15**

Section III: Paul's Apostolic Authority Defended (Chapters 10-13)

The tone changes sharply. Paul now confronts the false apostles and the minority still influenced by them.

Chapter 10 — Spiritual Warfare and True Boasting

"Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you" (10:1), quoting his critics. He hoped he would not have to be bold against those who thought he walked "according to the flesh" (10:2).

> *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*
>
> **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**

The Christian's battle is spiritual, against ideas, arguments and proud reasoning that oppose the knowledge of God. The weapons are not human cleverness, manipulation or force, but God's Word,

prayer and the Spirit's power (Ephesians 6:10-18). The goal is to bring every thought captive to Christ.

The critics said, "his letters... are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (10:10). Paul replied that he would be the same in person as in his letters (10:11). "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (10:12). Paul stayed within the sphere God assigned him and did not boast in other men's labours; he hoped to preach "in the regions beyond you" (10:13-16).

> *But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 10:17-18**

Chapter 11 — False Apostles and Paul's Sufferings

Godly jealousy (11:1-6). Paul asked them to bear with his "folly" in boasting, because he was concerned for them:

> *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 11:2-3**

Paul, like a father who had arranged his daughter's engagement, wanted to present the church pure to Christ, her Bridegroom. He feared that, as Satan deceived Eve, the false teachers would lead them away from simple, sincere devotion to Christ. They tolerated anyone who preached "another Jesus... another spirit... another gospel" (11:4; Galatians 1:6-9). Paul was not inferior to these "very chiefest apostles," though "rude in speech" (11:5-6).

Preaching without pay (11:7-12). His critics claimed Paul refused their money because he did not love them or was not a true apostle. Paul explained that he preached freely so as not to burden them and to cut off any opportunity for the false apostles to claim they were on the same footing (11:7-12).

Satan's servants (11:13-15).

> *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**

False teachers rarely look evil; they appear as servants of righteousness. Believers must test every teacher by the truth (1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:2).

Boasting as a fool (11:16-33). Since the Corinthians tolerated the boasting, and even the abuse, of the false apostles (11:19-20), Paul would "boast" too, but in a surprising way. He matched their credentials:

"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more" (11:22-23). Then, instead of listing achievements, he listed sufferings:

> *In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 11:23-28**

Many of these sufferings are not recorded in Acts. (The shipwreck at Malta, Acts 27, came later, so Paul suffered at least four shipwrecks.) On top of physical hardships came daily anxiety for all the churches. "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (11:29). "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities" (11:30). His climactic "boast" was a humiliating escape from Damascus, let down through a window in a basket (11:32-33).

Chapter 12 — Visions, the Thorn and Sufficient Grace

Caught up to paradise (12:1-6). Paul then turned to "visions and revelations of the Lord." Speaking of himself in the third person, out of humility:

> *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven... How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 12:2-4**

The "third heaven" is the dwelling place of God (beyond the atmosphere and outer space), also called "paradise" (Luke 23:43; Revelation 2:7). Paul kept this experience private for fourteen years and revealed it only reluctantly; he did not build his ministry on mystical experiences.

The thorn in the flesh (12:7-10).

> *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 12:7-9**

The "thorn" has been identified as an eye disease (compare Galatians 4:15; 6:11), malaria, a speech impediment, or persistent opposition; Scripture does not say, perhaps so that every suffering believer can apply the lesson. Satan meant it to harm; God used it to keep Paul humble. Paul prayed three times for its removal, as Jesus prayed three times in Gethsemane. God said no, and gave something better: sufficient grace and Christ's power resting on him. God does not always remove our weaknesses; He displays His strength through them.

> *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 12:10**

Paul's credentials and love (12:11-21). The Corinthians should have commended him. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (12:12). These miraculous signs authenticated the apostles (Hebrews 2:3-4). He was coming a third time and would not be a burden: "for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (12:14-15). He feared he would find quarrelling, envy, anger, strife, slander, gossip, pride and disorder, and that many had not repented of their immorality (12:20-21).

Chapter 13 — Examine Yourselves

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (13:1; Deuteronomy 19:15). On this visit he would not spare unrepentant sinners (13:2). They sought proof that Christ spoke through him; Christ "was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God," and Paul shared both His weakness and His power (13:3-4).

> *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*
>
> **2 Corinthians 13:5**

The Corinthians were busy examining Paul; they needed to examine themselves. True faith shows itself in a changed life (1 John 2:3-6; 3:14). "Reprobates" here means "failing the test," people whose profession is not genuine. Paul hoped they would pass, and prayed for their maturity (13:6-9). "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (13:8). He wrote so that when he came he would not need to use his authority severely, since it was given "to edification, and not to destruction" (13:10).

> *Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 13:11**

The letter closes with the fullest Trinitarian benediction in Scripture:

> *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.*

> **2 Corinthians 13:14**

Part Three: Christ in 2 Corinthians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:5	The One whose sufferings and consolation abound in His people
1:19-20	The Son of God, the "Yea" and "Amen" of every promise of God
2:14	The conqueror who leads His people in triumph
2:15	The sweet savour of the gospel
3:14, 16	The One in whom the veil over the Old Testament is removed
3:18	The glory of the Lord into whose image believers are changed
4:4	The image of God
4:5	Christ Jesus the Lord, whom we preach
4:6	The face in which the glory of God shines
4:10-11	The One whose death and life are seen in His servants
5:10	The Judge at whose judgment seat all believers will appear
5:14-15	The One who died for all and rose again, whose love constrains us
5:17	The One in whom believers are new creatures
5:19	God in Christ, reconciling the world
5:21	The sinless One made sin for us
8:9	The rich One who became poor for us
9:15	God's unspeakable gift
10:1	The meek and gentle Christ
10:5	The One to whom every thought must be made captive
11:2	The Bridegroom of the church
12:9	The One whose power rests on His weak servants
13:4	Crucified in weakness, living by God's power
13:5	Christ in you

The Great Exchange

The heart of the gospel in 2 Corinthians is the double exchange: Christ "made... sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (5:21), and Christ who "was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (8:9). He took what was ours so that we might receive what is His.

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	2 Corinthians	Fulfillment
The new covenant written on hearts by the Spirit	3:3, 6	Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27; fulfilled in the gospel age
"In a time accepted... in the day of salvation"	6:2	Isaiah 49:8; fulfilled now in the gospel
"I will dwell in them, and walk in them"	6:16	Leviticus 26:12; Ezekiel 37:27; fulfilled in the church as God's temple; completed in Revelation 21:3
"I will be a Father unto you... my sons and daughters"	6:18	2 Samuel 7:14; fulfilled in believers' adoption
Light shining out of darkness	4:6	Genesis 1:3; Isaiah 9:2; fulfilled in conversion
The veil removed when Israel turns to the Lord	3:16	For individuals now; for the nation at Christ's return (Romans 11:26)
The resurrection of believers	4:14	Still future
The eternal, heavenly body	5:1-4	Still future
The judgment seat of Christ	5:10	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 — Comfort in Affliction

God comforts us in every trouble so that we can comfort others. Overwhelming pressures teach us not to trust in ourselves but in the God who raises the dead.

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 — Restoring the Repentant

Church discipline must give way to forgiveness, comfort and reaffirmed love when the sinner repents, or Satan will gain an advantage.

2 Corinthians 3:7-18 — The Greater Glory

The new covenant of the Spirit far surpasses the old covenant of the letter. Believers, beholding Christ's glory in the Word, are transformed into His image by the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4:7-18 — Treasure in Clay Pots

God puts His treasure in weak vessels so the power is clearly His. Believers are pressed but not crushed. Present afflictions are light and momentary compared with the eternal weight of glory, so we fix our eyes on the unseen.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 — Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord

At death believers go immediately to be with Christ. One day they will receive resurrection bodies and stand before Christ's judgment seat to receive rewards. Their aim now is to please Him.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 — The Ministry of Reconciliation

Christ's love compels believers to live for Him. Anyone in Christ is a new creation. God reconciled the world to Himself through Christ, who was made sin for us, and sends believers as ambassadors pleading, "be ye reconciled to God."

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 — Separation unto God

Believers must not be yoked with unbelievers in ways that compromise their faith, but must cleanse themselves and pursue holiness, because God dwells among them as their Father.

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 — Godly Sorrow

Godly sorrow produces repentance and life; worldly sorrow produces death. True repentance shows itself in earnestness, zeal and a desire to make things right.

2 Corinthians 8-9 — The Grace of Giving

Giving flows from first giving ourselves to the Lord, follows the example of Christ who became poor for us, is proportionate to what we have, is handled with integrity, and should be generous, deliberate and cheerful. God supplies the giver, and the result is thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 — Spiritual Warfare

The battle for minds is fought with spiritual weapons that tear down arguments against God and bring every thought captive to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 — False Apostles

False teachers disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, as Satan appears as an angel of light. Believers must test teaching by the truth.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 — Sufficient Grace

God sometimes says no to our prayers for relief and gives instead sufficient grace. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. When we are weak, then we are strong.

2 Corinthians 13:5 — Examine Yourselves

Every professing Christian should examine whether his faith is genuine, looking for the evidence that Christ lives in him.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Corinthians

1. The God of All Comfort

God comforts His people in trouble and equips them to comfort others (1:3-7).

2. The Sealing and Earnest of the Spirit

God seals believers and gives the Spirit as a guarantee of their inheritance (1:21-22; 5:5).

3. The New Covenant

The ministry of the Spirit and righteousness surpasses the old covenant of the letter and condemnation (3).

4. Transformation into Christ's Image

Believers are progressively changed by the Spirit as they behold Christ's glory (3:18).

5. Satan's Activity

Satan blinds unbelievers, seeks advantage over believers, and disguises himself and his servants (2:11; 4:4; 11:3, 14-15; 12:7).

6. Strength in Weakness

God's power is displayed through human frailty and suffering (4:7-12; 12:9-10).

7. The Eternal Perspective

Present afflictions produce eternal glory; the unseen is eternal (4:16-18).

8. Death and the Intermediate State

To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (5:6-8).

9. The Judgment Seat of Christ

All believers will give account and be rewarded (5:10).

10. Reconciliation and Substitution

God reconciled sinners to Himself through Christ, who was made sin for us (5:18-21).

11. The New Creation

Anyone in Christ is a new creature (5:17).

12. Biblical Separation

Believers must not be unequally yoked with unbelievers and must perfect holiness (6:14-7:1).

13. Godly Sorrow and Repentance

True repentance flows from sorrow toward God (7:10-11).

14. Christian Giving

Generous, proportionate, cheerful, voluntary giving modelled on Christ's grace (8-9).

15. Spiritual Warfare

Fought with spiritual weapons for the obedience of every thought to Christ (10:3-5).

16. Discerning True and False Ministers

True ministers are marked by suffering, integrity and love; false ones by self-commendation, exploitation and another gospel (10-13).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Corinthians Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Corinthians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Light shining out of darkness (1:3; 2 Corinthians 4:6); the serpent's deceit of Eve (3:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:3)
Exodus	Moses' shining face and veil (34:29-35; 2 Corinthians 3:7-16); the tables of stone (31:18; 2 Corinthians 3:3); the manna shared (16:18; 2 Corinthians 8:15)
Leviticus	"I will walk among you... and ye shall be my people" (26:12; 2 Corinthians 6:16)
Deuteronomy	The unequal yoke (22:10; 2 Corinthians 6:14); forty stripes (25:3; 2 Corinthians 11:24); two or three witnesses (19:15; 2 Corinthians 13:1)
2 Samuel	"I will be his father, and he shall be my son" (7:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18)
Psalms	"I believed, therefore have I spoken" (116:10; 2 Corinthians 4:13); the righteous man's lasting gifts (112:9; 2 Corinthians 9:9)
Proverbs	The liberal soul made fat (11:24-25; 2 Corinthians 9:6)
Isaiah	The day of salvation (49:8; 2 Corinthians 6:2); "touch no unclean thing" (52:11; 2 Corinthians 6:17); seed to the sower (55:10; 2 Corinthians 9:10)
Jeremiah	The new covenant written on hearts (31:31-34; 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6); glory in the Lord (9:24; 2 Corinthians 10:17)
Ezekiel	A heart of flesh and a new spirit (11:19; 36:26-27; 2 Corinthians 3:3); God's tabernacle with His people (37:27; 2 Corinthians 6:16)

2 Corinthians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Laying up treasure in heaven (6:19-21; 2 Corinthians 4:18); false prophets in sheep's clothing (7:15; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
Luke	Give, and it shall be given (6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6); paradise (23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4)
John	Christ's love for His own (13:1; 2 Corinthians 5:14); the Spirit who gives life (6:63; 2 Corinthians 3:6)
Acts	Paul's journeys and sufferings (13-20); the stoning at Lystra (14:19); the Damascus escape (9:23-25); the collection delivered (24:17)
Romans	Reconciliation through Christ's death (5:10-11); the collection for Jerusalem (15:25-27); present sufferings and future glory (8:18)
1 Corinthians	The previous letter; the offender (5); the judgment seat and rewards (3:12-15); the collection (16:1-4); the resurrection body (15)
Galatians	"Another gospel" (1:6-9; 2 Corinthians 11:4); Paul's apostolic credentials (1-2); his eyes and large letters (4:15; 6:11)

Book	Link
Ephesians	Sealed with the Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance (1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:22); the armour of God (6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4)
Philippians	Christ who emptied Himself (2:5-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9); to depart and be with Christ (1:21-23; 2 Corinthians 5:8); the Philippians' giving (4:15-18; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
Colossians	Christ the image of God (1:15; 2 Corinthians 4:4)
Hebrews	The new covenant better than the old (8; 2 Corinthians 3); signs confirming the apostles (2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12)
1 Peter	Suffering and glory (1:6-7; 4:12-13; 2 Corinthians 4:17); Christ the sinless substitute (2:22-24; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
1 John	Test the spirits (4:1; 2 Corinthians 11:13); examine your faith by its fruit (2:3-6; 2 Corinthians 13:5)
Revelation	The church presented as a bride (19:7-8; 21:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2); testing false apostles (2:2)

Themes That Run from 2 Corinthians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 2 Corinthians	Developed in the New Testament
Comfort in suffering	Isaiah 40:1; 66:13	1:3-7; 7:6	Romans 15:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:18
The new covenant	Jeremiah 31:31-34	3	Hebrews 8-10
Transformation into God's image	Genesis 1:27	3:18	Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2
Substitution	Isaiah 53:4-6	5:21	1 Peter 2:24; 3:18
Reconciliation	Leviticus 16	5:18-20	Romans 5:10-11; Colossians 1:20-22
Separation from the world	Leviticus 20:26; Isaiah 52:11	6:14-7:1	James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; Revelation 18:4
Generous giving	Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Proverbs 11:24-25	8-9	Philippians 4:15-19; Hebrews 13:16
Strength in weakness	Judges 7; 1 Samuel 17	12:9-10	Hebrews 11:34

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let God's comfort in your trouble equip you to comfort others** (1:4).
- **Learn not to trust in yourself but in the God who raises the dead** (1:9).
- **Pray for God's servants** (1:11).
- **Let your yes mean yes** (1:17-18).
- **Forgive and restore the repentant** (2:7-8).
- **Be aware of Satan's devices** (2:11).
- **Spread the fragrance of Christ everywhere** (2:14-15).
- **Never peddle or dilute God's Word** (2:17; 4:2).
- **Let your life be a letter from Christ** (3:2-3).
- **Rely on God's sufficiency, not your own** (3:5).
- **Behold Christ's glory in the Word, and be changed** (3:18).
- **Preach Christ, not yourself** (4:5).
- **Remember that the power is God's, not yours** (4:7).
- **Don't lose heart; your inward man is renewed day by day** (4:16).
- **Keep your eyes on eternal, unseen things** (4:18).
- **Walk by faith, not by sight** (5:7).
- **Live to please Christ, who will judge your works** (5:9-10).
- **Let Christ's love constrain you** (5:14).
- **Live for Him who died for you** (5:15).
- **Rejoice that you are a new creature** (5:17).
- **Be an ambassador for Christ** (5:20).
- **Respond to God's grace today** (6:2).
- **Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers** (6:14).
- **Perfect holiness in the fear of God** (7:1).
- **Let sorrow over sin lead you to genuine repentance** (7:10).
- **Give yourself first to the Lord** (8:5).
- **Remember the grace of Christ who became poor for you** (8:9).
- **Handle money with integrity before God and men** (8:21).
- **Give generously, deliberately and cheerfully** (9:6-7).
- **Thank God for His unspeakable gift** (9:15).
- **Take every thought captive to Christ** (10:5).
- **Don't measure yourself by others** (10:12).
- **Seek the Lord's commendation, not your own** (10:18).
- **Guard your simple devotion to Christ** (11:3).

- **Test teachers; Satan disguises himself** (11:14).
- **Boast in your weaknesses, where Christ's power rests** (12:9).
- **Accept God's "no" with His sufficient grace** (12:9).
- **Spend and be spent for others** (12:15).
- **Examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith** (13:5).
- **Be of one mind, and live in peace** (13:11).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3-4	Blessed be God... the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble
1:20	For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen
3:18	But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory
4:7	But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
4:17	For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory
4:18	For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.
5:7	For we walk by faith, not by sight
5:8	Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.
5:10	For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ
5:17	Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
5:21	For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
6:2	Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.
6:14	Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers
7:10	For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of
8:9	Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.
9:7	Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
10:5	Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ
12:9	My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.
13:14	The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Conclusion

2 Corinthians is Paul's most personal letter, written with tears and joy to a church that had wounded him and then repented. In it he opens his heart and shows what genuine Christian ministry looks like. He blesses the God of all comfort who comforted him when he despaired of life, explains that every promise of God is "yes" in Christ, and urges the church to forgive the repentant. He describes the surpassing glory of the new covenant, in which believers, beholding the Lord, are transformed into His image. He confesses that God's treasure is carried in clay pots, pressed but not crushed, and that present afflictions are light and momentary compared with eternal glory. He looks forward to the heavenly body, to being present with the Lord, and to the judgment seat of Christ, and he proclaims the ministry of reconciliation: in Christ we are new creatures, because the sinless One was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He calls for separation and holiness, rejoices in godly sorrow, and teaches the grace of cheerful giving, rooted in the grace of Christ who became poor for us. Finally, confronting false apostles disguised as angels of light, he boasts only in his sufferings and weaknesses, and records the word that has sustained countless believers: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

> *And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*
>
> **2 Corinthians 12:9**

Galatians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 49 (or mid-50s) • Chapters: 6

> *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*
>
> **Galatians 2:20**

Part One: Introduction to Galatians

The Author

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia" (1:1-2). Paul's authorship has never been seriously doubted. The letter is intensely personal, and he wrote at least its closing lines "with mine own hand" in large letters (6:11).

The Recipients and Date

Galatians was sent to several churches in the region of Galatia, in central Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Scholars hold two main views about which churches these were:

View	Churches	When Founded	Probable Date of Letter
South Galatian	Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia	Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)	About AD 48-49, before the Jerusalem council; possibly Paul's earliest letter
North Galatian	Churches among the ethnic Galatians (Celts) in the north, around Ancyra	Paul's second journey (Acts 16:6; 18:23)	About AD 53-57, from Ephesus or Macedonia

Many conservative scholars favour the South Galatian view, since Acts records Paul's founding of churches there in detail and the letter does not mention the decision of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15), which would have settled the very issue Paul was addressing. Either way, the message is the same.

The Problem

After Paul left, certain teachers, often called "Judaizers," came to the Galatian churches. They taught that Gentile believers must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses to be fully accepted by God (5:2-4; 6:12-13). They also attacked Paul's authority, suggesting that he was a second-hand apostle dependent on the Jerusalem leaders and that he had watered down the gospel to please Gentiles (1:10-12). Many Galatians were being persuaded, beginning to observe Jewish days and seasons (4:10) and considering circumcision (5:2).

Purpose and Theme

Paul wrote to defend the gospel of God's grace: that sinners are justified by faith in Christ alone, apart from the works of the law, and that believers live in freedom by the power of the Holy Spirit, not under the bondage of the law. Galatians has been called "the Magna Carta of Christian liberty." Martin Luther loved it so much that he called it his "Katie von Bora," after his wife.

> *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ... for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*
>
> **Galatians 2:16**

> *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*
>
> **Galatians 5:1**

The Tone of the Letter

Galatians is the most urgent and severe of Paul's letters. Every other letter Paul wrote to a church begins with thanksgiving for the readers; Galatians does not. He goes straight to the crisis: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed... unto another gospel" (1:6). He pronounces a curse on anyone who preaches a different gospel (1:8-9), calls the Galatians "foolish" and "bewitched" (3:1), and fears he has laboured for them in vain (4:11). Yet he also writes with deep tenderness: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (4:19). The issue at stake was nothing less than the gospel itself.

Galatians and Romans

Feature	Galatians	Romans
Occasion	A crisis: false teachers in Paul's own churches	Preparing to visit a church he had not founded
Tone	Urgent, emotional, polemical	Calm, orderly, systematic
Justification by faith	Defended against attack	Explained in full
Abraham	Justified by faith; father of believers (3:6-9)	Justified by faith; father of believers (4)
Habakkuk 2:4	"The just shall live by faith" (3:11)	"The just shall live by faith" (1:17)
The law	Our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (3:24)	Reveals sin; cannot save (3:20; 7)
The Spirit and adoption	"Abba, Father" (4:6)	"Abba, Father" (8:15)
Flesh and Spirit	Works of the flesh; fruit of the Spirit (5:16-25)	Walking after the Spirit (8:1-13)

Outline of Galatians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Personal: The Gospel Defended	1-2	Paul's gospel came from God
No other gospel	1:1-10	"Let him be accursed"
The gospel received by revelation	1:11-24	Not from man
The gospel confirmed by the apostles	2:1-10	The right hand of fellowship
The gospel defended before Peter	2:11-21	"I am crucified with Christ"
II. Doctrinal: The Gospel Explained	3-4	Justification by faith, not law
The Galatians' experience	3:1-5	"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law?"
Abraham's example	3:6-14	Justified by faith; the curse removed

Section	Chapters	Theme
The promise and the law	3:15-29	"The law was our schoolmaster"
Sons, not servants	4:1-20	"Abba, Father"
Hagar and Sarah	4:21-31	Bondage and freedom
III. Practical: The Gospel Applied	5-6	Liberty in the Spirit
Stand fast in liberty	5:1-15	"By love serve one another"
Walk in the Spirit	5:16-26	The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit
Bear one another's burdens	6:1-10	Sowing and reaping
Glory in the cross	6:11-18	"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Personal — The Gospel Defended (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter 1 — No Other Gospel

Greeting (1:1-5). Paul immediately asserts his authority: he is an apostle "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (1:1). He summarises the gospel: Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever" (1:4-5). Christ's death is the complete provision for our sins; nothing needs to be added.

The crisis (1:6-10).

> *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*
>
> **Galatians 1:6-7**

Turning from the gospel of grace to a gospel of works is not merely a change of doctrine but a desertion of God Himself, "him that called you." The false gospel is "not another," because there is only one gospel; it is a perversion.

> *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*
>
> **Galatians 1:8-9**

The repeated curse shows the seriousness of the matter. The test of any message is not the messenger's credentials, even an apostle or an angel, but its agreement with the gospel once delivered. Adding any human work to faith in Christ as a condition of salvation destroys the gospel. "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (1:10).

Paul's gospel came by revelation (1:11-24). "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:11-12). Paul proved this from his life story:

- **Before conversion (1:13-14):** he persecuted the church of God and "profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals... being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." No one had less reason to invent a gospel of grace.
- **His conversion (1:15-16):** "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen." His conversion and calling were entirely God's work.

- **After conversion (1:16-24):** "immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He went into Arabia and returned to Damascus. Only after three years did he go to Jerusalem, and then only to visit Peter for fifteen days; he saw no other apostle except James, the Lord's brother (1:17-19). Then he went to Syria and Cilicia, unknown by face to the churches of Judea, who only heard that "he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me" (1:21-24).

Paul did not receive his gospel from the Jerusalem apostles; he received it directly from Christ.

Chapter 2 — The Gospel Confirmed and Defended

The right hand of fellowship (2:1-10). Fourteen years later, Paul went to Jerusalem "by revelation" with Barnabas and Titus, and privately set before the leaders the gospel he preached among the Gentiles (2:1-2). (This may be the famine visit of Acts 11:30 or the council of Acts 15.) Titus, an uncircumcised Greek believer, was not compelled to be circumcised, a test case proving that Gentiles need not keep the law (2:3). "False brethren unawares brought in... came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (2:4-5). Paul would not compromise for a moment.

The respected leaders "added nothing to me" (2:6). They recognised that "the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter" (2:7). God was at work in both. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship" (2:9). There was one gospel, with two spheres of mission. Their only request was to "remember the poor," which Paul was eager to do (2:10).

Paul rebukes Peter (2:11-14).

> *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.*
>
> **Galatians 2:11-12**

Peter had freely eaten with Gentile believers, as God had taught him (Acts 10-11). But when strict Jewish believers arrived, Peter, afraid of their criticism, withdrew from table fellowship with the Gentiles. Other Jewish believers followed, "insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation" (2:13). Peter's behaviour implied that Gentile believers were second-class unless they kept the law. "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (2:14). Even an apostle could err in conduct, and public inconsistency that threatened the gospel required public correction. (Peter later showed no resentment, calling Paul "our beloved brother," 2 Peter 3:15.)

Justified by faith (2:15-21). Paul's words to Peter flow into a summary of the gospel:

> *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*
>
> **Galatians 2:16**

Three times in one verse Paul says justification is by faith, not by works. Does this make Christ a promoter of sin, since Jewish believers abandon law-keeping as a way of righteousness? "God forbid" (2:17). The real transgressor is the one who rebuilds the law-system he tore down (2:18). "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (2:19).

> *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*
>
> **Galatians 2:20-21**

The believer died with Christ; the old self is gone. The new life is Christ living in him, lived by faith in the Son of God, whose love is personal: "who loved me, and gave himself for me." If law-keeping could make us righteous, Christ's death would have been pointless.

Section II: Doctrinal — The Gospel Explained (Chapters 3-4)

Chapter 3 — Faith, the Law and the Promise

The Galatians' own experience (3:1-5).

> *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*
>
> **Galatians 3:1-3**

Paul had preached Christ crucified so vividly it was as if they had seen it. They had received the Holy Spirit by believing the message, not by keeping the law. How foolish to think that the Christian life, begun by the Spirit through faith, could be completed by human effort and rituals. The God who gave them the Spirit and worked miracles among them did so through faith (3:4-5).

Abraham justified by faith (3:6-9). "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (3:6; Genesis 15:6). "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (3:7). The Judaizers claimed that Gentiles must become Jews to be Abraham's children; Paul says faith makes them Abraham's children.

> *And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

> **Galatians 3:8-9**

The gospel of justification by faith for the Gentiles was announced to Abraham two thousand years earlier (Genesis 12:3).

The curse of the law and Christ's redemption (3:10-14).

> *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*
>
> **Galatians 3:10-11**

The law demands perfect, continual obedience in "all things" (Deuteronomy 27:26). Anyone who relies on law-keeping must keep it perfectly, and no one does, so all who rely on the law are under its curse. Scripture says the righteous live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4), and the law operates on a different principle, "The man that doeth them shall live in them" (3:12; Leviticus 18:5).

> *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*
>
> **Galatians 3:13-14**

Christ bought us out from under the law's curse by becoming a curse in our place. The law declared that anyone hanged on a tree was under God's curse (Deuteronomy 21:23); on the cross, Christ bore that curse for us. As a result, the blessing promised to Abraham, justification and the gift of the Spirit, comes to Gentiles who believe.

The promise came before the law (3:15-18). Even a human covenant, once confirmed, cannot be cancelled or added to (3:15). God's promises were made "to Abraham and his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (3:16). The promise of blessing to the nations centres on one Seed, Christ (Genesis 22:18). The law came 430 years later and cannot cancel the earlier covenant of promise (3:17). "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (3:18).

The purpose of the law (3:19-25). "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (3:19). The law was given to reveal sin as transgression, to restrain it, and to show the need for a Saviour, and it was temporary, "till the seed should come." It is not against God's promises, but it could never give life (3:21). "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (3:22).

> *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*
>
> **Galatians 3:24-25**

The "schoolmaster" (Greek paidagogos) was a household slave who supervised and disciplined a child until he came of age. The law guarded and disciplined Israel until Christ came; it shows every sinner his guilt and drives him to Christ. Once faith in Christ has come, believers are no longer under its supervision as a system.

Sons of God, one in Christ (3:26-29).

> *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*
>
> **Galatians 3:26-29**

Faith makes believers God's sons. Baptism into Christ (the Spirit's work of uniting us to Him, pictured in water baptism) means being clothed with Christ. In Him, every barrier of race, social status and sex is removed as far as standing before God and access to His blessing are concerned; all believers are equally sons and heirs. (This does not abolish the distinct roles of men and women taught elsewhere, but it denies that any believer is spiritually inferior.) Every believer, Jew or Gentile, belongs to Christ and is therefore Abraham's true seed and heir.

Chapter 4 — Sons, Not Servants

The coming of age (4:1-7). An heir who is still a child is no different from a servant; he is under guardians until the date set by his father (4:1-2). "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world" (4:3), the basic religious principles of law and ritual.

> *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*
>
> **Galatians 4:4-7**

At exactly the right moment in history, God sent His eternal Son. He was "made of a woman," truly human and virgin-born (the woman's Seed of Genesis 3:15), and "made under the law," fully subject to it and keeping it perfectly. His purpose was to redeem those under the law and give them the full rights of adopted sons. Then the Father sent the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, so that they cry "Abba, Father," an intimate address. All three Persons of the Trinity are active in our salvation.

Turning back to bondage (4:8-20). Before conversion the Galatians served false gods. "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (4:9-11). Exchanging grace for a religion of rules and calendars is like returning to slavery.

Paul made a personal appeal. He first preached to them because of an illness, yet they received him "as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus" (4:13-14). "For I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye

would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me" (4:15), perhaps hinting at an eye condition. "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (4:16). The false teachers courted them for their own ends (4:17).

> *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you*
>
> **Galatians 4:19**

Paul felt like a mother in labour again, longing for Christ's character to be fully formed in them.

The allegory of Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31). To those who wanted to be under the law, Paul said, "do ye not hear the law?" (4:21). Abraham had two sons: Ishmael by Hagar the slave woman, born "after the flesh" by human scheming, and Isaac by Sarah the free woman, born "by promise" through God's miracle (4:22-23; Genesis 16; 21). Paul draws an allegory:

Hagar	Sarah
The bondwoman (4:22)	The freewoman (4:22)
Ishmael, born after the flesh (4:23)	Isaac, born by promise (4:23)
The covenant from Mount Sinai (4:24)	The covenant of promise
Jerusalem which now is, in bondage with her children (4:25)	Jerusalem which is above, free, the mother of us all (4:26)
The son who persecuted (4:29)	The son who was persecuted (4:29)
"Cast out the bondwoman and her son" (4:30)	The heir of the inheritance (4:30)

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (4:28). As Ishmael mocked Isaac (Genesis 21:9), "even so it is now" (4:29): those relying on the flesh persecute those born of the Spirit. Scripture says, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman" (4:30; Genesis 21:10). Law and grace cannot be mixed; legalism must be put out. "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (4:31).

Section III: Practical — The Gospel Applied (Chapters 5-6)

Chapter 5 — Liberty and the Spirit

Stand fast in liberty (5:1-12).

> *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*
>
> **Galatians 5:1**

Christ has set believers free from the law as a means of righteousness. To accept circumcision as necessary for salvation would mean that "Christ shall profit you nothing," and would obligate them "to do the whole law" (5:2-3). "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (5:4). "Fallen from grace" does not mean losing salvation by sinning; it means abandoning the principle of grace for the principle of law as the way to be right with God. Grace and law-righteousness cannot be combined. "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (5:5-6). Genuine faith is never idle; it works through love.

"Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (5:7). "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (5:9): a little legalism corrupts the whole gospel. Paul expressed his indignation at the troublers with a biting remark: if they were so keen on cutting, he wished they would go further and cut themselves off (5:12).

Liberty for love, not licence (5:13-15).

> *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*
>
> **Galatians 5:13-14**

Freedom from the law is not freedom to sin, but freedom to serve one another in love, which fulfils what the law aimed at (Leviticus 19:18; Romans 13:8-10). "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (5:15).

Walk in the Spirit (5:16-26). How then do believers live holy lives without the law?

> *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
>
> **Galatians 5:16-17**

The "flesh" is the sinful nature that remains in the believer; the Spirit indwells him and opposes it. The answer to the flesh is not the law, but walking moment by moment in dependence on the Spirit. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (5:18).

The Works of the Flesh (5:19-21)	The Fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23)
Sexual sins: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness	Love, joy, peace (toward God)
Religious sins: idolatry, witchcraft (sorcery, often involving drugs)	Longsuffering, gentleness, goodness (toward others)

The Works of the Flesh (5:19-21)	The Fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23)
Social sins: hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders	Faith (faithfulness), meekness, temperance (self-control) (within oneself)
Sins of excess: drunkenness, revellings	"Against such there is no law"
"Works": many, produced by human effort	"Fruit": singular, produced by the Spirit as one harmonious character
"They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"	The likeness of Christ

The works of the flesh are plural, varied and chaotic; the fruit of the Spirit is singular, a unified character that grows naturally as believers abide in Christ (John 15:4-5). The fruit describes the character of Christ Himself. Those whose lives are characterised by the works of the flesh show that they do not belong to God's kingdom.

> *And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*
>
> **Galatians 5:24-26**

Believers have life by the Spirit; they must now keep in step with Him.

Chapter 6 — Bearing Burdens, Sowing and Glorying in the Cross

Restoring and bearing (6:1-5).

> *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*
>
> **Galatians 6:1-2**

Spiritual believers do not condemn a fallen brother but restore him gently, like setting a broken bone, remembering their own vulnerability. "The law of Christ" is the law of love (John 13:34). Pride deceives: "if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (6:3). Each should test his own work (6:4). "For every man shall bear his own burden" (6:5): a different word from verse 2, meaning one's own load of personal responsibility before God. We help carry heavy burdens that crush others, while each carries his own pack of duty.

Sowing and reaping (6:6-10). "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (6:6): support those who teach God's Word.

> *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*
>
> **Galatians 6:7-8**

This law is as certain in the spiritual realm as in farming. What we invest our lives in determines what we harvest.

> *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*
>
> **Galatians 6:9-10**

Glorying in the cross (6:11-18). "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand" (6:11): Paul took the pen himself, writing in large letters, perhaps for emphasis or because of poor eyesight. The Judaizers wanted to "make a fair shew in the flesh," avoiding persecution for the cross and boasting in the number of Gentiles they had circumcised (6:12-13).

> *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*
>
> **Galatians 6:14**

Paul's only boast was the cross, where Christ died for him and where his relationship to the world's values ended. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (6:15). What matters is not religious ritual but the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (6:16), meaning either Jewish believers or all true believers as God's people. "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (6:17). The Judaizers boasted of circumcision marks; Paul bore the scars of beatings and stoning for Christ, the brands of a slave belonging to his Master. "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen" (6:18). The letter begins and ends with grace.

Part Three: Christ in Galatians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	Raised from the dead by God the Father; the source of Paul's apostleship
1:4	Gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from this present evil world
1:12, 16	Revealed to Paul and in Paul by the Father
2:16	The object of justifying faith
2:20	The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me; living in the believer
2:21	The One whose death would be in vain if righteousness came by the law
3:1	Christ crucified, set forth before the eyes of the Galatians
3:13	Made a curse for us on the tree
3:16	The one Seed of Abraham to whom the promises were made
3:24	The goal to which the law leads
3:27	The One whom believers put on
4:4	Sent forth in the fulness of time, made of a woman, made under the law
4:5	The Redeemer of those under the law
4:6	The Son whose Spirit cries "Abba, Father" in us
4:19	The One to be formed in believers
5:1	The Liberator who sets us free
5:24	The One to whom believers belong, having crucified the flesh
6:2	The Lawgiver whose law is love
6:14	The Lord of the cross in which alone we glory
6:17	The Master whose marks Paul bore

The Purpose of the Law

What the Law Does	Galatians
Reveals sin as transgression	3:19
Puts all who rely on it under a curse	3:10
Cannot justify or give life	2:16; 3:11, 21
Shuts all up under sin, so that the promise comes by faith	3:22-23
Acts as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ	3:24
Was temporary, "till the seed should come"	3:19, 25
Cannot cancel the earlier promise to Abraham	3:17

What the Law Does	Galatians
Is fulfilled in love	5:14

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled

Prophecy	Galatians	Fulfillment
"In thee shall all nations be blessed"	3:8	Genesis 12:3; Gentiles justified by faith in Christ
The promised Seed of Abraham	3:16	Genesis 22:18; Christ
"The just shall live by faith"	3:11	Habakkuk 2:4; the gospel of justification
The curse of hanging on a tree	3:13	Deuteronomy 21:23; Christ's crucifixion
The Seed of the woman	4:4	Genesis 3:15; Christ "made of a woman"
The fulness of the time	4:4	Christ's birth at God's appointed moment (Daniel 9:24-26)
The barren woman rejoicing over many children	4:27	Isaiah 54:1; the growth of the church
The promise of the Spirit	3:14	Joel 2:28; Ezekiel 36:27; given to believers

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Galatians 1:6-9 — No Other Gospel

There is only one gospel: salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ's finished work. Any message that adds human works as a condition of salvation is a perversion under God's curse, whoever preaches it.

Galatians 2:11-14 — Standing for the Truth of the Gospel

Even Peter's fear of man led him into hypocrisy that undermined the gospel. Faithfulness to the gospel sometimes requires loving, open confrontation, even of respected leaders.

Galatians 2:16, 20 — Justified by Faith; Crucified with Christ

No one is justified by keeping the law; justification comes only through faith in Christ. The believer has died with Christ, and now Christ lives in him. The Christian life is lived by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 3:10-14 — Redeemed from the Curse

All who rely on law-keeping are under its curse, because no one keeps it perfectly. Christ became a curse for us on the cross, so that Abraham's blessing and the promised Spirit might come to all who believe.

Galatians 3:24-29 — From Schoolmaster to Sonship

The law guarded and disciplined until Christ came. Now, by faith, believers are sons of God, clothed with Christ, all one in Him, and heirs of Abraham's promise.

Galatians 4:4-7 — The Fulness of Time

At God's appointed moment, the Son came, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem and adopt. The Spirit makes believers cry "Abba, Father." We are sons and heirs, not slaves.

Galatians 5:1 — Stand Fast in Liberty

Christ has freed believers from the yoke of law-keeping as a way to earn God's favour. They must not return to bondage.

Galatians 5:13-26 — Walking in the Spirit

Freedom is for loving service, not self-indulgence. Victory over the flesh comes by walking in the Spirit, who produces in believers the fruit of Christlike character.

Galatians 6:1-2 — Restoring the Fallen

Spiritual believers restore the fallen gently and humbly, and carry one another's burdens.

Galatians 6:7-9 — Sowing and Reaping

Every choice is a seed. Sowing to the flesh reaps corruption; sowing to the Spirit reaps everlasting life. Don't grow weary in doing good.

Galatians 6:14 — Glorying in the Cross

The believer's only boast is the cross of Christ, which separates him from the world and its values.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Galatians

1. The One True Gospel

There is no other gospel; any addition to grace perverts it (1:6-9).

2. The Divine Origin of the Gospel

Paul's gospel came by revelation from Christ (1:11-12).

3. Justification by Faith Alone

No one is justified by works of the law, but only by faith in Christ (2:16; 3:11, 24).

4. Union with Christ

The believer is crucified with Christ and Christ lives in him (2:20).

5. Substitutionary Atonement

Christ gave Himself for our sins and became a curse for us (1:4; 3:13).

6. The Purpose of the Law

To reveal sin, to condemn, and to lead to Christ; it cannot justify (3:19-25).

7. The Abrahamic Covenant

The promise of blessing to the nations through Abraham's Seed is fulfilled in Christ (3:6-18).

8. Adoption

Believers are sons of God and heirs, crying "Abba, Father" (3:26; 4:5-7).

9. The Unity of Believers

All believers are one in Christ, without spiritual distinction (3:28).

10. Christian Liberty

Believers are free from the law's bondage, but must use liberty to serve in love (5:1, 13).

11. The Holy Spirit

Received by faith, the Spirit enables believers to overcome the flesh and produces His fruit (3:2-5; 5:16-25).

12. The Conflict Between Flesh and Spirit

The sinful nature and the Spirit are opposed; believers must walk in the Spirit (5:16-17).

13. Mutual Care and Restoration

Believers restore the fallen and bear one another's burdens (6:1-2).

14. Sowing and Reaping

God's moral law of harvest governs every life (6:7-8).

15. The Cross

The cross is the believer's only boast and the end of the world's claim on him (6:14).

Part Seven: Connections — How Galatians Links to the Rest of the Bible

Galatians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The woman's Seed (3:15; Galatians 4:4); "In thee shall all families... be blessed" (12:3; Galatians 3:8); Abraham believed God (15:6; Galatians 3:6); Hagar and Ishmael (16); "to thy seed" (22:18; Galatians 3:16); Isaac and Ishmael; "Cast out this bondwoman" (21:9-10; Galatians 4:29-30)
Exodus	The law given at Sinai (19-20; Galatians 4:24-25); 430 years from the promise to the law (12:40; Galatians 3:17)
Leviticus	"The man that doeth them shall live in them" (18:5; Galatians 3:12); "Love thy neighbour as thyself" (19:18; Galatians 5:14)
Deuteronomy	Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the law (27:26; Galatians 3:10); cursed is he that hangs on a tree (21:23; Galatians 3:13)
Isaiah	"Rejoice, O barren" (54:1; Galatians 4:27); Paul's call from the womb, like the Servant's (49:1; Galatians 1:15)
Jeremiah	Called before birth to the nations (1:5; Galatians 1:15)
Habakkuk	"The just shall live by his faith" (2:4; Galatians 3:11)

Galatians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Love your neighbour as yourself fulfils the law (22:39-40; Galatians 5:14)
John	The Spirit and the flesh (3:6; Galatians 5:17); abiding and bearing fruit (15; Galatians 5:22-23)
Acts	Paul's conversion and early years (9); the churches of South Galatia (13-14); the Jerusalem council on circumcision (15; Galatians 2); Peter and Cornelius (10)
Romans	Justification by faith; Abraham; the law; adoption and "Abba, Father"; the Spirit and the flesh (1-8)
1 Corinthians	Christian liberty limited by love (8-10; Galatians 5:13)
2 Corinthians	False apostles; "another gospel" (11:4; Galatians 1:6-9); a new creature (5:17; Galatians 6:15)
Ephesians	Saved by grace through faith (2:8-9); Jew and Gentile one in Christ (2:14-16; Galatians 3:28)
Philippians	Paul's former zeal and the righteousness of faith (3:4-9; Galatians 1:13-14)
Colossians	Not subject to ordinances, days and sabbaths (2:16-23; Galatians 4:10)
Hebrews	The law a shadow; the better covenant (8-10); the just shall live by faith (10:38)
James	Faith that works (2:14-26; Galatians 5:6)
2 Peter	Peter calls Paul "our beloved brother" (3:15)

Themes That Run from Galatians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Galatians	Developed in the New Testament
Justification by faith	Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4	2:16; 3:6-11	Romans 3-5; Philippians 3:9
The Abrahamic promise	Genesis 12:3; 22:18	3:8, 16, 29	Romans 4; Hebrews 6:13-20
Redemption from the curse	Deuteronomy 21:23; Isaiah 53	3:13	2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24
Adoption	Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1	4:5-7	Romans 8:14-17; Ephesians 1:5
The fruit of the Spirit	Ezekiel 36:27	5:22-23	John 15; Ephesians 5:9
Liberty in Christ	Exodus 20:2; Isaiah 61:1	5:1, 13	John 8:36; 2 Corinthians 3:17
Sowing and reaping	Job 4:8; Proverbs 22:8; Hosea 8:7	6:7-8	2 Corinthians 9:6

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Guard the gospel; test every message by it** (1:8-9).
- **Seek to please God, not men** (1:10).
- **Remember that God called you by His grace** (1:15).
- **Never compromise the truth, "no, not for an hour"** (2:5).
- **Don't let the fear of man lead you into hypocrisy** (2:12).
- **Confront error lovingly and openly when the gospel is at stake** (2:11-14).
- **Trust in Christ alone for your justification** (2:16).
- **Live by faith in the Son of God who loved you** (2:20).
- **Don't try to perfect by the flesh what the Spirit began** (3:3).
- **Rejoice that Christ bore your curse** (3:13).
- **Let the law drive you to Christ** (3:24).
- **Treat every believer as your equal in Christ** (3:28).
- **Live as a son and heir, not a slave** (4:7).
- **Don't return to religious bondage** (4:9; 5:1).
- **Tell the truth, even if it makes you unpopular** (4:16).
- **Long for Christ to be formed in others** (4:19).
- **Let your faith work by love** (5:6).
- **Use your freedom to serve others** (5:13).
- **Don't bite and devour one another** (5:15).
- **Walk in the Spirit moment by moment** (5:16, 25).
- **Put away the works of the flesh** (5:19-21).
- **Cultivate the fruit of the Spirit** (5:22-23).
- **Restore the fallen gently** (6:1).
- **Bear others' burdens, and carry your own load** (6:2, 5).
- **Support those who teach you God's Word** (6:6).
- **Sow to the Spirit; God is not mocked** (6:7-8).
- **Don't grow weary in doing good** (6:9).
- **Do good to all, especially believers** (6:10).
- **Glory only in the cross** (6:14).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:8	But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.
1:10	For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.
2:16	A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ
2:20	I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
3:11	But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.
3:13	Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us
3:24	Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
3:28	For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.
4:4-5	But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law
5:1	Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.
5:13	Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.
5:16	Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
5:22-23	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
6:2	Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
6:7	Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
6:9	And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
6:14	But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

Conclusion

Galatians is Paul's fiery defence of the gospel of grace. When teachers came to the churches of Galatia insisting that Gentile believers must be circumcised and keep the law to be right with God, Paul responded without his usual thanksgiving, pronouncing a curse on any other gospel. He showed that his gospel came by direct revelation from Christ, was recognised by the Jerusalem apostles, and was worth confronting even Peter to defend. He declared that no one is justified by the works of the law but only by faith in Christ, the One who loved him and gave Himself for him. Abraham was justified by faith; the law puts all who rely on it under a curse, but Christ became a curse for us; the law was a temporary schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and now, through faith, believers are sons of God, one in Christ, heirs of the promise, crying "Abba, Father" by the Spirit of His Son. Like Isaac, they are children of the free woman, not the slave. So Paul calls them to stand fast in the liberty Christ has given, to use it in loving service, to walk in the Spirit and bear His fruit, to restore the fallen, to bear one another's burdens, to sow to the Spirit, and to glory only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

> *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*
>
> **Galatians 2:20**

Ephesians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul (from prison) • Date: c. AD 60-62 • Chapters: 6

> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:8-9**

Part One: Introduction to Ephesians

The Author and Date

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" (1:1). Paul wrote as a prisoner: "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles" (3:1); "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord" (4:1); "an ambassador in bonds" (6:20). This was almost certainly his first Roman imprisonment, around AD 60-62, when he lived under guard in his own rented house (Acts 28:16, 30-31). Ephesians is one of the four "prison epistles," with Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. Tychicus carried it, together with Colossians (6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-9).

A Circular Letter?

The words "at Ephesus" (1:1) are missing from a few of the oldest manuscripts, though present in the great majority and in the King James Version. The letter contains no personal greetings, which is surprising given that Paul spent three years at Ephesus (Acts 20:31), and Paul writes as if some readers knew him only by report (1:15; 3:2). Many therefore believe Ephesians was a circular letter, sent to Ephesus and also intended for other churches in the province of Asia, perhaps the "epistle from Laodicea" mentioned in Colossians 4:16. Either way, its message is for the whole church.

The City and Church of Ephesus

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia, a great port and commercial centre with perhaps 250,000 people. Its temple of Diana (Artemis) was one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, and the city was famous for magic and the occult (Acts 19:19). Paul ministered there for three years on his third journey, teaching daily in the school of Tyrannus, so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:10). Books of magic worth fifty thousand pieces of silver were burned, and a riot broke out over the threat to the worship of Diana (Acts 19). Paul gave a moving farewell to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17-38). Later Timothy ministered there (1 Timothy 1:3), tradition says the apostle John lived there, and the risen Christ addressed the church in Revelation 2:1-7.

Purpose and Theme

Ephesians is not written to correct a particular crisis. It lifts believers' eyes to the grand eternal purpose of God: to gather together all things in Christ (1:10), and to create, from Jews and Gentiles, one new people, the church, which is Christ's body, God's temple and Christ's bride. Its theme is the believer's riches in Christ and the walk worthy of that calling. The phrases "in Christ," "in him" and "in whom" occur about thirty-five times; "the heavenly places" five times (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*
>
> **Ephesians 1:3**

> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:8-9**

> *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*
>
> **Ephesians 4:1**

Sit, Walk, Stand

Ephesians divides into two halves: doctrine (1-3) and duty (4-6). A helpful summary uses three key words:

Key Word	Chapters	Reference	Meaning
Sit	1-3	"Made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (2:6)	Our position and wealth in Christ
Walk	4:1-6:9	"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (4:1; compare 4:17; 5:2, 8, 15)	Our conduct in the church, the world and the home
Stand	6:10-24	"That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (6:11, 13, 14)	Our warfare against spiritual enemies

The order is important: Christian living flows from Christian truth. Believers do not walk in order to be saved; they walk worthy because they have already been saved and seated with Christ.

Pictures of the Church in Ephesians

Picture of the Church	Ephesians	Teaching
The body of Christ	1:22-23; 4:4, 12-16; 5:30	Christ is the Head; every member is joined and needed
The new man	2:15; 4:24	Jew and Gentile made into one new humanity
The household of God	2:19	Believers are family members, fellow citizens
The temple of God	2:20-22	Built on Christ the cornerstone, a dwelling for God by the Spirit
The bride of Christ	5:25-32	Loved, cleansed and presented to Christ in glory
The army of God	6:10-18	Standing together in the armour of God

Outline of Ephesians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Doctrine: Our Wealth in Christ	1-3	"Sit"
Every spiritual blessing	1:1-14	Chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, sealed by the Spirit
Prayer for enlightenment	1:15-23	"That ye may know"
Saved by grace	2:1-10	"Dead in trespasses... But God"
One new man	2:11-22	The wall of partition broken down
The mystery revealed	3:1-13	Gentiles fellowheirs
Prayer for strengthening	3:14-21	"To know the love of Christ"
II. Duty: Our Walk in Christ	4:1-6:9	"Walk"
Walk in unity	4:1-16	One body; gifts for building up
Walk in holiness	4:17-32	Put off the old man, put on the new
Walk in love	5:1-6	"As Christ also hath loved us"
Walk in light	5:7-14	"Ye are light in the Lord"
Walk in wisdom and the Spirit	5:15-21	"Be filled with the Spirit"
The Christian home	5:22-6:4	Wives, husbands, children, fathers
The Christian workplace	6:5-9	Servants and masters
III. Warfare: Our Stand in Christ	6:10-24	"Stand"
The whole armour of God	6:10-17	"Be strong in the Lord"
Prayer and closing	6:18-24	"Praying always"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Doctrine — Our Wealth in Christ (Chapters 1-3)

Chapter 1 — Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ

The hymn of blessing (1:3-14). In the Greek, verses 3-14 are a single, magnificent sentence of praise. It celebrates the work of the whole Trinity in our salvation, each section ending with "to the praise of his glory" (1:6, 12, 14).

> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*
>
> **Ephesians 1:3**

Every spiritual blessing is already given to believers, located "in heavenly places," and found "in Christ."

The Father's work: He chose and adopted us (1:4-6).

> *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*
>
> **Ephesians 1:4-6**

God's choice of His people was made "in him," in Christ, before creation, with the goal of holiness. He predestined believers to be adopted as His sons. (Baptists hold differing views on how God's choice relates to His foreknowledge of faith; all agree that salvation originates in God's grace, not human merit.) Believers are "accepted in the beloved": God accepts us because we are in His beloved Son.

The Son's work: He redeemed and revealed (1:7-12).

> *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*
>
> **Ephesians 1:7**

Redemption means release by the payment of a price; the price was Christ's blood. Forgiveness is not measured out sparingly but "according to the riches of his grace." God has also revealed "the mystery of his will... That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (1:9-10). History is heading toward the day when everything will be united under Christ's headship. In Him believers have "obtained an inheritance" (1:11).

The Spirit's work: He sealed us (1:13-14).

> *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*
>
> **Ephesians 1:13-14**

The order is clear: they heard the gospel, believed it, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit. A seal marked ownership, guaranteed authenticity, and secured contents. The "earnest" is a down payment, guaranteeing the full payment. The Spirit is God's pledge that He will complete the redemption of His people. This is a strong foundation for the eternal security of the believer.

Prayer for enlightenment (1:15-23). Paul prayed that God would give believers "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (1:17-18), that they might know three things:

- "What is the hope of his calling" (1:18): the future to which God has called them.
- "What the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (1:18): how precious believers are to God as His own inheritance.
- "What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe" (1:19): the power available to them now.

This power is the same power God displayed in raising Christ from the dead and seating Him at His right hand:

> *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*
>
> **Ephesians 1:21-23**

Christ reigns supreme over every power in the universe (Psalm 110:1; 8:6), and He is head over all things for the benefit of His church.

Chapter 2 — Saved by Grace; Made One

What we were (2:1-3).

> *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:1-3**

Before salvation, people are spiritually dead, unable to respond to God. They are controlled by three enemies: the world ("the course of this world"), the devil ("the prince of the power of the air") and the

flesh ("the lusts of our flesh"). By nature, all, Jews included ("we all"), are under God's wrath.

What God did (2:4-7).

> *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:4-7**

"But God": two words that change everything. Moved by mercy and love, God made us alive with Christ, raised us with Him, and seated us with Him in heaven. Throughout eternity, believers will be living displays of God's grace.

How we are saved (2:8-10).

> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Salvation is by grace (its source), through faith (its means), not of ourselves (it is a gift), not of works (so no one can boast). The whole package of salvation is God's gift. Yet salvation produces good works: believers are God's "workmanship" (Greek poiema, His masterpiece), newly created in Christ for the good works God planned for them. Works are the result of salvation, never its cause.

One new man (2:11-22). Paul reminded the Gentile believers of their former condition: "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" (2:12).

> *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us*
>
> **Ephesians 2:13-14**

In the Jerusalem temple, a stone barrier separated the Court of the Gentiles from the inner courts; inscriptions warned that any Gentile who passed it would be put to death. (Two of these warning inscriptions have been found by archaeologists.) Christ's death abolished the enmity between Jew and Gentile, setting aside the law of ceremonial commandments that divided them, "for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace" (2:15). He reconciled both to God "in one body by the cross" (2:16), and preached peace to those far off and those near (2:17; Isaiah 57:19). "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (2:18): through the Son, by the Spirit, to the Father.

> *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*
>
> **Ephesians 2:19-22**

The church is a holy temple built on the foundation of the apostles and New Testament prophets (their inspired teaching, now in Scripture), with Christ as the cornerstone that holds it all together (Isaiah 28:16). God now dwells not in a building of stone but in His people by the Spirit.

Chapter 3 — The Mystery and the Love of Christ

The mystery revealed (3:1-13). "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles" (3:1). Paul begins a prayer, then pauses to explain his special stewardship. God had revealed to him "the mystery" (a truth previously hidden, now revealed):

> *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel*
>
> **Ephesians 3:5-6**

The Old Testament foretold that Gentiles would be blessed (Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6). What was not revealed was that Jews and Gentiles would be united as equals in one body, the church, without Gentiles becoming Jews. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (3:8).

> *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*
>
> **Ephesians 3:10-11**

The church is God's showcase, displaying His many-sided wisdom to angels. In Christ believers have "boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him" (3:12). Paul's sufferings were for their glory, so they should not lose heart (3:13).

Prayer for strengthening (3:14-21). Paul resumes his prayer: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (3:14).

> *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*
>
> **Ephesians 3:16-19**

The prayer climbs step by step: inner strength by the Spirit; Christ at home in their hearts; being rooted (like a tree) and grounded (like a building) in love; grasping, together with all believers, the immeasurable dimensions of Christ's love; knowing a love beyond knowledge; and being filled with all God's fullness. It ends with one of the greatest doxologies in Scripture:

> *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*
>
> **Ephesians 3:20-21**

Section II: Duty — Our Walk in Christ (4:1-6:9)

Chapter 4 — Walk in Unity and Holiness

Walk worthy (4:1-6).

> *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
>
> **Ephesians 4:1-3**

"Therefore" links duty to doctrine. A worthy walk is marked by humility, gentleness, patience and loving forbearance. Believers do not create spiritual unity; the Spirit has created it. They must diligently keep it. Its basis is seven "ones":

> *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*
>
> **Ephesians 4:4-6**

The unity rests on the triune God (one Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father) and the truths shared by all believers (one body, one hope, one faith, one baptism).

Gifts for building up (4:7-16). Unity does not mean uniformity: "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ" (4:7). The ascended Christ gives gifts, as Psalm 68:18 pictures a conquering king leading captives and distributing spoils: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men" (4:8). He first descended "into the lower parts of the earth" (in His incarnation and death), then ascended "far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (4:9-10).

> *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*
>
> **Ephesians 4:11-12**

Christ gives gifted leaders to His church: apostles and prophets, the foundational gifts (2:20); evangelists, who spread the gospel; and pastors-teachers, who shepherd and teach local churches. Their purpose is to equip ("perfect") the saints for the work of ministry, so that the whole body is built up. Ministry belongs to every believer; leaders train and equip them.

The goal is unity of faith, knowledge of the Son of God, and maturity, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (4:13).

> *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*
>
> **Ephesians 4:14-15**

Mature believers are stable in doctrine, and they combine truth and love. From Christ, the whole body, "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth," grows and builds itself up in love (4:16).

Put off the old, put on the new (4:17-32). Believers must no longer walk like unbelieving Gentiles, "in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (4:17-19). "But ye have not so learned Christ" (4:20).

> *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*
>
> **Ephesians 4:22-24**

Like changing clothes, believers take off the old self and its habits, are renewed in their thinking, and put on the new self created in God's likeness. Paul then gives specific examples, each with a positive replacement and a reason:

Put Off	Put On	Reason
Lying	Speak truth with your neighbour	"For we are members one of another" (4:25)
Sinful anger	"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath"	"Neither give place to the devil" (4:26-27)
Stealing	Labour with your hands	"That he may have to give to him that needeth" (4:28)
Corrupt speech	Words that build up	"That it may minister grace unto the hearers" (4:29)
Grieving the Spirit	Honour the Spirit	"Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (4:30)

Put Off	Put On	Reason
Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, malice	Kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness	"Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (4:31-32)

"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (4:30) shows that the Spirit is a Person who can be grieved by believers' sin, yet they remain sealed "unto the day of redemption."

> *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
>
> **Ephesians 4:32**

Chapter 5 — Walk in Love, Light and Wisdom; the Christian Marriage

Walk in love (5:1-7).

> *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*
>
> **Ephesians 5:1-2**

Children imitate their father. The pattern of love is Christ's self-sacrifice, which pleased God like the fragrant offerings of the Old Testament (Leviticus 1:9). The counterfeit of love is lust: fornication, uncleanness and covetousness should "not be once named among you, as becometh saints," nor filthy talk and crude joking, "but rather giving of thanks" (5:3-4). No immoral or covetous person (a covetous man is an idolater) has inheritance in Christ's kingdom (5:5). "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (5:6).

Walk in light (5:8-14).

> *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light*
>
> **Ephesians 5:8**

Believers were not merely in darkness; they were darkness. Now they are light. "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (5:9). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (5:11); light exposes what is hidden. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (5:14).

Walk in wisdom (5:15-17).

> *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
>
> **Ephesians 5:15-16**

"Circumspectly" means carefully, looking around. "Redeeming the time" means buying up every opportunity, because life is short and the days are evil. "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (5:17).

Be filled with the Spirit (5:18-21).

> *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit*
>
> **Ephesians 5:18**

A drunk person is controlled by wine; a believer should be controlled by the Spirit. The command is in the present tense: "keep on being filled," continually yielding to the Spirit's control. Every believer is indwelt and sealed by the Spirit; not every believer is filled. The evidence of the Spirit's filling is not ecstatic experience but:

- **Worship:** "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (5:19).
- **Thanksgiving:** "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:20).
- **Submission:** "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (5:21).

The last leads into Paul's teaching on relationships in the home and the workplace.

Wives and husbands (5:22-33).

> *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*
>
> **Ephesians 5:22-23**

A wife's submission is voluntary, directed to "your own" husband, and offered "as unto the Lord," as part of her devotion to Christ. It does not imply inferiority (Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7), and it never requires obeying a command to sin (Acts 5:29). The husband's headship is modelled on Christ's headship over the church, which means loving, sacrificial leadership:

> *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*
>
> **Ephesians 5:25-27**

Christ's love for the church is the standard for every husband: self-giving to the point of death, seeking her holiness and good. Christ cleanses His church through His Word and will present her to Himself in perfect glory. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself" (5:28), nourishing and cherishing her as Christ does the church, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (5:29-30). Quoting Genesis 2:24 (5:31), Paul says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (5:32). Marriage, from creation, was designed as a picture of Christ's relationship with His people. "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (5:33).

Chapter 6:1-9 — Children, Parents, Servants and Masters

Children and fathers (6:1-4).

> *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*
>
> **Ephesians 6:1-3**

(Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16.) "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (6:4). Fathers are responsible for the spiritual training and discipline of their children, avoiding harshness, unfairness and neglect that discourage and embitter them.

Servants and masters (6:5-9). Many early Christians were slaves. Paul did not command a revolution, but planted principles that undermined slavery and transform every working relationship. Servants should obey "with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (6:5-7), knowing the Lord will reward them (6:8). Masters must treat servants justly, "forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (6:9). These principles apply to employees and employers today: work as to the Lord, and lead knowing you answer to Him.

Section III: Warfare — Our Stand in Christ (6:10-24)

Chapter 6:10-24 — The Whole Armour of God

> *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*
>
> **Ephesians 6:10-12**

The Christian life is a battle. The real enemies are not people but Satan and his organised forces of evil spirits. Believers' strength is not their own but the Lord's. They must put on "the whole armour of God" (6:13), and their goal is to "stand," to hold the ground Christ has already won. Paul, chained to a Roman soldier as he wrote (Acts 28:16), described the armour piece by piece. Much of it echoes Isaiah's description of God's own armour (Isaiah 59:17; 11:5; 52:7).

Armour	Roman Soldier	Spiritual Meaning	Ephesians
Girdle	Belt holding the tunic and armour in place	Truth: God's truth believed and a life of integrity	6:14
Breastplate	Protecting the heart and vital organs	Righteousness: Christ's righteousness credited, and righteous living	6:14

Armour	Roman Soldier	Spiritual Meaning	Ephesians
Shoes	Sturdy sandals for firm footing and marching	The preparation of the gospel of peace: stability through peace with God, and readiness to share the gospel	6:15
Shield	Large shield, soaked in water to quench flaming arrows	Faith: trusting God's promises, which quenches "all the fiery darts of the wicked" (temptations, doubts, accusations)	6:16
Helmet	Protecting the head	Salvation: assurance of salvation guards the mind	6:17
Sword	Short sword for close combat	"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God": the only offensive weapon, as Jesus used Scripture against Satan	6:17

To the armour Paul adds prayer, the believer's constant communication with headquarters:

> *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds*
>
> **Ephesians 6:18-20**

Paul did not ask for release, but for boldness to preach. Tychicus, "a beloved brother and faithful minister," would tell them how Paul was doing and comfort them (6:21-22). The letter closes with peace, love and faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen" (6:23-24).

Part Three: Christ in Ephesians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:3	The One in whom every spiritual blessing is given
1:4	The One in whom believers were chosen before the foundation of the world
1:6	The Beloved, in whom we are accepted
1:7	The Redeemer whose blood brings forgiveness
1:10	The One in whom all things will be gathered together
1:20-21	Raised and seated at God's right hand, far above all powers
1:22-23	Head over all things to the church, which is His body
2:13	The One whose blood brings the far-off near
2:14	Our peace, who broke down the wall of partition
2:15-16	The Creator of one new man; the Reconciler by the cross
2:20	The chief cornerstone
3:8	The unsearchable riches of Christ
3:17	The One who dwells in our hearts by faith
3:19	The love of Christ which passes knowledge
4:7-10	The ascended Conqueror who gives gifts
4:13, 15	The measure of maturity; the Head into whom we grow
4:21	The truth as it is in Jesus
5:2	The loving sacrifice, a sweet-smelling savour to God
5:14	The light that awakens the sleeper
5:23	The Head and Saviour of the body
5:25-27	The Bridegroom who gave Himself to sanctify and present His bride
6:9	The heavenly Master of servants and masters alike
6:10	The Lord in whose might we are strong

The Blessings of Believers in Christ

Blessing	Ephesians	Meaning
Chosen	1:4	Selected in Christ before creation, to be holy
Predestinated to adoption	1:5	Destined to be God's sons
Accepted	1:6	Fully received in the Beloved

Blessing	Ephesians	Meaning
Redeemed	1:7	Set free by the price of Christ's blood
Forgiven	1:7	Sins pardoned according to the riches of grace
Enlightened	1:9	Shown the mystery of God's will
Given an inheritance	1:11	Heirs of God's purposes
Sealed	1:13	Marked and secured by the Holy Spirit
Given the earnest	1:14	The Spirit as guarantee of future redemption
Made alive	2:5	Quickened together with Christ
Raised and seated	2:6	Positioned with Christ in heavenly places
Made nigh	2:13	Brought near to God by Christ's blood
Given access	2:18	Approaching the Father by one Spirit
Made citizens and family	2:19	Fellowcitizens with the saints; household of God
Built into a temple	2:21-22	God's dwelling by the Spirit

The Trinity in Ephesians

Ephesians repeatedly presents the three Persons of the Godhead working together: the Father chooses, the Son redeems and the Spirit seals (1:3-14); access to the Father through the Son by one Spirit (2:18); a habitation of God through the Spirit, built on Christ (2:20-22); Paul prays to the Father that believers be strengthened by the Spirit so that Christ may dwell in their hearts (3:14-17); one Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father (4:4-6).

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Ephesians	Fulfillment
Christ seated at God's right hand	1:20	Psalm 110:1; fulfilled at the ascension
All things put under His feet	1:22	Psalm 8:6; in principle now, fully at His return
The ascended King giving gifts	4:8	Psalm 68:18; Pentecost and the gifts to the church
Peace preached to the far and near	2:17	Isaiah 57:19; the gospel to Jews and Gentiles
The Gentiles blessed and included	2:11-22; 3:6	Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6; the church of Jews and Gentiles
The chief cornerstone laid	2:20	Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118:22; Christ
All things gathered together in Christ	1:10	Still future
The redemption of the purchased possession	1:14; 4:30	Still future, at the day of redemption
The exceeding riches of grace shown in the ages to come	2:7	Eternity
The church presented glorious, without spot or wrinkle	5:27	At Christ's coming (Revelation 19:7-8)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Ephesians 1:3-14 — Every Spiritual Blessing

The Father chose and adopted, the Son redeemed and forgave, and the Spirit sealed and guarantees our inheritance, all to the praise of God's glory. Every believer is already rich in Christ.

Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21 — Paul's Two Prayers

The first prays that believers may know their hope, their value to God, and His power. The second prays that they may be strengthened, indwelt by Christ, rooted in love, filled with God's fullness. The model for our prayers is not mainly about circumstances but about spiritual understanding and strength.

Ephesians 2:1-10 — Dead, Made Alive, Created for Good Works

Humanity is spiritually dead, enslaved and condemned. "But God," rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ. Salvation is by grace through faith, God's gift, not of works; and it produces the good works God planned for us.

Ephesians 2:11-22 — One New Man

Christ's death broke down the barrier between Jew and Gentile, making one new humanity reconciled to God, built into a holy temple where God dwells by the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:1-16 — Unity and Maturity

Believers must keep the unity the Spirit created, grounded in seven great "ones." Christ gives leaders to equip every member for ministry, so the body grows to maturity, stable in truth and loving.

Ephesians 4:22-32 — Put Off, Put On

Christian growth means replacing old habits with new ones: truth for lies, honest work for theft, edifying words for corrupt ones, kindness and forgiveness for bitterness, all motivated by God's forgiveness in Christ.

Ephesians 5:15-21 — Wise Living and the Spirit's Filling

Live carefully, make the most of time, understand God's will, and be continually filled with the Spirit, which shows itself in worship, thanksgiving and mutual submission.

Ephesians 5:22-33 — Christian Marriage

Wives submit to their husbands as to the Lord; husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Marriage pictures Christ and the church.

Ephesians 6:10-18 — The Armour of God

The believer's real enemies are spiritual. Strength comes from the Lord. Believers stand firm in truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation and the Word of God, and pray always.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Ephesians

1. Election and Adoption

God chose believers in Christ before creation and destined them for adoption (1:4-5).

2. Redemption Through Christ's Blood

Forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace (1:7).

3. The Sealing of the Spirit

Believers are sealed and guaranteed their inheritance until the day of redemption (1:13-14; 4:30).

4. The Exaltation of Christ

Christ is seated far above every power and is Head over all things to the church (1:20-23).

5. Spiritual Death and Salvation by Grace

All are dead in sin; salvation is by grace through faith, not of works (2:1-10).

6. The Unity of Jew and Gentile

Christ made one new man, one body, reconciled to God (2:11-22; 3:6).

7. The Church

Christ's body, God's temple, Christ's bride, God's household, displaying God's wisdom (1:23; 2:19-22; 3:10; 5:25-32).

8. The Unity of the Spirit

Believers must keep the unity grounded in one body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism and God (4:3-6).

9. Spiritual Gifts and Leadership

Christ gives leaders to equip all believers for ministry (4:7-16).

10. Sanctification

Putting off the old man and putting on the new (4:22-32).

11. The Filling of the Spirit

Continual yielding to the Spirit's control (5:18-21).

12. The Christian Home

Mutual roles of husbands and wives, parents and children, modelled on Christ (5:22-6:4).

13. Work as Service to the Lord

Servants and masters both answer to Christ (6:5-9).

14. Spiritual Warfare

Standing against the devil in God's armour and prayer (6:10-18).

Part Seven: Connections — How Ephesians Links to the Rest of the Bible

Ephesians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The man and wife one flesh (2:24; Ephesians 5:31); the blessing of the nations (12:3; Ephesians 3:6)
Exodus	Honour thy father and mother, the first commandment with promise (20:12; Ephesians 6:2)
Leviticus	Sacrifices of a sweet savour (1:9; Ephesians 5:2)
Deuteronomy	The promise of long life for honouring parents (5:16; Ephesians 6:3)
Psalms	Anger without sin (4:4; Ephesians 4:26); led captivity captive (68:18; Ephesians 4:8); all things under His feet (8:6; Ephesians 1:22); seated at God's right hand (110:1; Ephesians 1:20); the cornerstone (118:22)
Isaiah	The girdle of righteousness (11:5); the cornerstone (28:16; Ephesians 2:20); beautiful feet of the gospel (52:7; Ephesians 6:15); peace to the far and near (57:19; Ephesians 2:17); God's breastplate and helmet (59:17; Ephesians 6:14, 17); "Arise, shine" (60:1; Ephesians 5:14)
Ezekiel	God's bride cleansed and adorned (16:8-14; Ephesians 5:26-27)
Hosea	God's covenant love for His wife Israel (2:19-20)
Zechariah	Speak every man the truth to his neighbour (8:16; Ephesians 4:25)

Ephesians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Christ builds His church (16:18; Ephesians 2:20-22)
John	One fold, one Shepherd (10:16; Ephesians 2:14-16); that they all may be one (17:21; Ephesians 4:3-6); the Spirit as guarantee (14:16-17)
Acts	Paul's ministry at Ephesus (19); his farewell to the Ephesian elders (20:17-38); prison in Rome (28:16-31)
Romans	Saved by grace (3:24; Ephesians 2:8); gifts in the body (12:4-8; Ephesians 4:7-12); armour of light (13:12; Ephesians 6:11)
1 Corinthians	One body, many members (12; Ephesians 4:16); the temple of God (3:16; Ephesians 2:21)
2 Corinthians	Sealed and given the earnest of the Spirit (1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14); spiritual warfare (10:3-5; Ephesians 6:12)
Galatians	One in Christ (3:28; Ephesians 2:14-16); adoption (4:5; Ephesians 1:5)
Philippians	Christ exalted above every name (2:9-11; Ephesians 1:21)
Colossians	The "twin" letter: Christ the Head; the old and new man; household relationships (1:18; 3:9-10; 3:18-4:1)
1 Thessalonians	The breastplate of faith and love, the helmet of hope (5:8; Ephesians 6:14-17)

Book	Link
1 Timothy	Timothy at Ephesus; qualifications for church leaders (1:3; 3)
Hebrews	The word of God sharper than a two-edged sword (4:12; Ephesians 6:17)
James	Resist the devil (4:7; Ephesians 6:11-13)
1 Peter	Living stones in a spiritual house (2:4-9; Ephesians 2:20-22); wives and husbands (3:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-33); resisting the devil (5:8-9)
Revelation	The church at Ephesus which left its first love (2:1-7); the marriage of the Lamb (19:7-9; Ephesians 5:27); the foundations bearing the apostles' names (21:14; Ephesians 2:20)

Themes That Run from Ephesians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Ephesians	Developed in the New Testament
Election	Deuteronomy 7:6-8	1:4-5	Romans 8:29-30; 1 Peter 1:2
Salvation by grace	Genesis 15:6	2:8-9	Romans 3:24; Titus 3:5-7
The temple of God	Exodus 25:8; 1 Kings 8	2:20-22	1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 21:3
Jew and Gentile one	Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 56:6-8	2:11-22	Acts 10-15; Galatians 3:28
Marriage and Christ's bride	Genesis 2:24; Hosea 2:19-20	5:22-33	Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2
Spiritual warfare	Genesis 3:15; Job 1-2	6:10-18	1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 12:7-11
The filling of the Spirit	Exodus 31:3	5:18	Acts 2:4; 4:31

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Praise God for every spiritual blessing you have in Christ** (1:3).
- **Rest in being accepted in the Beloved** (1:6).
- **Rejoice that you are sealed by the Spirit** (1:13).
- **Pray for spiritual understanding, not just for circumstances** (1:17-19).
- **Remember what you were, and what God has done** (2:1-5).
- **Never boast; salvation is God's gift** (2:8-9).
- **Do the good works God prepared for you** (2:10).
- **Refuse every barrier of race and background in the church** (2:14).
- **Value the church as God's dwelling place** (2:22).
- **Ask God to strengthen you and to root you in His love** (3:16-19).
- **Expect God to do more than you can ask or think** (3:20).
- **Walk worthy of your calling** (4:1).
- **Keep the unity of the Spirit with humility and patience** (4:2-3).
- **Use your gifts to build up the body** (4:12).
- **Grow out of doctrinal instability** (4:14).
- **Speak the truth in love** (4:15).
- **Put off the old habits, and put on the new** (4:22-24).
- **Don't let the sun go down on your anger** (4:26).
- **Work honestly, so you can give** (4:28).
- **Let your words build others up** (4:29).
- **Don't grieve the Holy Spirit** (4:30).
- **Be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving** (4:32).
- **Imitate God and walk in love** (5:1-2).
- **Keep your speech and conduct pure** (5:3-4).
- **Walk as a child of light** (5:8).
- **Make the most of your time** (5:16).
- **Be continually filled with the Spirit** (5:18).
- **Sing, give thanks always, and submit one to another** (5:19-21).
- **Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord** (5:22).
- **Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church** (5:25).
- **Children, obey and honour your parents** (6:1-2).
- **Fathers, raise your children in the Lord without provoking them** (6:4).
- **Work as unto the Lord** (6:6-7).
- **Be strong in the Lord** (6:10).

- **Put on the whole armour of God every day** (6:11).
- **Use the Word of God as your sword** (6:17).
- **Pray always, for all saints, and for gospel boldness** (6:18-19).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ
1:7	In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace
2:4-5	But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ
2:8-9	For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.
2:10	For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works
3:20	Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us
4:1	Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called
4:3	Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
4:15	But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ
4:30	And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.
4:32	And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.
5:16	Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
5:18	And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit
5:25	Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it
6:1	Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
6:10-11	Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God
6:12	For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers

Conclusion

Ephesians, written from a Roman prison, lifts believers into the heavenly places to see God's eternal purpose in Christ. In one sweeping sentence Paul praises the Father who chose and adopted us, the Son whose blood redeemed and forgave us, and the Spirit who sealed us until the day of redemption, all to the praise of God's glory. He prays that believers may know their hope, their worth to God and His mighty power, the same power that raised Christ and seated Him far above all. He reminds them that they were dead in sin, "But God," rich in mercy, made them alive and seated them with Christ, saving them by grace through faith, not of works, and creating them for good works. In Christ, the wall between Jew and Gentile has fallen; one new man, one body, one temple has been built on Christ the cornerstone, and through the church God displays His manifold wisdom even to angels. Paul prays that they may know the love of Christ that passes knowledge, and praises the God who can do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. Then he calls them to walk worthy: in unity, using Christ's gifts to grow into maturity; in holiness, putting off the old and putting on the new; in love, light and wisdom, filled with the Spirit; in homes where husbands love as Christ loved the church and wives respond as the church to Christ; and in work done as unto the Lord. Finally, he calls them to stand, strong in the Lord, clothed in the whole armour of God, praying always.

> *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*
>
> **Ephesians 3:20-21**

Philippians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul (from prison) • Date: c. AD 61-62 • Chapters: 4

> *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*
>
> **Philippians 1:21**

Part One: Introduction to Philippians

The Author and Date

"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (1:1). Paul wrote as a prisoner (1:7, 13, 16), most likely during his first Roman imprisonment around AD 61-62. He mentions "the palace" (the praetorian guard, 1:13) and "Caesar's household" (4:22), and he was awaiting a verdict that might mean release or execution (1:20-26; 2:23-24). Some have suggested an earlier imprisonment at Ephesus or Caesarea, but Rome remains the traditional and most widely held view. Paul expected to be released (1:25; 2:24), and the Pastoral Epistles suggest that he was.

The City of Philippi

Philippi, in Macedonia (northern Greece), was named after Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. In 42 BC it was the site of the famous battle in which Antony and Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius, the assassins of Julius Caesar. Afterwards Roman veterans were settled there, and it became a Roman colony, "the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony" (Acts 16:12). Its citizens enjoyed the rights of Roman citizens, governed themselves by Roman law, and were proud of their status. It lay on the Via Egnatia, the great Roman road linking east and west. Paul uses this background when he writes, "let your conversation [conduct yourselves as citizens] be as it becometh the gospel" (1:27) and "our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven" (3:20).

The Church at Philippi

The Philippian church was the first church founded in Europe, on Paul's second missionary journey, after the vision of the man of Macedonia (Acts 16:9-40). Its first members were remarkably varied: Lydia, a wealthy businesswoman from Thyatira; a slave girl delivered from a spirit of divination; and a Roman jailer converted after an earthquake. Paul and Silas had been beaten and imprisoned there (1 Thessalonians 2:2). The church loved Paul deeply and supported him financially again and again, even when they were poor (4:15-16; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 11:9). It had an organised leadership of "bishops [overseers] and deacons" (1:1).

The Occasion

The Philippians had sent Epaphroditus to Rome with a gift for Paul and to help him. Epaphroditus fell gravely ill but recovered (2:25-30). Paul sent him home with this letter to:

- thank the church for its gift (4:10-20);
- report on his circumstances and the progress of the gospel (1:12-26);
- encourage unity and humility, including between two women, Euodias and Syntyche (2:1-4; 4:2-3);
- warn against Judaizing teachers (3:2-3) and those who lived as "enemies of the cross" (3:18-19);
- commend Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30).

Purpose and Theme

Philippians is a letter of joy written from a prison. Words for joy and rejoicing appear about sixteen times. Paul's joy did not depend on circumstances but on Christ, who is the centre of everything: His name or title appears more than forty times in these four chapters.

Ch.	Christ Is Our	Key Verse
1	Life	"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (1:21)
2	Pattern	"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5)
3	Goal	"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection" (3:10)
4	Strength	"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (4:13)

> *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*
>
> **Philippians 4:4**

Outline of Philippians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Joy in Spite of Suffering	1	Christ our life
Thanksgiving and prayer	1:1-11	"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it"
Paul's circumstances advance the gospel	1:12-18	"Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice"
Life or death	1:19-26	"To live is Christ, and to die is gain"
Standing firm together	1:27-30	"As it becometh the gospel"
II. Joy in Serving	2	Christ our pattern
Unity through humility	2:1-4	"Esteem other better than themselves"
The mind of Christ	2:5-11	Humbled and exalted
Working out salvation; shining as lights	2:12-18	"It is God which worketh in you"
Examples: Timothy and Epaphroditus	2:19-30	Humble servants
III. Joy in Believing	3	Christ our goal
Warning against confidence in the flesh	3:1-6	"Beware of dogs"
Counting all loss for Christ	3:7-11	"That I may know him"
Pressing toward the mark	3:12-16	"This one thing I do"
Citizens of heaven	3:17-21	"From whence also we look for the Saviour"
IV. Joy in Giving and Receiving	4	Christ our strength
Unity, joy and peace	4:1-7	"Be careful for nothing"
Right thinking and doing	4:8-9	"Think on these things"

Section	Chapters	Theme
Contentment and thanks for the gift	4:10-20	"I have learned... to be content"; "My God shall supply all your need"
Greetings	4:21-23	"Caesar's household"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Joy in Spite of Suffering (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-11 — Thanksgiving and Prayer

Paul and Timothy call themselves "servants" (bondslaves) of Jesus Christ (1:1). The church had two kinds of officers: "bishops" (overseers, the same as elders or pastors, Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-7) and "deacons" (servants, 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

> *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*
>
> **Philippians 1:3-6**

Their "fellowship in the gospel" was their partnership in spreading it, including their financial support. Paul was confident that God, who began the work of salvation in them, would carry it through to completion at Christ's return. What God starts, He finishes: a promise of the believer's security. Paul held them in his heart; they shared in his imprisonment and his defence of the gospel (1:7-8).

His prayer for them:

> *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*
>
> **Philippians 1:9-11**

Love must grow, guided by knowledge and discernment, so that believers can recognise what is best, live with integrity, and bear the fruit Christ produces.

Chapter 1:12-18 — The Gospel Advanced Through Chains

> *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*
>
> **Philippians 1:12-14**

Paul's imprisonment was not a setback but an advance. The soldiers of the elite praetorian guard, chained to him in shifts, heard the gospel, and the whole guard knew he was a prisoner for Christ. Other believers grew bold. Some preached Christ out of envy and rivalry, hoping to add to Paul's troubles; others out of love (1:15-17).

> *What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*
>
> **Philippians 1:18**

These preachers proclaimed the true gospel with wrong motives; Paul could rejoice that Christ was preached. (This is very different from false teachers who preach "another gospel," whom Paul condemns in Galatians 1:8-9 and in Philippians 3:2.) Paul's joy was not tied to his own reputation.

Chapter 1:19-26 — To Live Is Christ

Paul knew that through their prayers and the Spirit's supply, his situation would turn out for his deliverance (1:19).

> *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*
>
> **Philippians 1:20-21**

Paul's one aim was that Christ be magnified, made to look great, through his life or his death. For him, life meant Christ: knowing, serving and glorifying Him. Death would be gain, because it would bring him into Christ's presence.

> *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*
>
> **Philippians 1:23-24**

"Depart" was used for a ship lifting anchor or soldiers striking camp. At death the believer goes immediately to be with Christ, which is "far better" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Yet Paul was willing to stay for their sake, and was confident he would remain, "for your furtherance and joy of faith" (1:25-26).

Chapter 1:27-30 — Standing Firm Together

> *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries*
>
> **Philippians 1:27-28**

"Conversation" here means living as citizens. As the Philippians lived as proud Roman citizens, they must live as worthy citizens of heaven: united, standing firm, striving together like a team, and unafraid. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (1:29). Suffering for Christ is a privilege given by God, like faith itself.

Section II: Joy in Serving (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-4 — Unity Through Humility

> *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*
>
> **Philippians 2:1-4**

Since believers share encouragement in Christ, the comfort of His love, the fellowship of the Spirit and tender compassion, they should be united in mind and love. Selfish ambition and conceit destroy unity; humility, which values others above oneself and looks to their interests, builds it.

Chapter 2:5-11 — The Mind of Christ

The supreme example of humility is Christ Himself. This passage is one of the most profound statements in Scripture about the person of Christ.

> *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*
>
> **Philippians 2:5-8**

- **"Being in the form of God":** "Form" (Greek morphe) means the essential nature. Christ always existed as God, sharing God's very nature.
- **"Thought it not robbery to be equal with God":** His equality with God was not something He had to seize or cling to at others' expense.
- **"Made himself of no reputation":** literally, "emptied himself." He did not cease to be God or give up any divine attribute; He laid aside the outward display of His glory and the independent use of His divine rights, by taking on human nature.
- **"Took upon him the form of a servant":** He who was truly God became truly a servant.
- **"Was made in the likeness of men":** a real human being.
- **"He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death":** He submitted completely to the Father's will.
- **"Even the death of the cross":** the most shameful and painful death, reserved for slaves and the worst criminals, and cursed by the law (Deuteronomy 21:23).

Then the movement reverses:

> *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
>
> **Philippians 2:9-11**

Because He humbled Himself, God exalted Him to the highest place. In Isaiah 45:23 the LORD swears, "unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Paul applies these words to Jesus: He is the LORD. One day every being in heaven, on earth and under the earth, angels, humans and demons, believers and unbelievers, will bow and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Believers do so willingly now; others will do so by compulsion at the judgment. The path of humility leads to exaltation, for Christ and for those who follow Him (1 Peter 5:6).

Chapter 2:12-18 — Working Out Salvation; Shining as Lights

> *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*
>
> **Philippians 2:12-13**

Believers are not told to work for their salvation, but to work out what God has worked in, bringing it to full expression in daily life. They do so with reverent seriousness, and with confidence, because God Himself is at work in them, giving both the desire and the power to do His will.

> *Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life*
>
> **Philippians 2:14-16**

Israel grumbled in the wilderness (Exodus 16; Numbers 14) and was "a perverse and crooked generation" (Deuteronomy 32:5). Believers must not complain or argue, but shine like stars against the darkness of a twisted world, holding out the word of life. Paul would rejoice even if his life were "offered" (poured out like a drink offering, Numbers 28:7) on the sacrifice of their faith (2:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:6).

Chapter 2:19-30 — Two Examples: Timothy and Epaphroditus

Paul gave two living examples of the mind of Christ.

Timothy (2:19-24). "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel" (2:20-22). Timothy genuinely cared for others and put Christ's interests first.

Epaphroditus (2:25-30). Paul called him "my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants" (2:25). He had been "sick nigh unto death: but

God had mercy on him" (2:27). (Paul did not heal him miraculously at will; even in the apostolic age, the gift of healing was not used for convenience, compare 2 Timothy 4:20.) He was distressed not about his own illness but that the church had heard he was sick (2:26). "Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life" (2:30). "Hold such in reputation" (2:29).

Section III: Joy in Believing (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-6 — No Confidence in the Flesh

"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" (3:1). Then a sharp warning:

> *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*
>
> **Philippians 3:2-3**

Jews called Gentiles "dogs"; Paul turned the word on the Judaizers who insisted on circumcision. He called their circumcision "the concision" (mere mutilation). True believers are "the circumcision": they worship by the Spirit, rejoice in Christ, and put no confidence in human achievement or ritual.

If anyone could boast in the flesh, Paul could:

> *Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*
>
> **Philippians 3:5-6**

He had the right ritual, race, tribe, heritage, religious party, zeal and outward record.

Chapter 3:7-11 — Gain Counted Loss

> *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*
>
> **Philippians 3:7-9**

Paul used the language of a business ledger. Everything he had counted as profit he moved into the loss column, even counted as refuse, compared with knowing Christ. He gave up his own righteousness, based on law-keeping, for the righteousness that comes from God through faith in Christ. This is justification by faith alone.

> *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*
>
> **Philippians 3:10-11**

Paul's great passion was to know Christ personally and deeply: to experience His resurrection power, to share His sufferings, and to be conformed to His death in self-giving. "If by any means I might attain" expresses humble eagerness, not doubt about his salvation; he longed for the resurrection and lived toward it.

Chapter 3:12-16 — Pressing Toward the Mark

> *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*
>
> **Philippians 3:12-14**

Even the great apostle had not "arrived." Christ had laid hold of him for a purpose, and Paul strained to lay hold of it. Like a runner, he concentrated on "one thing," refused to be held back by past failures or achievements, leaned forward toward the finish line, and pressed on for the prize of God's upward call. Mature believers share this attitude; where they differ, God will reveal truth, but meanwhile they must live up to what they have already attained (3:15-16).

Chapter 3:17-21 — Citizens of Heaven

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (3:17). Paul warned, with tears, of many who lived as "the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (3:18-19). These professed Christians lived for appetite and earthly things, perhaps abusing grace as a licence for sin.

> *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*
>
> **Philippians 3:20-21**

As Philippi was a colony of Rome, believers are a colony of heaven on earth. Their citizenship, King and future are there. They eagerly await the Saviour's return, when He will transform their weak, lowly bodies into bodies like His own glorious resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 John 3:2), by the same power with which He will subdue all things.

Section IV: Joy in Giving and Receiving (Chapter 4)

Chapter 4:1-7 — Unity, Joy and Peace

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (4:1).

Two women at odds (4:2-3). "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord" (4:2). These two women had laboured with Paul in the gospel, and their names were "in the book of life" (4:3), yet they had fallen out. Paul asked a "true yokefellow" to help them reconcile. Even faithful workers can disagree, and the church should help them restore harmony.

Rejoice and do not worry (4:4-7).

> *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*
>
> **Philippians 4:4-5**

Joy in the Lord is commanded "alway," because it rests on the Lord, not on circumstances; Paul wrote these words in chains. "Moderation" means gentleness, a gracious, reasonable spirit. "The Lord is at hand": He is near, both present with us and coming soon.

> *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
>
> **Philippians 4:6-7**

"Be careful for nothing" means do not be anxious about anything (Matthew 6:25-34). Instead of worrying, pray about everything, with thanksgiving. The result is not always that we get what we ask, but that God's peace, beyond human understanding, will "keep" (garrison, stand guard over) our hearts and minds, as Roman soldiers guarded Philippi.

Chapter 4:8-9 — Think on These Things

> *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*
>
> **Philippians 4:8**

What we dwell on shapes who we become. Believers must deliberately fill their minds with what is true, honourable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy, and refuse what is not. Thinking must lead to doing: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (4:9). The peace of God (4:7) comes with the presence of the God of peace (4:9).

Chapter 4:10-23 — Contentment and Thanks

Paul rejoiced that their care for him had "flourished again" in their gift (4:10).

> *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
>
> **Philippians 4:11-13**

Contentment is learned. Paul had experienced both poverty and plenty and had discovered the secret of being satisfied in either. That secret is Christ's strength. "I can do all things through Christ" means, in context, that Christ enables His servant to face any circumstance God allows and do whatever God calls him to do; it is not a promise of success in every personal ambition.

Yet Paul appreciated their kindness: "ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction" (4:14). From the beginning, no other church had partnered with him in giving and receiving; they had sent help again and again, even in Thessalonica (4:15-16). "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account" (4:17). Their gift was credited to their heavenly account and was "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God" (4:18). Then the promise:

> *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*
>
> **Philippians 4:19**

This promise was given to generous givers who had sacrificed to support God's work. God will meet every need, not merely out of His riches but "according to" them, on a scale worthy of His wealth. "Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (4:20).

The letter closes with greetings: "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household" (4:22). The gospel had reached into the emperor's own staff. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (4:23).

Part Three: Christ in Philippians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:6, 10; 2:16	The One whose "day" will complete His work in believers
1:8	The One whose tender compassion fills His servants
1:11	The source of the fruits of righteousness
1:20	The One magnified in His servant's body, by life or death
1:21	The believer's life
1:23	The One whose presence is "far better"
2:5	The pattern of humility
2:6	In the form of God, equal with God
2:7	The One who emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men
2:8	Obedient unto death, even the death of the cross
2:9-11	Highly exalted; the name above every name; the Lord before whom every knee will bow
3:8	The surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord
3:9	The source of the righteousness of God by faith
3:10	The One whose resurrection power and sufferings believers share
3:12	The One who laid hold of Paul
3:14	The One in whom God's high calling is found
3:20	The coming Saviour from heaven
3:21	The One who will transform our bodies like His glorious body and subdue all things
4:7	The One through whom God's peace guards our hearts
4:13	The strength of the believer
4:19	The One through whom God supplies every need

The Humiliation and Exaltation of Christ

Step Down (2:6-8)	Step Up (2:9-11)
In the form of God, equal with God	God highly exalted Him
Made Himself of no reputation	Gave Him a name above every name
Took the form of a servant	Every knee shall bow

Step Down (2:6-8)	Step Up (2:9-11)
Made in the likeness of men	In heaven, on earth and under the earth
Found in fashion as a man	Every tongue shall confess
Humbled Himself; obedient unto death	That Jesus Christ is Lord
Even the death of the cross	To the glory of God the Father

Four Examples of the Mind of Christ

Example	Philippians	How They Showed It
Christ	2:5-11	Left heaven's glory to serve and die
Paul	1:21-26; 2:17; 3:7-8	Willing to stay for others' sake; poured out as an offering; counted all loss for Christ
Timothy	2:19-22	Genuinely cared for others; sought Christ's interests, not his own
Epaphroditus	2:25-30	Risked his life to serve; worried more about others than himself

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Philippians	Fulfillment
The Servant humbled and then exalted	2:7-9	Isaiah 52:13-53:12; fulfilled in Christ's death and exaltation
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess	2:10-11	Isaiah 45:23; still future in its fullness
Paul's expectation of release	1:25; 2:24	Apparently fulfilled (compare 1 Timothy, Titus)
The day of Jesus Christ, completing His work	1:6, 10; 2:16	Still future
The Saviour coming from heaven	3:20	Still future
The transformation of believers' bodies	3:21	Still future (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)
Christ subduing all things to Himself	3:21	Still future (1 Corinthians 15:25-28)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Philippians 1:6 — God Finishes What He Starts

The God who began the good work of salvation will complete it on the day of Christ. The believer's assurance rests on God's faithfulness, not his own.

Philippians 1:12-18 — Chains That Advance the Gospel

What looked like defeat became an opportunity: the palace guard heard the gospel and other believers grew bold. God uses hardship to spread His Word.

Philippians 1:21-24 — To Live Is Christ, To Die Is Gain

For the believer whose life is centred on Christ, death holds no terror. Life means serving Christ; death means being with Christ, which is far better.

Philippians 2:1-11 — The Mind of Christ

Humility means valuing others and their interests. Christ, equal with God, emptied Himself, became a servant and died on a cross; God exalted Him to the highest place. One day every knee will bow to Him as Lord.

Philippians 2:12-16 — Work Out What God Works In

Believers work out their salvation with reverent seriousness because God is at work within them. Without complaining, they shine as lights in a dark world, holding out the word of life.

Philippians 3:7-14 — Counting All Loss to Know Christ

Paul exchanged every human advantage for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ and having God's righteousness by faith. He pressed on toward the goal, forgetting the past, straining toward the prize.

Philippians 3:20-21 — Citizens of Heaven

Believers belong to heaven, await their Saviour from there, and will receive glorious bodies like His.

Philippians 4:4-9 — Joy, Prayer, Peace and Right Thinking

Rejoice always; replace worry with thankful prayer; receive God's guarding peace; fill your mind with what is good; and put into practice what you have learned.

Philippians 4:11-13, 19 — Contentment and Supply

Contentment is learned through Christ's strength in every circumstance, and God supplies every need of His generous people according to His riches in glory.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Philippians

1. Joy in Christ

True joy depends on Christ, not circumstances (1:18; 3:1; 4:4).

2. The Security of the Believer

God will complete the work He began (1:6).

3. Life and Death in Christ

To live is Christ; to die is gain; to depart is to be with Christ (1:21-23).

4. The Deity and Humanity of Christ

Christ is in the form of God and equal with God, yet became truly man (2:6-8).

5. The Humiliation and Exaltation of Christ

He humbled Himself to the cross and is exalted as Lord of all (2:8-11).

6. Humility and Unity

Believers must be of one mind, valuing others above themselves (2:1-4; 4:2).

7. Sanctification

Believers work out their salvation as God works in them (2:12-13).

8. Justification by Faith

Righteousness comes from God through faith in Christ, not through law-keeping (3:9).

9. The Pursuit of Christlikeness

Knowing Christ and pressing on toward the goal (3:10-14).

10. Heavenly Citizenship and the Second Coming

Believers belong to heaven and await the Saviour who will transform their bodies (3:20-21).

11. Prayer and Peace

Prayer with thanksgiving replaces anxiety with God's peace (4:6-7).

12. Right Thinking

Believers must fill their minds with what is good (4:8).

13. Contentment

Learned through Christ's strength in every circumstance (4:11-13).

14. Christian Giving and God's Supply

Giving is a sacrifice pleasing to God, who supplies every need (4:15-19).

15. Church Leadership

The local church is led by bishops (overseers) and served by deacons (1:1).

Part Seven: Connections — How Philippians Links to the Rest of the Bible

Philippians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Circumcision on the eighth day (17:12; Philippians 3:5)
Exodus	Israel's murmuring in the wilderness (16; Philippians 2:14); a sweet-smelling sacrifice (29:18; Philippians 4:18); the book of God (32:32-33; Philippians 4:3)
Numbers	The drink offering poured out (28:7; Philippians 2:17)
Deuteronomy	A perverse and crooked generation (32:5; Philippians 2:15); cursed is he that hangs on a tree (21:23; Philippians 2:8)
Job	"This also shall be my salvation" (13:16; Philippians 1:19)
Psalms	The book of the living (69:28; Philippians 4:3)
Isaiah	The Servant humbled and exalted (52:13-53:12; Philippians 2:7-9); "unto me every knee shall bow" (45:23; Philippians 2:10-11)
Daniel	Those written in the book (12:1; Philippians 4:3); those who shine as the stars (12:3; Philippians 2:15)

Philippians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	"Take no thought for your life" (6:25-34; Philippians 4:6); the humble exalted (23:12; Philippians 2:8-9)
John	The Servant washing feet (13:1-17; Philippians 2:7); the Word made flesh (1:14; Philippians 2:7)
Acts	The founding of the church at Philippi (16:9-40); Paul's revisits (20:1-6); Paul's Roman imprisonment (28:16-31)
Romans	Justification by faith apart from works (3:21-28; Philippians 3:9); every knee bowing (14:11)
1 Corinthians	Running for the prize (9:24-27; Philippians 3:14); the transformed resurrection body (15:51-53; Philippians 3:21); Christ subduing all things (15:25-28)
2 Corinthians	The Macedonians' generosity in poverty (8:1-5); Christ who became poor (8:9; Philippians 2:7); absent from the body, present with the Lord (5:8; Philippians 1:23)
Galatians	Warnings against the Judaizers (Philippians 3:2-3)
Ephesians	Written from the same imprisonment; unity and humility (4:1-3)
Colossians	Christ the image of God and Creator (1:15-20; Philippians 2:6); things above (3:1-2; Philippians 3:20)
1 Thessalonians	Paul's suffering at Philippi (2:2); waiting for the Son from heaven (1:10; Philippians 3:20)
1 Timothy	Bishops and deacons (3:1-13; Philippians 1:1); contentment (6:6-8; Philippians 4:11)

Book	Link
2 Timothy	Poured out as a drink offering; the crown at the finish (4:6-8; Philippians 2:17; 3:14)
Hebrews	Jesus humbled and crowned with glory (2:9); running the race looking unto Jesus (12:1-2; Philippians 3:13-14); contentment (13:5)
1 Peter	Humble yourselves, and God will exalt you; cast your care on Him (5:5-7; Philippians 2:3, 9; 4:6)
1 John	We shall be like Him (3:2; Philippians 3:21)
Revelation	Names in the book of life (3:5; 20:12; Philippians 4:3); every creature confessing the Lamb (5:13; Philippians 2:10-11)

Themes That Run from Philippians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Philippians	Developed in the New Testament
Joy in the Lord	Nehemiah 8:10; Habakkuk 3:17-18	4:4	1 Peter 1:8; James 1:2
Humility and exaltation	1 Samuel 2:7-8; Proverbs 15:33	2:5-11	Luke 14:11; James 4:10
The deity of Christ	Isaiah 9:6; 45:23	2:6, 10-11	John 1:1; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3
Justification by faith	Genesis 15:6	3:9	Romans 3-4; Galatians 2:16
Heavenly citizenship	Psalm 87	3:20	Hebrews 11:13-16; 13:14
The resurrection body	Job 19:25-27; Daniel 12:2	3:21	1 Corinthians 15; 1 John 3:2
Peace instead of anxiety	Isaiah 26:3	4:6-7	Matthew 6:25-34; 1 Peter 5:7

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Thank God for fellow believers who partner with you in the gospel** (1:3-5).
- **Trust God to finish His work in you and others** (1:6).
- **Pray for love that abounds in knowledge and discernment** (1:9-10).
- **See hardships as opportunities for the gospel** (1:12).
- **Rejoice whenever Christ is preached** (1:18).
- **Make Christ the centre of your life** (1:21).
- **Don't fear death; it is gain for the believer** (1:21-23).
- **Live as a worthy citizen of heaven** (1:27).
- **Stand together for the faith** (1:27).
- **Count suffering for Christ a privilege** (1:29).
- **Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit** (2:3).
- **Value others above yourself, and look to their interests** (2:3-4).
- **Let Christ's humility shape your attitude** (2:5-8).
- **Bow to Jesus as Lord now, willingly** (2:10-11).
- **Work out your salvation; God works in you** (2:12-13).
- **Stop grumbling and arguing** (2:14).
- **Shine as a light and hold out the word of life** (2:15-16).
- **Honour faithful servants of God** (2:29).
- **Put no confidence in the flesh** (3:3).
- **Count everything loss compared with knowing Christ** (3:8).
- **Rest in God's righteousness, not your own** (3:9).
- **Make knowing Christ your great ambition** (3:10).
- **Forget what lies behind; press toward the mark** (3:13-14).
- **Follow godly examples** (3:17).
- **Don't live for appetite and earthly things** (3:19).
- **Live in expectation of the Saviour from heaven** (3:20).
- **Help believers in conflict to reconcile** (4:2-3).
- **Rejoice in the Lord always** (4:4).
- **Be gentle toward all** (4:5).
- **Pray about everything instead of worrying** (4:6).
- **Let God's peace guard your heart and mind** (4:7).
- **Think on things that are true, pure and lovely** (4:8).
- **Practise what you have learned** (4:9).
- **Learn contentment in every circumstance** (4:11-12).

- **Draw on Christ's strength for whatever God calls you to** (4:13).
- **Give generously to God's work** (4:15-18).
- **Trust God to supply all your need** (4:19).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:6	Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ
1:21	For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
1:27	Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ
2:3	Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
2:5	Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus
2:9-11	Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him... That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord
2:13	For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
2:14	Do all things without murmurings and disputings
3:8	I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord
3:10	That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings
3:13-14	Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
3:20	For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ
4:4	Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.
4:6-7	Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
4:8	Whatsoever things are true... think on these things.
4:11	I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.
4:13	I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.
4:19	But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Conclusion

Philippians is a letter of joy written in chains. Paul, a prisoner in Rome facing possible death, wrote to his beloved friends at Philippi, the first church in Europe, who had supported him from the beginning. He thanked God for them, confident that God would complete His work in them. He rejoiced that his imprisonment had spread the gospel through the palace guard, and declared, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He called them to unity and humility, and set before them the supreme example of Christ, who, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, and became obedient to death on a cross, and whom God has exalted so that every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. He warned against confidence in the flesh and counted all his former advantages as loss for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ and His righteousness, pressing toward the mark as a citizen of heaven awaiting the Saviour. And he urged them to rejoice always, to pray instead of worrying, to think on what is good, and to learn contentment, as he had, through Christ who strengthened him, trusting the God who would supply all their need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

> *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*
>
> **Philippians 1:21**

Colossians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul (from prison) • Date: c. AD 60-62 • Chapters: 4

> *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*
>
> **Colossians 2:9**

Part One: Introduction to Colossians

The Author and Date

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse" (1:1-2). Paul wrote from prison (4:3, 10, 18), most likely in Rome around AD 60-62, at the same time as Ephesians and Philemon. Tychicus carried the letter, accompanied by Onesimus, the runaway slave who had become a believer and was returning to his master Philemon in Colosse (4:7-9; Philemon 10-12).

The City and Church of Colosse

Colosse was a small town in the Lycus River valley in Phrygia (western Turkey), about a hundred miles east of Ephesus, near the larger cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis (4:13). Once important, it had declined by Paul's time. The region was struck by an earthquake around AD 60-61, recorded by the Roman historian Tacitus as destroying Laodicea.

Paul had not visited the church (2:1). It was founded by Epaphras, a native of Colosse (4:12), probably converted during Paul's three years in Ephesus, when "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:10). Epaphras is called "our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ" (1:7). He had come to Rome to report to Paul about the church, bringing good news of their faith and love (1:4, 8), but also concern about a dangerous false teaching.

The Colossian Heresy

Paul never names the false teaching, but its features can be pieced together from his warnings:

Heresy Element	Colossians	Description
Philosophy	2:4, 8	"Philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men"; enticing words
Special knowledge	2:2-3, 18	Claims to higher wisdom and visions available only to the initiated
Jewish legalism	2:11, 16	Circumcision; food laws; holy days, new moons and sabbaths
Angel worship	2:18	"Worshipping of angels"; intermediaries between God and man
Asceticism	2:20-23	"Touch not; taste not; handle not"; harsh treatment of the body
Diminishing Christ	1:15-20; 2:9-10	Treating Christ as one spiritual power among many, not the fullness of God

This mixture of Jewish ritualism, pagan philosophy and mysticism resembled the later heresy of Gnosticism, which taught that matter is evil, that salvation comes through secret knowledge, and that a chain of spiritual beings stands between God and the world. Paul's answer to every element is the same: Christ. He is the fullness of God, the Creator and Lord of every spiritual power, and believers are complete in Him. They need nothing added.

Purpose and Theme

Colossians proclaims the supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ. It contains one of the highest statements of Christ's deity in Scripture (1:15-20; 2:9).

> *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.*
>
> **Colossians 1:18**

> *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him*
>
> **Colossians 2:9-10**

Colossians and Ephesians

Colossians and Ephesians were written at the same time, carried by the same messenger, and share many themes and phrases. Ephesians emphasises the church as the body of Christ; Colossians emphasises Christ as the head of the body.

Shared Theme	Colossians	Ephesians
Redemption and forgiveness	1:14	1:7
Christ head of the body, the church	1:18	1:22-23
Reconciliation through the cross	1:20-22	2:16
The mystery revealed	1:26-27	3:3-9
Dead in sins, made alive	2:13	2:1-5
Put off the old man, put on the new	3:9-10	4:22-24
Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs	3:16 (the word of Christ dwelling richly)	5:19 (filled with the Spirit)
Wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, masters	3:18-4:1	5:22-6:9
Prayer and boldness for the gospel	4:2-4	6:18-20
Tychicus sent	4:7-8	6:21-22

Comparing Colossians 3:16 with Ephesians 5:18-19 shows that being filled with the Spirit and letting the word of Christ dwell richly produce the same results: singing, thanksgiving and submission.

Outline of Colossians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Doctrinal: The Preeminence of Christ	1	Who Christ is
Thanksgiving and prayer	1:1-14	Delivered and translated
The supremacy of Christ	1:15-20	Creator, Sustainer, Head, Reconciler

Section	Chapters	Theme
The reconciliation of believers	1:21-23	Presented holy
Paul's ministry of the mystery	1:24-29	"Christ in you, the hope of glory"
II. Polemical: The Sufficiency of Christ	2	Complete in Him
Treasures in Christ	2:1-7	Rooted and built up in Him
Beware of philosophy	2:8-10	"All the fulness of the Godhead bodily"
The work of the cross	2:11-15	Forgiven, the debt cancelled, the powers defeated
Beware of legalism, mysticism and asceticism	2:16-23	"The body is of Christ"
III. Practical: Life in Christ	3-4	Living as those raised with Christ
Seek things above	3:1-4	"Your life is hid with Christ in God"
Put off and put on	3:5-17	"Christ is all, and in all"
The Christian household	3:18-4:1	"As to the Lord"
Prayer and witness	4:2-6	"Speech... seasoned with salt"
Personal greetings	4:7-18	Faithful fellow workers

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Doctrinal — The Preeminence of Christ (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-14 — Thanksgiving, Prayer and Deliverance

Paul thanked God for the Colossians' "faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven" (1:4-5): faith, love and hope. The gospel was "bringing forth fruit" both in the whole world and among them (1:6). They had learned it from Epaphras (1:7).

Paul's prayer for them:

> *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*
>
> **Colossians 1:9-11**

In contrast with the false teachers' secret knowledge, Paul prayed for true knowledge of God's will, which leads to a worthy walk, fruitfulness, growth, strength, patience and joy. He gave thanks to the Father:

> *Which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins*
>
> **Colossians 1:12-14**

God has qualified believers for their inheritance, rescued them from Satan's dominion of darkness, and transferred them into the kingdom of His beloved Son. ("Translated" was used of transporting a whole population to a new country.) In Christ they have redemption and forgiveness.

Chapter 1:15-20 — The Supremacy of Christ

This passage is one of the greatest statements about the person of Christ in the Bible.

> *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*
>
> **Colossians 1:15-17**

Christ and God. He is "the image of the invisible God": not a copy, but the exact visible expression of the invisible God (John 1:18; 14:9; Hebrews 1:3).

Christ and creation. He is "the firstborn of every creature." "Firstborn" here does not mean the first being created; the next verse says He created all things. In Scripture, "firstborn" often means the one with the rights of preeminence and inheritance. God said of David, the youngest son of Jesse, "I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth" (Psalm 89:27). Christ is the heir and Lord over all creation. (Those who teach that Christ is a created being misread this verse.) The passage then states:

- **He is the Creator:** "by him were all things created," including every rank of angelic power, which the false teachers wanted people to worship. The LORD alone created all things (Isaiah 44:24), so Christ is the LORD.
- **He is the goal:** all things were created "for him."
- **He is eternal:** "he is before all things."
- **He is the Sustainer:** "by him all things consist," hold together. The universe does not run by itself; Christ upholds it (Hebrews 1:3).

Christ and the church.

> *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; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*
>
> **Colossians 1:18-20**

He is the Head of the church, the source of its life and its authority. He is the "firstborn from the dead," the first to rise in a glorified, immortal body, guaranteeing the resurrection of His people. He has first place in creation and in redemption: "in all things he might have the preeminence." All the fullness of God dwells in Him. And through His blood shed on the cross, He will reconcile all things, bringing the whole universe into harmony with God, either through salvation or through subjugation of His enemies (2:15; Philippians 2:10-11).

Chapter 1:21-23 — The Colossians Reconciled

> *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel*
>
> **Colossians 1:21-22**

Reconciliation was accomplished "in the body of his flesh through death," a real physical death, contradicting any teaching that Christ was not truly human or that the body is evil. God's goal is to present believers holy and blameless. "If ye continue in the faith" does not make salvation depend on human effort; continuing in the faith is the evidence of genuine faith, which the false teachers were threatening to undermine (compare Hebrews 3:14; 1 John 2:19). The gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven" (1:23), spreading through the whole world.

Chapter 1:24-29 — Paul's Ministry: Christ in You

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (1:24). Christ's atoning sufferings are complete (John 19:30). But Christ still suffers in His people (Acts 9:4), and Paul willingly bore his share of suffering for the sake of the church.

Paul was a minister of "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (1:26):

> *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*
>
> **Colossians 1:27-28**

The mystery is that Christ Himself indwells Gentile believers, guaranteeing their future glory. Against the false teachers' exclusive knowledge for an elite few, Paul's aim was "every man": warning, teaching and presenting every believer mature in Christ. He laboured, "striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (1:29).

Section II: Polemical — The Sufficiency of Christ (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-7 — Treasures in Christ

Paul struggled in prayer for the Colossians, the Laodiceans and others who had never met him (2:1), that they might be encouraged, united in love, and come to full understanding of "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (2:2-3). The false teachers claimed hidden wisdom; all true wisdom is hidden in Christ. "And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words" (2:4).

> *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*
>
> **Colossians 2:6-7**

The Christian life continues as it began: in Christ, by faith. Believers are rooted like trees, built up like buildings, and established in the faith they were taught.

Chapter 2:8-10 — Complete in Christ

> *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power*
>
> **Colossians 2:8-10**

"Spoil" means to carry off as captives or plunder. Paul does not condemn careful thinking, but empty human philosophies and traditions that are "not after Christ." Then comes the decisive statement: "in

him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The complete, undiminished essence of God permanently dwells in Christ, in bodily form, in His incarnate and glorified humanity. He is not one of many intermediaries; He is God. And believers, united to Him, are "complete," lacking nothing spiritually. They need no higher knowledge, mystical experience, angelic mediator or religious ritual.

Chapter 2:11-15 — The Work of the Cross

Believers are complete because of what Christ has done:

- **Spiritual circumcision (2:11):** "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." They do not need physical circumcision; their hearts have been changed (Deuteronomy 30:6; Romans 2:29).
- **Union in death and resurrection (2:12):** "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Baptism pictures the believer's burial and resurrection with Christ, received "through the faith." (Immersion portrays this picture of burial and rising.)
- **New life and full forgiveness (2:13):** "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."
- **The debt cancelled (2:14):** "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." The "handwriting" was a certificate of debt, a written record of what was owed. Our record of guilt under the law was wiped out and nailed to the cross: paid in full.
- **The powers defeated (2:15):** "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Christ disarmed the evil spiritual powers and paraded them as defeated captives, as a Roman general led conquered enemies in a triumphal procession. Why fear or worship angels and spiritual powers that Christ has conquered?

Chapter 2:16-23 — Freedom from Legalism, Mysticism and Asceticism

Legalism (2:16-17).

> *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*
>
> **Colossians 2:16-17**

The Old Testament food laws, festivals, new moons and Sabbaths were shadows pointing to Christ, the reality. Once the substance has come, believers should not be judged for not observing the shadows (Hebrews 8:5; 10:1; Galatians 4:9-11). Christians gather for worship on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, the day of Christ's resurrection (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10), finding their true rest in Christ (Hebrews 4:9-10).

Mysticism (2:18-19). "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (2:18). The false teachers practised a false humility that worshipped angels instead of approaching God directly through Christ, and boasted of visions. Despite their claims, they were "not holding the Head," from whom the whole body grows (2:19).

Asceticism (2:20-23). "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (2:20-22). Man-made rules about avoiding certain foods and harsh treatment of the body "have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body," but they have no power against the indulgence of the flesh (2:23). Rules imposed from outside cannot change the heart. Only Christ can.

Section III: Practical — Life in Christ (Chapters 3-4)

Chapter 3:1-4 — Seek Things Above

> *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*
>
> **Colossians 3:1-4**

The answer to the false teachers' earthly rules is a heavenly focus. Believers have died and risen with Christ. Their true life is now hidden with Christ in God, secure and out of reach. They should set their hearts and minds on heavenly realities, where Christ reigns (Psalm 110:1). When Christ, who is their very life, appears, they will appear with Him in glory.

Chapter 3:5-17 — Put Off the Old, Put On the New

Put to death (3:5-7).

> *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience*
>
> **Colossians 3:5-6**

"Mortify" means put to death. Believers must deal ruthlessly with sexual sin, impurity, lust, evil desire and greed (which is idolatry, putting things in God's place).

Put off (3:8-11). "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (3:8-10). In the new humanity, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (3:11). Every barrier of race, religion, culture and class is overcome in Christ.

Put on (3:12-14).

> *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*
>
> **Colossians 3:12-14**

Because they are chosen, holy and loved by God, believers clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. They bear with one another and forgive as Christ forgave them. Over all these, like an outer garment, they put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Peace, the Word and thankfulness (3:15-17).

> *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*
>
> **Colossians 3:15-17**

"Rule" means to act as umpire: Christ's peace should decide matters in the heart and in the church. Christ's word must "dwell" (make itself at home) in believers "richly," producing mutual teaching, admonition and joyful singing. Every word and deed should be done in Christ's name, under His authority and for His glory, with thanksgiving.

Chapter 3:18-4:1 — The Christian Household

Life in Christ transforms the home and the workplace:

Who	Duty	Motive	Colossians
Wives	"Submit yourselves unto your own husbands"	"As it is fit in the Lord"	3:18
Husbands	"Love your wives, and be not bitter against them"	(Compare Ephesians 5:25: as Christ loved the church)	3:19
Children	"Obey your parents in all things"	"For this is well pleasing unto the Lord"	3:20
Fathers	"Provoke not your children to anger"	"Lest they be discouraged"	3:21
Servants	"Obey... in singleness of heart, fearing God"	"Ye serve the Lord Christ"	3:22-25
Masters	"Give... that which is just and equal"	"Ye also have a Master in heaven"	4:1

> *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*
>
> **Colossians 3:23-24**

Every task, however humble, becomes service to Christ, done wholeheartedly and rewarded by Him. "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (3:25).

Chapter 4:2-6 — Prayer and Witness

> *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds*
>
> **Colossians 4:2-3**

Prayer must be persistent, alert and thankful. Paul, in chains, asked not for release but for open doors to preach Christ, and for clarity (4:4).

> *Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*
>
> **Colossians 4:5-6**

Believers must live wisely before unbelievers, seize every opportunity, and speak graciously and wisely. Salt preserves and adds flavour; believers' words should be wholesome and attractive, fitting each person and situation (1 Peter 3:15).

Chapter 4:7-18 — Faithful Fellow Workers

Paul's greetings give a glimpse of the network of believers around him:

- **Tychicus**, "a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant," carried the letter (4:7-8).
- **Onesimus**, "a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you" (4:9): the runaway slave, now a brother in Christ (see Philemon).
- **Aristarchus**, Paul's "fellowprisoner" (4:10; Acts 27:2).
- **Marcus**, "sister's son to Barnabas," whom Paul now commended (4:10): once the cause of a split (Acts 15:37-39), now restored.
- **Jesus called Justus** (4:11). These three were the only Jewish co-workers who had been a comfort to Paul.
- **Epaphras**, "always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (4:12-13), a model intercessor.
- **Luke, the beloved physician**, and **Demas** (4:14). Sadly, Demas later "forsook me, having loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10).
- **Nymphas** and the church in her house (4:15).
- **Archippus**: "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" (4:17; Philemon 2).

The Colossians were to exchange letters with the Laodiceans, reading the letter "from Laodicea" (4:16), which may be Ephesians. Paul signed with his own hand: "Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen" (4:18).

Part Three: Christ in Colossians

The Supremacy of Christ (1:15-20)

Christ Is	Colossians	Meaning
The image of the invisible God	1:15	The perfect visible expression of God
The firstborn of every creature	1:15	Preeminent heir and Lord over creation
The Creator of all things	1:16	Including every angelic power
The goal of creation	1:16	All things were made "for him"
Before all things	1:17	Eternal, existing before creation
The Sustainer of all things	1:17	"By him all things consist"
The Head of the body, the church	1:18	Its source of life and authority
The beginning	1:18	The origin of the new creation
The firstborn from the dead	1:18	The first to rise in immortal glory
Preeminent in all things	1:18	First in creation and redemption
The dwelling of all fulness	1:19; 2:9	All the fullness of God in bodily form
The Reconciler of all things	1:20	Peace through the blood of His cross

The Believer's Union with Christ

With Christ, Believers Are	Colossians
In Him: redeemed and forgiven	1:14
Indwelt by Him: "Christ in you"	1:27
Rooted, built up and walking in Him	2:6-7
Complete in Him	2:10
Circumcised in Him	2:11
Buried with Him	2:12
Risen with Him	2:12; 3:1
Made alive with Him	2:13
Dead with Him to the world's rudiments	2:20
Hidden with Him in God	3:3
To appear with Him in glory	3:4

Christ the Answer to the Heresy

The False Teaching	Christ the Answer
Human philosophy and hidden knowledge (2:8, 18)	All treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ (2:3)
Angels as intermediaries to be worshipped (2:18)	Christ created all angelic powers (1:16) and triumphed over the evil ones (2:15); He is the Head of all principality and power (2:10)
Christ as less than fully God (implied)	In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (2:9)
Circumcision required (2:11)	Believers have the circumcision of Christ, made without hands (2:11)
Food laws and holy days (2:16)	These were shadows; the substance is Christ (2:17)
Ascetic rules (2:20-23)	Believers died with Christ; life is found in seeking things above (2:20; 3:1)
An exclusive elite (implied)	"Every man" may be presented perfect in Christ (1:28); "Christ is all, and in all" (3:11)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Colossians	Fulfillment
The LORD alone created all things	1:16	Isaiah 44:24; fulfilled in Christ the Creator, showing His deity
The firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth	1:15, 18	Psalm 89:27; fulfilled in Christ's preeminence
Seated at God's right hand	3:1	Psalm 110:1; fulfilled at His ascension
The serpent's head crushed	2:15	Genesis 3:15; fulfilled at the cross
The circumcision of the heart	2:11	Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; fulfilled in believers
The shadows of the law	2:16-17	Fulfilled in Christ
The gospel preached to every creature	1:6, 23	Fulfilled in principle in the apostolic age; continuing
Christ reconciling all things	1:20	Completed at His return
Christ appearing, with His people in glory	3:4	Still future
The wrath of God on the disobedient	3:6	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Colossians 1:13-14 — Delivered and Translated

God has rescued believers from Satan's kingdom of darkness and brought them into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom they have redemption and full forgiveness.

Colossians 1:15-20 — The Supremacy of Christ

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, the Creator, Sustainer and goal of the universe, the Head of the church, the firstborn from the dead, the One in whom all God's fullness dwells, and the Reconciler through His blood. He must have first place in everything, including our lives.

Colossians 1:27-28 — Christ in You

The glorious mystery is that Christ Himself lives in every believer, guaranteeing future glory. The goal of ministry is to present every believer mature in Christ.

Colossians 2:6-10 — Complete in Christ

Believers continue as they began, walking in Christ by faith. They must reject human philosophies that are not after Christ, because all the fullness of God dwells in Him, and they are complete in Him.

Colossians 2:13-15 — The Triumph of the Cross

Christ made us alive, forgave all our sins, cancelled the record of our debt by nailing it to His cross, and publicly triumphed over every evil power.

Colossians 2:16-23 — Freedom from Man-Made Religion

Food laws, holy days and Sabbaths were shadows of Christ; angel worship and visions draw people from the Head; ascetic rules cannot restrain the flesh. Christ is enough.

Colossians 3:1-4 — Seeking Things Above

Raised with Christ, believers set their hearts and minds on heaven, where their life is hidden with Christ, awaiting His appearing.

Colossians 3:5-17 — The New Life

Put to death sinful desires; put off anger and lies; put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness and love. Let Christ's peace rule, His word dwell richly, and do all in His name with thanks.

Colossians 3:18-4:1 — Christ in the Home and Workplace

Every relationship is transformed when it is lived "in the Lord." All work is done heartily as service to the Lord Christ.

Colossians 4:2-6 — Prayer and Gracious Witness

Pray persistently and thankfully for open doors. Live wisely before unbelievers, make the most of every opportunity, and let your speech be gracious and seasoned with salt.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Colossians

1. The Deity of Christ

All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily (1:19; 2:9).

2. Christ the Creator and Sustainer

All things were created by Him and for Him, and by Him all things hold together (1:16-17).

3. The Preeminence of Christ

He must have first place in all things (1:18).

4. Christ the Head of the Church

The church draws its life and direction from Him (1:18; 2:19).

5. Redemption and Forgiveness

Through His blood, believers are delivered, redeemed and fully forgiven (1:13-14; 2:13-14).

6. Reconciliation

Christ reconciles sinners and ultimately all things through the cross (1:20-22).

7. Victory over Evil Powers

Christ disarmed and triumphed over principalities and powers (2:15).

8. The Sufficiency of Christ

Believers are complete in Him and need no additions (2:10).

9. Freedom from Legalism and Asceticism

Rituals were shadows; man-made rules cannot sanctify (2:16-23).

10. Union with Christ

Believers died, were buried, rose and live with Christ (2:12-13, 20; 3:1-4).

11. Sanctification

Putting to death the old, putting on the new (3:5-14).

12. The Word of Christ

The Word must dwell richly in believers, producing worship and mutual edification (3:16).

13. Christian Relationships

Home and work transformed by serving the Lord (3:18-4:1).

14. Prayer and Witness

Persistent, thankful prayer and gracious, wise speech (4:2-6).

Part Seven: Connections — How Colossians Links to the Rest of the Bible

Colossians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	God's image in man (1:26-27; Colossians 1:15; 3:10); creation of heaven and earth (1; Colossians 1:16); the serpent's defeat (3:15; Colossians 2:15)
Exodus	The tabernacle and its ordinances as shadows (25-40; Colossians 2:17); the Sabbath (20:8-11; Colossians 2:16)
Leviticus	Clean and unclean foods (11; Colossians 2:16)
Numbers	New moons and feasts (28-29; Colossians 2:16)
Deuteronomy	The circumcision of the heart (10:16; 30:6; Colossians 2:11)
Psalms	The firstborn, higher than kings (89:27; Colossians 1:15); seated at God's right hand (110:1; Colossians 3:1)
Proverbs	Wisdom present at creation (8:22-31; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:3)
Isaiah	The LORD alone made all things (44:24; Colossians 1:16); teaching the commandments of men (29:13; Colossians 2:22)
Jeremiah	Circumcise your hearts (4:4; Colossians 2:11)
Ezekiel	A new heart and new spirit (36:26; Colossians 3:10)

Colossians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Treasure in heaven (6:19-21; Colossians 3:1-2); the traditions of men (15:9; Colossians 2:8, 22)
John	The Word, the Creator (1:1-3; Colossians 1:16); "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (14:9; Colossians 1:15)
Acts	The gospel spreading through Asia from Ephesus (19:10); Aristarchus, Mark and Luke with Paul (27:2)
Romans	Buried with Christ by baptism into death (6:3-11; Colossians 2:12); holy days and conscience (14:5-6; Colossians 2:16)
1 Corinthians	One God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things (8:6; Colossians 1:16)
2 Corinthians	Christ the image of God (4:4; Colossians 1:15); a new creature (5:17)
Galatians	Days, months and years (4:9-11; Colossians 2:16); one in Christ (3:28; Colossians 3:11)
Ephesians	The twin letter: Christ the Head, the body, the new man, the household code (see the comparison table)
Philippians	Christ in the form of God (2:6); citizenship in heaven (3:20; Colossians 3:1-4)

Book	Link
1 Timothy	Doctrines forbidding marriage and foods (4:1-5; Colossians 2:20-23)
2 Timothy	Demas forsakes Paul; Mark profitable; Luke alone with him (4:10-11)
Philemon	Onesimus and Archippus (2, 10-16; Colossians 4:9, 17)
Hebrews	God's Son the Creator and Sustainer, the brightness of His glory (1:2-3; Colossians 1:15-17); the law a shadow (8:5; 10:1; Colossians 2:17)
1 John	Testing spirits; confessing that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (4:1-3; Colossians 1:22; 2:9)
Revelation	Christ "the beginning of the creation of God" addressing Laodicea (3:14; Colossians 1:15-18; 4:16)

Themes That Run from Colossians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Colossians	Developed in the New Testament
Christ the Creator	Genesis 1; Psalm 33:6; Proverbs 8	1:16-17	John 1:3; Hebrews 1:2
The fullness of God in Christ	Isaiah 9:6	1:19; 2:9	John 1:14, 16; Hebrews 1:3
The shadow and the substance	Exodus 25:40	2:16-17	Hebrews 8:5; 10:1
Victory over the powers	Genesis 3:15	2:15	Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12
Seeking things above	Psalm 73:25	3:1-2	Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 11:13-16
The image of God renewed	Genesis 1:26-27	3:10	Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Thank God for others' faith, love and hope** (1:3-5).
- **Pray for true knowledge of God's will** (1:9).
- **Walk worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him** (1:10).
- **Rejoice that you have been delivered from darkness** (1:13).
- **Give Christ first place in everything** (1:18).
- **Remember that Christ holds all things together, including your life** (1:17).
- **Continue grounded and settled in the faith** (1:23).
- **Rejoice that Christ lives in you** (1:27).
- **Aim to present every believer mature in Christ** (1:28).
- **Keep walking in Christ as you received Him** (2:6).
- **Beware of philosophies and traditions not after Christ** (2:8).
- **Rest in being complete in Christ** (2:10).
- **Rejoice that your debt is nailed to the cross** (2:14).
- **Don't fear the powers Christ has defeated** (2:15).
- **Don't let others judge you by religious rituals** (2:16).
- **Hold fast to Christ the Head** (2:19).
- **Reject man-made rules as a way to holiness** (2:20-23).
- **Set your mind on things above** (3:1-2).
- **Remember your life is hidden with Christ** (3:3).
- **Put to death sinful desires, including greed** (3:5).
- **Stop lying, and put away anger** (3:8-9).
- **Treat all believers as equals; Christ is all** (3:11).
- **Clothe yourself with compassion, kindness and humility** (3:12).
- **Forgive as Christ forgave you** (3:13).
- **Put on love above all** (3:14).
- **Let Christ's peace decide** (3:15).
- **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly** (3:16).
- **Do everything in Jesus' name, with thanks** (3:17).
- **Live out Christ in your home** (3:18-21).
- **Work heartily, as to the Lord** (3:23).
- **Continue in prayer with thanksgiving** (4:2).
- **Pray for open doors for the gospel** (4:3).
- **Make the most of every opportunity with unbelievers** (4:5).
- **Let your speech be gracious and seasoned with salt** (4:6).

- **Labour fervently in prayer for others, like Epaphras** (4:12).
- **Fulfil the ministry God has given you** (4:17).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:10	That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work
1:13-14	Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins
1:16	For by him were all things created... all things were created by him, and for him
1:17	And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.
1:18	That in all things he might have the preeminence.
1:27	Christ in you, the hope of glory
2:6	As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him
2:8	Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men... and not after Christ.
2:9-10	For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him
2:14	Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us... nailing it to his cross
3:1-2	Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
3:13	Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
3:16	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom
3:17	And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus
3:23	And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men
4:2	Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving
4:6	Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt

Conclusion

Colossians was written to a small church in the Lycus valley, threatened by a teaching that mixed philosophy, Jewish rituals, angel worship and harsh self-denial, and that reduced Christ to one spiritual power among many. Paul's answer was to lift up Christ in all His glory. He is the image of the invisible God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, including every angelic power; all things were made for Him, and in Him all things hold together. He is the Head of the church, the firstborn from the dead, preeminent in all things, the One in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and the Reconciler who made peace through the blood of His cross. Believers are complete in Him: circumcised, buried and raised with Him, forgiven all their sins, their record of debt nailed to His cross, every evil power disarmed and defeated. The rituals of the law were shadows of Christ; man-made rules cannot conquer the flesh. So believers seek things above, where their life is hidden with Christ; they put off the old and put on the new; they let Christ's peace rule and His word dwell richly; they serve Him in their homes and their work; and they pray and speak with grace. In every sphere, Christ must have the preeminence, for Christ is all, and in all.

> *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.*
>
> **Colossians 1:18**

1 Thessalonians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 51 • Chapters: 5

> *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:16**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

The Author and Date

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). Silvanus is Silas, Paul's companion on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:40). Paul wrote from Corinth around AD 50-51, soon after Timothy returned from Thessalonica with good news (3:6; Acts 18:5). It is one of Paul's earliest letters, and among the earliest books of the New Testament.

The City of Thessalonica

Thessalonica (modern Thessaloniki) was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia and its largest city, with perhaps 200,000 people. It was named after Thessalonike, a half-sister of Alexander the Great. It was a busy seaport on the Via Egnatia, the main Roman road between Rome and the east, so news travelled from it quickly in every direction (1:8). As a "free city," it governed itself through magistrates called politarchs, the exact title Luke uses for "the rulers of the city" (Acts 17:6), confirmed by inscriptions found there.

The Founding of the Church

After being beaten and imprisoned at Philippi, Paul, Silas and Timothy came to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 2:2). For three Sabbaths Paul reasoned in the synagogue, showing from the Scriptures that the Christ had to suffer and rise again, and that Jesus was the Christ. Some Jews, many God-fearing Greeks and a number of leading women believed (Acts 17:4). Most of the converts had been pagans who "turned to God from idols" (1:9). Jealous Jewish leaders stirred up a mob, attacked the house of Jason, and accused the believers of turning the world upside down and proclaiming "another king, one Jesus" (Acts 17:5-7). Paul and Silas were sent away by night to Berea, and Paul went on to Athens and Corinth. His stay in Thessalonica had been short, perhaps only a few weeks or months, leaving a young church to face persecution without him.

Anxious about them, Paul sent Timothy back from Athens to strengthen them (3:1-5). Timothy returned to Paul at Corinth with an encouraging report of their faith and love, along with some questions and concerns (3:6). Paul wrote this letter in response.

Purpose

Paul wrote to:

- thank God for the Thessalonians' faith, love and hope, and their bold witness (1);
- defend his own conduct against those who slandered his motives (2:1-12);
- encourage them in persecution (2:13-3:13);
- urge them to sexual purity, brotherly love and diligent work (4:1-12);
- comfort them concerning believers who had died before Christ's return (4:13-18);
- teach them about the day of the Lord and how to be ready (5:1-11);

- instruct them in church life (5:12-28).

Theme: The Coming of the Lord

The return of Christ is mentioned in every chapter, each time with a practical application:

Verse	The Coming of Christ	Application
1:10	"To wait for his Son from heaven... which delivered us from the wrath to come"	Salvation: a waiting people
2:19	"Our... crown of rejoicing... in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming"	Service: converts as a crown
3:13	"Unblameable in holiness... at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints"	Holiness: a blameless heart
4:16-17	"The Lord himself shall descend... we... shall be caught up"	Comfort: the hope of reunion
5:23	"Preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"	Sanctification: the whole person preserved

> *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

Outline of 1 Thessalonians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Looking Back: Personal Reflections	1-3	Thanksgiving and relationship
A model church	1	Turned, served, waiting
A model ministry	2:1-12	As a nurse and as a father
Receiving the word in persecution	2:13-16	"The word of God, which effectually worketh"
Paul's longing and Timothy's report	2:17-3:13	"Now we live, if ye stand fast"
II. Looking Forward: Practical Instruction	4-5	Living in light of Christ's coming
Purity and love	4:1-12	"This is the will of God, even your sanctification"
The coming of the Lord for His people	4:13-18	"Caught up... to meet the Lord in the air"
The day of the Lord	5:1-11	"As a thief in the night"
Instructions for church life	5:12-28	"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing."

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Looking Back (Chapters 1-3)

Chapter 1 — A Model Church

> *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 1:3**

Faith, love and hope are the three great Christian virtues (1 Corinthians 13:13). Genuine faith produces work; genuine love produces labour (toil to the point of weariness); genuine hope produces patience (steadfast endurance). Paul knew they were chosen by God, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God," because of the way the gospel had come to them:

> *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 1:5**

The gospel was not mere words; the Holy Spirit worked with power and produced deep conviction. The Thessalonians became imitators of the apostles and of the Lord, "having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (1:6). Joy in suffering is the work of the Spirit. They became an example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia (1:7). "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord" (1:8), like a trumpet blast or a rolling echo, so that Paul did not need to tell others about them; everyone was already talking about their conversion:

> *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10**

These verses summarise genuine conversion:

- **Turned to God from idols:** repentance and faith, a decisive turning to God and away from false gods.
- **To serve the living and true God:** a changed life of service.
- **To wait for his Son from heaven:** an eager expectation of Christ's return.

Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, delivers believers "from the wrath to come," the future judgment of God.

Chapter 2:1-12 — A Model Ministry

Paul's enemies apparently accused him of being one of the many travelling teachers who used religion for money, sex or fame. Paul reminded the Thessalonians how he had actually behaved among them.

His courage and integrity (2:1-6). Though he had just been "shamefully entreated" at Philippi, he was "bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention" (2:2). His message was not "of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile" (2:3).

> *But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 2:4**

God had entrusted him with the gospel, as a steward; he answered to God, not to people. He used no flattery, no hidden greed, and sought no glory from men (2:5-6).

Like a mother (2:7-9).

> *But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 2:7-8**

Paul cared for them like a nursing mother warming her own children. He gave them not only the message but himself. He worked "night and day" at his trade so as not to be a financial burden (2:9).

Like a father (2:10-12). He lived "holily and justly and unblameably" among them (2:10). "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (2:11-12). A father encourages, comforts and urges his children individually toward maturity. Faithful ministry combines a mother's tenderness and a father's guidance.

Chapter 2:13-16 — The Word of God in Persecution

> *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 2:13**

The apostles' message was not human opinion but the very Word of God, and it actively worked in those who believed. This is a clear claim to the divine inspiration of apostolic teaching (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

The Thessalonians suffered from their own countrymen just as the churches in Judea suffered from the Jews, "Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us... Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved" (2:14-16). Paul, himself a Jew who loved his people deeply (Romans 9:1-5), was speaking of those who violently opposed the gospel. "For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (2:16), a judgment that would fall on Jerusalem in AD 70.

Chapters 2:17-3:13 — Paul's Longing and Timothy's Report

Torn away from them, Paul longed to see them again, but "Satan hindered us" (2:17-18).

> *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 2:19-20**

Paul's reward at Christ's coming would be the people he had led to Christ, standing in the Lord's presence. This "crown of rejoicing" is often called the soul winner's crown.

Unable to bear the suspense, Paul stayed alone at Athens and sent Timothy "to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (3:1-3). Suffering is part of God's plan for believers (2 Timothy 3:12). Paul feared the tempter might have succeeded and his labour been in vain (3:5). But Timothy brought "good tidings of your faith and charity," and that they longed to see Paul (3:6).

> *Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 3:7-8**

Their steadfastness revived him. He prayed "night and day... exceedingly" to see them and supply what was lacking in their faith (3:10). His prayer for them:

> *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**

Growing love leads to established holiness, ready for the day when Christ comes "with all his saints" (Zechariah 14:5; Jude 14).

Section II: Looking Forward (Chapters 4-5)

Chapter 4:1-12 — Purity, Love and Work

"We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (4:1).

Sexual purity (4:3-8).

> *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:3-5**

People often ask what God's will is; here it is stated plainly: sanctification, beginning with sexual purity. In a pagan culture where sexual immorality was accepted, believers must abstain from all sexual activity outside marriage. Each must learn to control "his vessel" (his own body, or possibly to take a wife) in holiness and honour, not in lustful passion like those who do not know God. Sexual sin wrongs others: "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such" (4:6). "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit" (4:7-8). To reject this teaching is to reject God Himself.

Brotherly love (4:9-10). "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another" (4:9). They already loved all the believers in Macedonia, but Paul urged them to "increase more and more" (4:10).

Quiet, diligent work (4:11-12).

> *And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:11-12**

Some believers had apparently stopped working, perhaps thinking Christ's return was so near that work was pointless, and were depending on others. Paul urged them to live quietly, mind their own affairs, and earn their own living, to keep a good testimony before unbelievers and to be self-supporting (compare 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12). Expecting Christ's return should make believers faithful, not idle.

Chapter 4:13-18 — The Coming of the Lord for His People

Some Thessalonian believers had died since Paul left. Their friends grieved, perhaps fearing that the dead would miss the blessing of Christ's coming.

> *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:13-14**

"Asleep" describes the death of believers: their bodies lie in the grave as if sleeping, awaiting resurrection, while their spirits are already with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23). Christians grieve, but not like those without hope. Because Jesus died and rose, God will bring with Him the spirits of believers who have died.

> *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:15**

"Prevent" in the King James English means "precede": living believers will not go ahead of those who have died. Paul's teaching came "by the word of the Lord," a direct revelation.

> *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18**

The order of events:

- **The Lord Himself shall descend:** not an angel, but Christ in person (Acts 1:11).
- **With a shout, the archangel's voice, and the trump of God:** a commanding call, as when He called Lazarus from the tomb (John 11:43; 1 Corinthians 15:52).
- **The dead in Christ shall rise first:** their bodies raised and reunited with their spirits in glorified form.
- **Then we which are alive... shall be caught up:** living believers will be suddenly snatched up and transformed (1 Corinthians 15:51-53). The Latin translation of "caught up" (rapiemur) gives the English word "rapture."
- **Together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:** a joyful reunion with departed loved ones and with the Lord. "Meet" was used of a welcoming party going out to greet an arriving dignitary.
- **So shall we ever be with the Lord:** permanent, unbroken fellowship (John 14:1-3).

The purpose of this revelation is comfort: "comfort one another with these words." Many Baptists and others understand this event, the "rapture" of the church, as distinct from Christ's coming in glory to the earth, and believe it will take place before the time of God's wrath on the earth (1:10; 5:9; Revelation 3:10). Other believers see it as one event with Christ's return to reign. All agree that the Lord Himself will come, the dead in Christ will be raised, the living will be changed, and believers will be with the Lord for ever.

Chapter 5:1-11 — The Day of the Lord

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you" (5:1).

> *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:2-3**

"The day of the Lord" is the prophets' term for God's direct intervention in judgment and deliverance (Joel 2:31; Amos 5:18; Zephaniah 1:14-18). It will come unexpectedly, like a thief, on an unbelieving world lulled by false security (Jeremiah 6:14), and as suddenly and inescapably as labour pains.

> *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*

> **1 Thessalonians 5:4-6**

Believers belong to the day; they should therefore be alert and self-controlled, not spiritually asleep or drunk with the world (5:7). "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" (5:8; Isaiah 59:17; Ephesians 6:14-17).

> *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:9-11**

God has destined believers not for wrath but for full salvation. Christ died for us so that, whether we are alive ("wake") or have died ("sleep") when He comes, we will live together with Him.

Chapter 5:12-28 — Instructions for Church Life

Paul closes with a rapid series of short commands for congregational life:

Toward leaders (5:12-13). "Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." Believers should recognise, respect and love their pastors (Hebrews 13:17).

Toward one another (5:14-15).

> *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:14-15**

Different people need different care: the idle and disorderly need warning; the fainthearted need encouragement; the weak need support; and everyone needs patience.

Toward God (5:16-18).

> *Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Constant joy, constant prayer (an unbroken attitude of dependence and communion with God), and thanksgiving in every circumstance (not necessarily for every circumstance) are God's will for His people.

Toward the Spirit and the Word (5:19-22). "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (5:19-22). Believers must not stifle the Spirit's work, nor despise God's message, but must test everything by God's Word, hold onto what is good, and avoid every form of evil.

Benediction (5:23-28).

> *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**

Paul prayed for their complete sanctification, every part of their being, spirit, soul and body, kept blameless until Christ comes. And the God who called them is faithful; He will do it (Philippians 1:6). Paul asked for their prayers (5:25), sent greetings (5:26), and solemnly charged that "this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren" (5:27). Paul expected his letter to be read publicly to the church, as the Old Testament Scriptures were. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (5:28).

Part Three: Christ in 1 Thessalonians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	The Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the church exists, together with God the Father
1:3	The object of believers' hope
1:6	The Lord whom believers imitate
1:10	God's Son from heaven, raised from the dead, who delivers from the wrath to come
2:15	The Lord Jesus, killed by His own people
2:19	The coming Lord in whose presence believers rejoice
3:11	The Lord who directs His servants' way
3:13	The Lord coming with all His saints
4:14	The One who died and rose again
4:16	The Lord who will descend from heaven with a shout
4:17	The Lord whom believers will meet in the air and be with for ever
5:9	The source of salvation
5:10	The One who died for us, that we should live together with Him
5:18	The One in whom God's will for us is found
5:23	The coming Lord for whom believers are preserved blameless

The Rapture and the Day of the Lord

Many Bible teachers, including many Baptists, distinguish between Christ's coming for His people (4:13-18) and the day of the Lord, which brings judgment on the world (5:1-11). Others see these as aspects of a single coming. The differences in emphasis are clear in the passages themselves:

Christ's Coming for His Saints (4:13-18)	The Day of the Lord (5:1-11)
The Lord descends to the air	Comes as a thief in the night
The dead in Christ rise; the living are caught up	Sudden destruction on those who say "Peace and safety"
Believers meet the Lord and are ever with Him	"They shall not escape"
Comfort for believers	Warning for unbelievers; watchfulness for believers

Christ's Coming for His Saints (4:13-18)	The Day of the Lord (5:1-11)
"Which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1:10)	"God hath not appointed us to wrath" (5:9)

Faith, Hope and Love

Virtue	1:3	3:6	5:8
Faith	"Your work of faith"	"Good tidings of your faith"	"The breastplate of faith"
Love	"Labour of love"	"And charity"	"And love"
Hope	"Patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"	(Paul's hope in them, 2:19)	"For an helmet, the hope of salvation"

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	1 Thessalonians	Fulfillment
The gospel received with power and the Holy Ghost	1:5	Joel 2:28; Ezekiel 36:27; fulfilled in the Spirit's work
Believers appointed to afflictions	3:3-4	Fulfilled in the Thessalonians' persecution (Acts 17:5-9)
Wrath on those who killed the Lord and forbade preaching to the Gentiles	2:16	Foreshadowed in the destruction of Jerusalem, AD 70
The Lord coming with all His saints	3:13	Zechariah 14:5; Jude 14; still future
The Lord descending; the dead raised; the living caught up	4:16-17	Still future
The day of the Lord as a thief	5:2	Joel 2:31; Zephaniah 1:14-18; still future
"Peace and safety," then sudden destruction	5:3	Jeremiah 6:14; still future
Believers preserved blameless at His coming	5:23	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 — A Model Conversion

The gospel came in power and the Holy Spirit. The Thessalonians received the word with joy despite affliction, turned from idols to serve the living God, and waited for His Son. Their transformed lives spread the gospel far and wide.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 — A Model Ministry

Paul spoke boldly, honestly and without greed, pleasing God rather than men. He cared for his converts with a mother's tenderness and a father's guidance, giving them both the gospel and his own life.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 — The Word of God

The apostolic message is the very Word of God, and it works powerfully in those who believe.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 — God's Will: Sexual Purity

God's will is our sanctification, including abstaining from sexual immorality and controlling the body in holiness and honour. Rejecting this is rejecting God.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 — The Dignity of Work

Believers should live quietly, mind their own business and work with their own hands, keeping a good testimony and depending on no one.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 — The Blessed Hope

Believers who die are not lost. The Lord Himself will descend, the dead in Christ will rise, the living will be caught up together with them, and all will be with the Lord for ever. This truth comforts grieving believers.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 — Ready for the Day

The day of the Lord will come suddenly on an unprepared world. Believers, as children of light, must stay awake, sober and armed with faith, love and hope, knowing God has appointed them not to wrath but to salvation.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 — Joy, Prayer and Thanksgiving

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in everything: this is God's will for every believer.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 — Wholly Sanctified

God will sanctify believers completely, spirit, soul and body, preserving them blameless until Christ comes. He is faithful and will do it.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Thessalonians

1. Election and Effectual Calling

God chose believers, and the gospel came to them in power (1:4-5; 2:12).

2. Genuine Conversion

Turning to God from idols, serving Him, and waiting for His Son (1:9-10).

3. The Inspiration of Scripture

The apostles' message is the Word of God (2:13).

4. Faithful Ministry

Courageous, honest, unselfish and loving (2:1-12).

5. Suffering

Believers are appointed to affliction, and God sustains them (1:6; 2:14; 3:3-4).

6. Sanctification

God's will is the believer's holiness, including sexual purity (4:3-8; 5:23).

7. Brotherly Love

Taught by God, it must keep growing (3:12; 4:9-10).

8. Work and Testimony

Believers must earn their living and live honestly before outsiders (4:11-12).

9. The Death of Believers

Believers "sleep in Jesus" and will be raised (4:13-14).

10. The Return of Christ

The Lord will descend, raise the dead in Christ, and catch up living believers to be with Him for ever (4:16-17).

11. The Day of the Lord

A sudden day of judgment on the unbelieving world (5:1-3).

12. Deliverance from Wrath

Believers are not appointed to wrath but to salvation (1:10; 5:9).

13. Church Life

Respect leaders, care for one another, rejoice, pray, give thanks and test all things (5:12-22).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Thessalonians Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Thessalonians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	The trumpet at God's descent on Sinai (19:16-19; 1 Thessalonians 4:16)
Isaiah	The dead shall live and arise (26:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:16); God's breastplate and helmet (59:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:8)
Jeremiah	"Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:3)
Daniel	Those who sleep in the dust shall awake (12:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14); the Son of man with the clouds (7:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:17)
Joel	The great and terrible day of the LORD (2:31; 1 Thessalonians 5:2)
Amos	The day of the LORD is darkness (5:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:4)
Zephaniah	The great day of the LORD is near (1:14-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3)
Zechariah	The LORD shall come, and all the saints with Him (14:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:13)

1 Thessalonians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The coming of the Son of man with a trumpet; the thief in the night (24:30-31, 42-44)
Luke	Watch and pray to escape what is coming (21:34-36)
John	"I will come again, and receive you unto myself" (14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:17)
Acts	The founding of the church at Thessalonica (17:1-9); Timothy and Silas rejoin Paul at Corinth (18:5)
Romans	Saved from wrath through Christ (5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9); the night far spent (13:11-14)
1 Corinthians	The dead raised and the living changed at the last trump (15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17); faith, hope and love (13:13)
Philippians	Waiting for the Saviour from heaven (3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 1:10); God completes His work (1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:24)
Ephesians	The armour of God (6:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:8)
2 Thessalonians	The sequel: further teaching on the day of the Lord and the man of sin; idleness rebuked
Titus	Looking for the blessed hope (2:13)
Hebrews	Obey and honour those who rule over you (13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
1 Peter	Rejoicing in trials; the hope of Christ's revelation (1:3-9)
2 Peter	The day of the Lord as a thief (3:10)
1 John	Test the spirits (4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:21); we shall be like Him (3:2)

Book	Link
Revelation	Kept from the hour of temptation (3:10); the Lord coming quickly (22:20)

Themes That Run from 1 Thessalonians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 1 Thessalonians	Developed in the New Testament
The return of Christ	Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 14:4-5	1:10; 4:16-17	Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16
The resurrection of the dead	Job 19:25-27; Daniel 12:2	4:14-16	1 Corinthians 15
The day of the Lord	Joel 2; Zephaniah 1	5:1-3	2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:17
Holiness	Leviticus 19:2	3:13; 4:3-7; 5:23	1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:14
Watchfulness	Habakkuk 2:1-3	5:6-8	Matthew 24:42; Revelation 16:15
The Word of God	Isaiah 55:11	2:13	Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let your faith work, your love labour, and your hope endure** (1:3).
- **Receive God's Word with joy, even in affliction** (1:6).
- **Be an example to other believers** (1:7).
- **Let the word sound out from your life** (1:8).
- **Turn from every idol to serve the living God** (1:9).
- **Wait eagerly for God's Son from heaven** (1:10).
- **Speak boldly, even after suffering** (2:2).
- **Seek to please God, not men** (2:4).
- **Care for others with a mother's gentleness** (2:7).
- **Give people your life as well as the gospel** (2:8).
- **Encourage and urge others like a father** (2:11-12).
- **Receive the Bible as the Word of God** (2:13).
- **Expect affliction as part of God's plan** (3:3).
- **Strengthen and encourage young believers** (3:2).
- **Pray earnestly for others' growth** (3:10-13).
- **Pursue holiness and sexual purity** (4:3-7).
- **Love one another more and more** (4:9-10).
- **Live quietly, mind your own business, and work** (4:11).
- **Grieve with hope when believers die** (4:13).
- **Comfort others with the promise of Christ's coming** (4:18).
- **Stay awake and sober, not spiritually asleep** (5:6).
- **Put on faith, love and the hope of salvation** (5:8).
- **Rest in knowing God has not appointed you to wrath** (5:9).
- **Encourage and build one another up** (5:11).
- **Respect and love your spiritual leaders** (5:12-13).
- **Warn the unruly, comfort the fainthearted, support the weak** (5:14).
- **Never repay evil for evil** (5:15).
- **Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in everything** (5:16-18).
- **Don't quench the Spirit** (5:19).
- **Test all things, and hold fast what is good** (5:21).
- **Abstain from every form of evil** (5:22).
- **Trust God to sanctify you completely** (5:23-24).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:5	For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance
1:9-10	Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven
2:4	Not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.
2:13	Ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God
3:12	And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men
4:3	For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication
4:11	That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands
4:16-17	For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout... and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
4:18	Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
5:2	The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
5:9	For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ
5:16-18	Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
5:21	Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
5:23	And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly
5:24	Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Conclusion

1 Thessalonians is one of Paul's earliest letters, written to a young church that had been planted in a few weeks and immediately plunged into persecution. Paul thanked God for their work of faith, labour of love and patience of hope, and for a conversion so real that the whole region was talking about how they had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven. He reminded them of his own conduct among them, gentle as a nursing mother and earnest as a father, delivering not the word of men but the Word of God. He rejoiced at Timothy's report that they were standing fast. He called them to holiness, especially sexual purity, to growing brotherly love, and to quiet, diligent work. And he comforted them with the great hope of the church: the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout; the dead in Christ will rise; the living will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Because the day of the Lord will come as a thief, believers must stay awake and sober, armed with faith, love and hope, knowing that God has not appointed them to wrath. Meanwhile they are to honour their leaders, care for one another, rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, give thanks in everything, and trust the faithful God who will sanctify them wholly and preserve them blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

> *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

2 Thessalonians

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 51-52 • Chapters: 3

> *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:3**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

The Author and Date

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). The same three missionaries who wrote the first letter wrote this one, probably from Corinth a few months later, around AD 51. Paul authenticated it with his own handwriting (3:17), because a forged letter had apparently been circulating in his name (2:2).

The Occasion

News had reached Paul that three problems had developed or grown worse in Thessalonica:

Problem	2 Thessalonians	Paul's Answer
Persecution had intensified	1:4-7	God will judge the persecutors and give rest to His people when Christ is revealed
False teaching that "the day of Christ" had already arrived	2:1-2	That day will not come until the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin
Some believers had stopped working	3:6-12	"If any would not work, neither should he eat"; discipline the disorderly

The false teaching about the day of the Lord had come "by spirit" (a claimed prophecy), "by word" (a report) or "by letter as from us" (a forged letter claiming to be from Paul) (2:2). Under severe persecution, the Thessalonians may have concluded that they were already in the day of the Lord's wrath, which would contradict Paul's earlier teaching that believers are not appointed to wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9).

Purpose and Theme

Paul wrote to encourage the persecuted believers, to correct the error about the day of the Lord, and to command the idle to work. The theme is the coming of Christ in judgment and glory, and how believers should live while they wait: steadfast in suffering, stable in doctrine and diligent in work.

> *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 1:7**

> *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:3**

1 and 2 Thessalonians Compared

Feature	1 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians
Main prophetic subject	Christ's coming for His saints (4:13-18)	The day of the Lord and the man of sin (2:1-12)
Emotional need	Comfort for those who grieve	Stability for those who are shaken
Persecution	Endure affliction	God will repay the persecutors
Idleness	Gentle exhortation to work (4:11-12)	Firm command and church discipline (3:6-15)
Key thought	"So shall we ever be with the Lord"	"Stand fast, and hold the traditions"

Outline of 2 Thessalonians

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Encouragement in Persecution	1	The righteous judgment of God
Thanksgiving for growing faith and love	1:1-4	Patience in tribulation
God's justice at Christ's revelation	1:5-10	Rest for believers; vengeance on persecutors
Prayer for worthiness	1:11-12	Christ glorified in His people
II. Correction About the Day of the Lord	2	The man of sin
The error and the signs	2:1-5	The falling away and the man of sin
The restrainer and the wicked one	2:6-12	The mystery of iniquity
Thanksgiving and exhortation	2:13-17	"Stand fast"
III. Commands for Christian Living	3	Work and discipline
Prayer and confidence	3:1-5	"The Lord is faithful"
The disorderly idle	3:6-15	"If any would not work, neither should he eat"
Benediction and signature	3:16-18	"The Lord of peace"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Encouragement in Persecution (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-4 — Growing Faith in Persecution

> *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 1:3-4**

Paul had prayed that their love would increase (1 Thessalonians 3:12); his prayer was being answered. Their faith was growing "exceedingly" and their love "aboundeth." Paul boasted about their endurance to other churches. Suffering had not destroyed their faith; it had strengthened it.

Chapter 1:5-10 — The Righteous Judgment of God

Their patient endurance was "a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer" (1:5). Their perseverance showed that God was at work in them and that they truly belonged to His kingdom. God's justice would be revealed:

> *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 1:6-9**

God is just. He will repay those who persecute His people (Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19) and give rest to the persecuted. This will happen at Christ's revelation from heaven: visibly, with His mighty angels, "in flaming fire" (Isaiah 66:15). Judgment will fall on two groups: "them that know not God" (those who rejected the knowledge of God available to all, Romans 1:18-21) and those "that obey not the gospel." Their punishment is "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." "Destruction" means ruin, not annihilation: the punishment is "everlasting," a conscious, eternal separation from the Lord's gracious presence and glory (Matthew 25:41, 46; Isaiah 2:10, 19).

> *When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 1:10**

The same day that brings judgment on the unbelieving will reveal Christ's glory in His people. Believers will marvel at Him, and He will be glorified through what He has done in them.

Chapter 1:11-12 — Prayer for Worthiness

> *Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 1:11-12**

Paul prayed that God would make their lives worthy of His calling and powerfully complete every good desire and work of faith, so that Christ would be glorified in them and they in Him, all by grace.

Section II: Correction About the Day of the Lord (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-5 — The Falling Away and the Man of Sin

> *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:1-2**

"Our gathering together unto him" refers to the event Paul described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. "Is at hand" here means "has already come" or "is present." Someone had convinced the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord had already begun, and they were shaken and alarmed. Paul answered by giving events that must happen first:

> *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**

The falling away. The Greek word (apostasia) means a departure, usually a rebellion or abandonment of the faith. Scripture foretells widespread apostasy in the last days (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-4). (Some interpreters understand the word here as a "departure" in the sense of the church's removal at the rapture, but most take it as a religious rebellion.)

The man of sin. He is also called "the son of perdition" (a name also given to Judas, John 17:12), "that Wicked" (2:8), and elsewhere "antichrist" (1 John 2:18) and "the beast" (Revelation 13). He will be a real person, the final embodiment of rebellion against God. He will:

- oppose God and exalt himself above every god and object of worship;
- sit in the temple of God, claiming to be God.

Daniel foretold a king who would "magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods" (Daniel 11:36), and an "abomination of desolation" in the holy place (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15).

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2:5). Paul had taught this new church about end-time prophecy during his short stay.

Chapter 2:6-12 — The Restrainer and the Mystery of Iniquity

> *And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:6-8**

"Letteth" is old English for "hinders" or "restrains." Something ("what withholdeth") and someone ("he who now letteth") is holding back the full revelation of lawlessness until God's appointed time. "The mystery of iniquity" (the secret power of lawlessness) is already at work in the world, but its full expression in the man of sin is restrained. Interpreters have identified the restrainer as:

- **The Holy Spirit,** who alone has the power to restrain Satan, working through the church; many Baptist and dispensational teachers believe He will be "taken out of the way" in the sense that His restraining ministry through the indwelt church ends when the church is removed at the rapture;
- **Human government and law,** which God ordained to restrain evil (Romans 13:1-4);
- other suggestions, such as the preaching of the gospel or an archangel.

Whatever the identity, God is in control: the man of sin can only appear "in his time." And his end is certain: the Lord Jesus will consume him "with the spirit of his mouth" (Isaiah 11:4) and destroy him "with the brightness of his coming," the glorious appearing of Christ (Revelation 19:15, 20). One word from Christ will end him.

The man of sin's coming will be "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish" (2:9-10). He will perform genuine supernatural signs designed to deceive (Matthew 24:24; Revelation 13:13-14). Why will people be deceived?

> *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:10-12**

They refused to love the truth, preferring unrighteousness. As a judgment, God will give them over to the lie they chose (compare Romans 1:24-28). Rejecting the truth is not a neutral act; it leaves a person open to deception.

Views of the man of sin. Believers have understood this passage in different ways. Some have seen it fulfilled in the first century, perhaps in Roman emperors or the events of AD 70. Many Reformers and older Protestant and Baptist writers identified the man of sin with the papacy, which claimed supreme authority in the church. Most modern Baptists and many other evangelicals understand him as a future individual, the Antichrist, who will arise before Christ's glorious return. Whatever view is taken, the lessons are clear: lawlessness is at work now, deception will increase, God remains sovereign, and

Christ will triumph.

Chapter 2:13-17 — Chosen, Called and Standing Fast

In contrast to those who perish, Paul gave thanks for the Thessalonians:

> *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**

God chose them, the Spirit set them apart, they believed the truth, God called them through the gospel, and they will share Christ's glory. Salvation from beginning to end is God's gracious work, received by faith.

> *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:15**

"Traditions" here means the teaching handed down by the apostles, whether in person or by letter. That apostolic teaching is now preserved in the New Testament Scriptures. This verse does not authorise later church traditions added to Scripture; it calls believers to hold fast to the apostles' original teaching, the very antidote to the false "letter as from us" (2:2).

> *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17**

Section III: Commands for Christian Living (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-5 — Prayer and the Faithfulness of God

> *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:1-2**

Paul asked for prayer that the Word would "have free course" (literally "run") and spread rapidly, and that he would be delivered from wicked opponents (Acts 18:6-17).

> *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:3**

People may be faithless; the Lord is faithful. He will strengthen believers and guard them from the evil one. Paul was confident they would obey (3:4), and prayed: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (3:5).

Chapter 3:6-15 — The Disorderly Idle

Despite Paul's earlier instruction (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 5:14), some believers were still refusing to work, perhaps excited by thoughts of the Lord's coming, and living off others.

> *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:6**

"Disorderly" was a military word for a soldier out of rank, here meaning idle and undisciplined. Paul reminded them of his own example: "we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you" (3:7-8). He had the right to support, but gave it up "to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us" (3:9).

> *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:10**

The command concerns those who "would not" work: those unwilling, not those unable. The church must care for the genuinely needy (1 Timothy 5:3-16; James 1:27), but must not subsidise laziness. Some were "working not at all, but are busybodies" (3:11): not busy at work, but busy meddling in others' affairs. Paul commanded them "that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (3:12).

> *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:13**

The faithful must not grow tired of doing good, even when others take advantage.

Discipline (3:14-15).

> *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:14-15**

Persistent disobedience to apostolic teaching calls for church discipline: noting the person and withdrawing close fellowship, so that he may feel shame and repent. Yet he remains a brother, to be warned in love, not treated as an enemy. The goal is restoration (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1).

Chapter 3:16-18 — Benediction and Signature

> *Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:16**

In the midst of persecution, confusion and discipline, the Lord of peace gives peace at all times and in every way.

> *The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:17**

Paul usually dictated his letters but added a greeting in his own handwriting as proof of authenticity (1 Corinthians 16:21; Colossians 4:18), important here because a forged letter had misled them (2:2). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (3:18).

Part Three: Christ in 2 Thessalonians

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1-2	The Lord Jesus Christ, with God the Father, the source of grace and peace
1:7	Revealed from heaven with His mighty angels
1:8	Coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on those who know not God and obey not the gospel
1:9	The Lord from whose presence and glory the lost are banished
1:10	Glorified in His saints, admired in all who believe
1:12	The One whose name is glorified in His people
2:1	The Lord to whom His people will be gathered
2:8	The Lord who will consume the wicked one with the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming
2:14	The One whose glory believers will obtain
2:16	Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, with the Father, who gives everlasting consolation
3:3	The faithful Lord who establishes and keeps His people
3:5	The One for whom believers patiently wait
3:16	The Lord of peace

The Man of Sin in Scripture

Characteristic	2 Thessalonians	Other Scriptures
Called the man of sin, son of perdition, that Wicked	2:3, 8	"The little horn" (Daniel 7:8); "the beast" (Revelation 13:1); "antichrist" (1 John 2:18)
Opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God	2:4	"He shall magnify himself above every god" (Daniel 11:36)
Sits in the temple of God, claiming to be God	2:4	The abomination of desolation in the holy place (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15)
Speaks against God	2:4	"A mouth speaking great things" (Daniel 7:8, 25; Revelation 13:5-6)
Comes with Satanic power, signs and lying wonders	2:9	False christs showing great signs (Matthew 24:24); the false prophet's wonders (Revelation 13:13-14)
Deceives those who perish	2:10	Deceiving the whole world (Revelation 13:8, 14)
Restrained until his time	2:6-7	Appointed times (Daniel 11:36)
Destroyed by Christ at His coming	2:8	Consumed by the breath of His lips (Isaiah 11:4); cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20)

A Futurist Order of Events

Many Baptist and dispensational teachers understand 1 and 2 Thessalonians together in this sequence (other views are noted in the chapter analysis):

Order	Event	Reference
1	Christ comes for His saints; believers gathered to Him	1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1
2	The restrainer's work is removed	2 Thessalonians 2:6-7
3	The man of sin is revealed; widespread apostasy	2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
4	The day of the Lord: judgment and great tribulation	1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; Matthew 24:21
5	Christ revealed from heaven in flaming fire with His angels	2 Thessalonians 1:7-8
6	The man of sin destroyed by the brightness of His coming	2 Thessalonians 2:8

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	2 Thessalonians	Fulfillment
The mystery of iniquity already at work	2:7	Fulfilled from the apostolic age onward (1 John 2:18)
Believers chosen and called through the gospel	2:13-14	Fulfilled in the Thessalonians and all believers
A falling away from the faith	2:3	Partially seen throughout church history; completed in the last days (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5)
The man of sin revealed and sitting in God's temple	2:3-4	Daniel 9:27; 11:36; still future (futurist view)
Lying signs and strong delusion	2:9-11	Still future in its full form
Christ revealed from heaven in flaming fire	1:7-8	Isaiah 66:15; still future
Everlasting destruction for those who reject God	1:9	Isaiah 2:10, 19; still future
The wicked one destroyed by the breath of Christ's mouth	2:8	Isaiah 11:4; still future
Christ glorified in His saints	1:10	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Thessalonians 1:3-5 — Growing Faith in Suffering

Persecution did not weaken the Thessalonians' faith; it grew exceedingly. Patient endurance is evidence that God is at work and that His judgment is righteous.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 — The Revelation of Christ in Judgment

God will repay those who persecute His people and give rest to the afflicted. Christ will be revealed in flaming fire, punishing with everlasting destruction those who do not know God or obey the gospel, and being glorified in His saints.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 — Not Shaken by False Teaching

Believers must not be alarmed by claims that the day of the Lord has already come. Certain events must come first: the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin, who will exalt himself as God.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12 — The Restrainer and the Delusion

Lawlessness is already at work but restrained until God's time. The man of sin will deceive with Satanic power those who refused the love of the truth, and God will give them over to the lie they chose. Christ will destroy him with a word.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-15 — Chosen and Standing Fast

Believers are chosen, sanctified, called and destined for glory. They must stand firm in the apostolic teaching now preserved in Scripture.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 — The Faithful Lord

Though men are faithless, the Lord is faithful to strengthen and protect His people.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 — Work and Discipline

Those unwilling to work should not eat. The church must lovingly discipline the disorderly, withdrawing fellowship while still admonishing them as brothers.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Thessalonians

1. God's Righteous Judgment

God will repay persecutors and reward the persecuted (1:5-7).

2. The Revelation of Christ in Glory

Christ will be revealed from heaven with angels in flaming fire (1:7-8).

3. Eternal Punishment

Those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel will suffer everlasting destruction from His presence (1:9).

4. The Day of the Lord

It will not come until the apostasy and the man of sin are revealed (2:1-3).

5. The Man of Sin

A final opponent of God who will claim deity and deceive the perishing (2:3-10).

6. The Restraint of Evil

God holds back the full expression of lawlessness until His time (2:6-7).

7. The Danger of Rejecting the Truth

Those who refuse the love of the truth are given over to delusion (2:10-12).

8. Election and Calling

God chose believers to salvation through the Spirit's sanctification and belief of the truth (2:13-14).

9. The Authority of Apostolic Teaching

Believers must hold fast to the apostles' teaching (2:15; 3:6, 14).

10. The Faithfulness of God

He establishes and keeps His people (3:3).

11. The Duty to Work

Christians must work and support themselves (3:10-12).

12. Church Discipline

The disorderly must be noted and admonished as brothers (3:6, 14-15).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Thessalonians Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Thessalonians and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Eating bread by the sweat of one's face (3:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12)
Deuteronomy	"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence" (32:35; 2 Thessalonians 1:6)
Psalms	God greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints (89:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:10)
Isaiah	Hiding from the glory of His majesty (2:10, 19, 21; 2 Thessalonians 1:9); slaying the wicked with the breath of His lips (11:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:8); coming with fire to render His anger (66:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:8)
Jeremiah	Fury on the heathen that know Him not (10:25; 2 Thessalonians 1:8)
Ezekiel	The prince of Tyre saying, "I am a God" (28:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:4)
Daniel	The little horn speaking great words (7:8, 25); the abomination that makes desolate (9:27); the king who magnifies himself above every god (11:36-37)

2 Thessalonians and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The abomination of desolation, false christs and great signs (24:15, 24); the Son of man coming with angels (24:30-31); everlasting fire and punishment (25:41, 46)
John	Judas, the son of perdition (17:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:3)
Acts	Paul's opponents at Thessalonica and Corinth (17:5-9; 18:6-17); Paul working with his own hands (20:34-35)
Romans	Vengeance belongs to God (12:19); God giving people over (1:24-28); government restraining evil (13:1-4)
1 Corinthians	Church discipline (5); Paul's signature (16:21)
Ephesians	Working to have something to give (4:28)
1 Thessalonians	The first letter: Christ's coming for His saints; the day of the Lord; idleness
1 Timothy	Departing from the faith in the latter times (4:1); providing for one's own (5:8)
2 Timothy	Perilous times; turning from the truth to fables (3:1-5; 4:3-4)
1 John	Antichrist coming; many antichrists already (2:18, 22; 4:3)
Jude	The Lord coming with His saints to execute judgment (14-15)
Revelation	The beast exalting himself and deceiving the world (13); the beast destroyed at Christ's coming (19:11-21)

Themes That Run from 2 Thessalonians Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 2 Thessalonians	Developed in the New Testament
The revelation of Christ in judgment	Isaiah 66:15-16; Daniel 7:9-14	1:7-10	Revelation 19:11-16
The Antichrist	Daniel 7; 9; 11	2:3-10	1 John 2:18; Revelation 13
Apostasy	Deuteronomy 13:1-5	2:3, 10-12	1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Peter 2
Eternal punishment	Isaiah 66:24; Daniel 12:2	1:9	Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:10-15
The faithfulness of God	Deuteronomy 7:9; Lamentations 3:23	3:3	1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:24
The dignity of work	Genesis 2:15; Proverbs 6:6-11	3:6-12	Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:8

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let your faith and love grow, even under pressure** (1:3).
- **Endure persecution patiently, trusting God's justice** (1:4-6).
- **Leave vengeance to God** (1:6).
- **Remember that Christ will be revealed in power and glory** (1:7).
- **Warn people that rejecting the gospel brings everlasting loss** (1:8-9).
- **Live so that Christ is glorified in you** (1:12).
- **Don't be shaken by alarming predictions** (2:2).
- **Test every claimed message from God** (2:2-3).
- **Recognise that lawlessness is already at work** (2:7).
- **Love the truth, not merely know it** (2:10).
- **Thank God for choosing and calling you** (2:13-14).
- **Hold fast to apostolic teaching, the Scriptures** (2:15).
- **Pray for the swift spread of God's Word** (3:1).
- **Trust the faithful Lord to keep you** (3:3).
- **Let the Lord direct your heart into God's love and Christ's patience** (3:5).
- **Work diligently and support yourself** (3:8-12).
- **Don't be a busybody** (3:11).
- **Don't grow weary in doing good** (3:13).
- **Discipline the disorderly, but treat them as brothers** (3:14-15).
- **Receive the peace that the Lord of peace gives** (3:16).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth
1:7	And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels
1:8	In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
1:10	When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe
2:3	Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed
2:13	God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth
2:15	Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.
3:3	But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.
3:5	And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.
3:10	If any would not work, neither should he eat.
3:13	But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.
3:16	Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.

Conclusion

2 Thessalonians was written to a young church under growing persecution, unsettled by a false report, perhaps even a forged letter in Paul's name, that the day of the Lord had already come, and troubled by members who had stopped working. Paul thanked God that their faith and love were growing in suffering, and assured them that God is just: when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, He will give rest to His afflicted people and punish with everlasting destruction those who do not know God or obey the gospel, and He will be glorified in His saints. He calmed their fears about the day of the Lord: it will not come until the great falling away and the revelation of the man of sin, who will exalt himself as God and deceive the perishing with lying wonders, but whom the Lord will destroy with the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming. Meanwhile the mystery of iniquity is already at work, restrained until God's time. Paul thanked God for choosing and calling them, urged them to stand fast in the apostles' teaching, and reminded them that the Lord is faithful to keep them. He commanded the idle to work quietly and earn their own bread, called the church to discipline the disorderly as brothers, and urged all not to grow weary in well doing. Over all he prayed for the peace that only the Lord of peace can give.

> *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 3:3**

1 Timothy

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 62-64 • Chapters: 6

> *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*
>
> **1 Timothy 3:16**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Timothy

The Pastoral Epistles

First Timothy, Second Timothy and Titus are known as the "Pastoral Epistles," because they were written to two of Paul's younger co-workers who were serving as his representatives in local churches, and because they deal with the leadership, doctrine and life of the church. They contain the New Testament's fullest instruction on church officers, sound doctrine and pastoral responsibility. They are the last letters Paul wrote.

The Author

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (1:1). The early church received the Pastoral Epistles as Paul's, and they were known to writers such as Polycarp and Irenaeus. Some modern critics have doubted Paul's authorship because of differences in vocabulary and the developed church organisation they describe. But the letters claim to be from Paul, contain many personal details no forger would invent, and their different vocabulary is explained by their different subject matter, Paul's later stage of life, and possibly the use of a secretary such as Luke (2 Timothy 4:11).

Timothy

"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith" (1:2). Timothy came from Lystra in Galatia. His mother Eunice was a believing Jewess and his grandmother Lois also had genuine faith; his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5). He had known the Scriptures from childhood (2 Timothy 3:15) and was probably converted through Paul on his first missionary journey. Paul took him along on his second journey (Acts 16:1-3), and he became one of Paul's most trusted co-workers, sent on missions to Thessalonica, Corinth and Philippi, and named as co-sender of six of Paul's letters. He was set apart for ministry by the laying on of hands (4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6). He was relatively young (4:12), perhaps timid by nature (1 Corinthians 16:10; 2 Timothy 1:7), and suffered from frequent illness (5:23). Paul loved him as a son: "I have no man likeminded" (Philippians 2:20).

Date and Setting

Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome (AD 60-62). The Pastoral Epistles describe travels that do not fit into Acts, showing that Paul was released, as he expected (Philippians 1:25; 2:24). He then visited Ephesus, Macedonia, Crete and other places. He left Timothy at Ephesus to deal with false teachers and wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia (1:3), probably around AD 62-64. Later Paul was arrested again and wrote 2 Timothy from a Roman dungeon shortly before his execution under Nero, around AD 67-68.

Event	Approximate Date	Reference
Paul's first Roman imprisonment	AD 60-62	Acts 28:30-31
Release and further travels	AD 62-66	Philippians 1:25; Titus 1:5; 3:12

Event	Approximate Date	Reference
Timothy left at Ephesus; 1 Timothy written	AD 62-64	1 Timothy 1:3
Titus left in Crete; Titus written	AD 63-65	Titus 1:5
Second arrest and Roman imprisonment	AD 66-67	2 Timothy 1:8, 16-17
2 Timothy written; Paul's martyrdom	AD 67-68	2 Timothy 4:6-8

Purpose and Theme

Paul states his purpose plainly:

> *These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*
>
> **1 Timothy 3:14-15**

1 Timothy is a manual for church life and leadership. It instructs Timothy to oppose false teaching, to order the church's worship and leadership, to care rightly for widows, elders and others, and to guard his own life and doctrine. Two key words run through the letter: "sound" (healthy) doctrine (1:10; 6:3), and "godliness" (true reverence for God expressed in life), which appears eight times.

> *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
>
> **1 Timothy 1:15**

The Faithful Sayings

The Pastoral Epistles contain five "faithful sayings," short statements of core truth, probably well known in the churches:

Reference	Faithful Saying
1 Timothy 1:15	"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief"
1 Timothy 3:1	"If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work"
1 Timothy 4:8-9	"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"
2 Timothy 2:11-13	"If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him... he abideth faithful"
Titus 3:5-8	"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us"

Outline of 1 Timothy

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Sound Doctrine and False Teachers	1	Guarding the gospel
The charge against false teaching	1:1-11	"That they teach no other doctrine"
Paul's testimony of grace	1:12-17	"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"
The charge to Timothy	1:18-20	"War a good warfare"
II. Order in Public Worship	2	Prayer, men and women
Prayer for all men	2:1-7	"One mediator between God and men"
Men and women in worship	2:8-15	Holy hands; modest adornment; order in teaching
III. Leaders in the Church	3	Bishops and deacons
Qualifications for bishops	3:1-7	"Blameless"
Qualifications for deacons	3:8-13	"Proved"
The church and the mystery of godliness	3:14-16	"God was manifest in the flesh"
IV. The Minister's Personal Life and Ministry	4	A good minister
Warning against apostasy	4:1-5	"Doctrines of devils"
Exercise unto godliness	4:6-10	"Godliness is profitable unto all things"
An example to believers	4:11-16	"Let no man despise thy youth"
V. Care for Groups in the Church	5:1-6:2	Widows, elders, servants
Relationships and widows	5:1-16	"Honour widows that are widows indeed"
Elders	5:17-25	"Double honour"; discipline; ordination
Servants	6:1-2	Honouring masters
VI. Final Charges	6:3-21	Godliness, money and the good fight
False teachers and the love of money	6:3-10	"Godliness with contentment is great gain"
The man of God	6:11-16	"Fight the good fight of faith"
The rich	6:17-19	"Rich in good works"
Guard the deposit	6:20-21	"Keep that which is committed to thy trust"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Sound Doctrine and False Teachers (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-11 — Teach No Other Doctrine

Paul greets Timothy with "Grace, mercy, and peace" (1:2), adding "mercy" to his usual greeting in his letters to individuals. Paul had urged Timothy to stay in Ephesus "that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith" (1:3-4). The false teachers were absorbed in speculative myths and endless genealogies, probably built on Jewish traditions, that produced arguments rather than spiritual growth.

> *Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned*
>
> **1 Timothy 1:5**

The goal of true Christian teaching is love, flowing from a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith. Some had wandered from this into "vain jangling," wanting to be teachers of the law without understanding it (1:6-7).

"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully" (1:8). The law's proper purpose is not to give the righteous a system of salvation, but to expose and restrain sin. It is made "for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners" (1:9). Paul's list of sinners follows the order of the Ten Commandments: those who sin against God, against parents ("murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers"), murderers, sexual sins including "them that defile themselves with mankind" (homosexual practice), "menstealers" (kidnappers and slave-traders), liars and perjurers, "and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" (1:9-10). "Sound" means healthy: true doctrine produces spiritual health. This is "according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God" (1:11).

Chapter 1:12-17 — Paul's Testimony of Grace

Paul thanked Christ for counting him faithful and putting him into the ministry, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1:13-14).

> *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*
>
> **1 Timothy 1:15-16**

This verse is the gospel in one sentence: Christ Jesus (His person) came into the world (His incarnation) to save sinners (His mission). Paul considered himself the chief of sinners, not out of false modesty but

from a real sense of his guilt as a persecutor of Christ's church. If Christ could save Paul, He can save anyone; Paul is the "pattern," the showcase of Christ's patience toward the worst of sinners. Overwhelmed, Paul burst into praise:

> *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
>
> **1 Timothy 1:17**

Chapter 1:18-20 — War a Good Warfare

Paul charged Timothy, in line with the prophecies made about him at his commissioning, to "war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (1:18-19). Faith (true doctrine) and a good conscience (holy living) belong together; abandoning a good conscience leads to the shipwreck of faith. Hymenaeus and Alexander were examples; Paul had "delivered [them] unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1:20), expelling them from the church's fellowship, with the goal of their correction (compare 1 Corinthians 5:5). Hymenaeus later taught that the resurrection was already past (2 Timothy 2:17-18).

Section II: Order in Public Worship (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-7 — Prayer for All Men

> *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*
>
> **1 Timothy 2:1-2**

Prayer is the first priority in the church's worship. Believers must pray for everyone, including rulers, even pagan emperors like Nero (compare Jeremiah 29:7). One goal is a peaceful society in which believers can live godly lives and the gospel can spread. Another is the salvation of all:

> *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*
>
> **1 Timothy 2:3-6**

God desires the salvation of all people (Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9). There is one God, so there is one way to Him: "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." A mediator stands between two parties to reconcile them. Christ, being both God and man, is the only One who can. No priest, saint, angel or Mary can serve as an additional mediator (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15). Christ "gave himself a ransom for all": His death was a payment made in the place of others (Mark 10:45), sufficient for all people. Paul was appointed a preacher and apostle "a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity" (2:7).

Chapter 2:8-15 — Men and Women in Worship

Men (2:8). "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Men should lead in public prayer, with lives that are pure and relationships free of anger and quarrelling.

Women (2:9-15). Women should adorn themselves "in modest apparel, with shamefacedness [modesty] and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (2:9-10). Paul's concern is not that women must be unattractive, but that they should not draw attention to themselves through extravagant or seductive display; their true beauty is godly character and good works (1 Peter 3:3-4).

> *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*
>
> **1 Timothy 2:11-14**

In a culture where women often had little opportunity for education, Paul commanded that women "learn," a significant affirmation. But in the church's gathered worship, women are not to teach men with authority or exercise authority over men. Paul grounds this not in local culture but in the order of creation (Adam was formed first, Genesis 2:7, 21-22) and in the events of the fall (Eve was deceived, Genesis 3:6, 13). Baptists therefore hold that the office of pastor and the teaching of men in the church are reserved for qualified men. This concerns roles, not worth: men and women are equally created in God's image and equally heirs of grace (Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7). Women have vital ministries, including teaching other women and children (Titus 2:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15).

"Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (2:15). This difficult verse does not teach salvation by bearing children. Interpretations include: women are saved through "the childbearing," the birth of Christ promised to the woman (Genesis 3:15); women will be preserved through the dangers of childbirth; or women find their God-given fulfilment in their role as wives and mothers, provided they continue in faith, love and holiness.

Section III: Leaders in the Church (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-7 — Qualifications for Bishops

> *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*
>
> **1 Timothy 3:1**

"Bishop" (Greek episkopos, overseer) refers to the same office called "elder" (presbyteros) and "pastor" (shepherd) elsewhere (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2). It is a noble work worth aspiring to. The New Testament describes two offices in the local church: pastors (bishops or elders) and deacons (Philippians 1:1). The qualifications emphasise character more than gifts:

- **"Blameless":** above reproach, with no justified accusation against him (3:2).

- **"The husband of one wife":** literally a "one-woman man," faithful in marriage. (Baptists understand this to exclude polygamists and the sexually unfaithful; many also apply it to divorce and remarriage.)
- **"Vigilant, sober, of good behaviour":** self-controlled, sensible, well-ordered.
- **"Given to hospitality":** opening his home to others.
- **"Apt to teach":** able to teach God's Word, the one qualification that is a skill rather than character.
- **"Not given to wine, no striker":** not addicted to wine, not violent (3:3).
- **"Not greedy of filthy lucre... not covetous":** not motivated by money.
- **"Patient, not a brawler":** gentle, not quarrelsome.
- **"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"** (3:4-5). The home is the proving ground for church leadership.
- **"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil"** (3:6). A new convert promoted too soon may fall into pride, the devil's sin.
- **"A good report of them which are without"** (3:7): a good reputation with unbelievers.

Chapter 3:8-13 — Qualifications for Deacons

"Deacon" (diakonos) means servant. The office likely originated with the seven men chosen to serve the practical needs of the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1-6). Deacons must be "grave" (worthy of respect), "not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (3:8-9). They must first be "proved" (tested) (3:10). "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" (3:11). (The word "wives" can also mean "women"; most Baptists understand it as deacons' wives, though some see a reference to women who served.) Deacons must be husbands of one wife and rule their children and houses well (3:12). Faithful service brings "a good degree," a good standing, "and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (3:13).

Chapter 3:14-16 — The Church and the Mystery of Godliness

Paul wrote so that Timothy would "know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (3:15). The church is God's household, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation that supports and displays God's truth to the world. Then Paul quotes what appears to be an early Christian hymn about Christ:

> *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*
>
> **1 Timothy 3:16**

The hymn traces Christ's work from incarnation to ascension:

- **"God was manifest in the flesh":** the incarnation (John 1:14). (The Received Text behind the King James Version reads "God"; some other manuscripts read "He who." Either way, the subject is the pre-existent Christ.)

- **"Justified in the Spirit":** vindicated by the Spirit, especially in His resurrection (Romans 1:4).
- **"Seen of angels":** throughout His life, at His resurrection and ascension.
- **"Preached unto the Gentiles":** the gospel to all nations.
- **"Believed on in the world":** received by faith.
- **"Received up into glory":** His ascension (Acts 1:9).

Section IV: The Minister's Personal Life and Ministry (Chapter 4)

Chapter 4:1-5 — Doctrines of Devils

> *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*
>
> **1 Timothy 4:1-3**

The Holy Spirit clearly foretold apostasy. Behind false doctrine are deceiving spirits; its teachers are hypocrites whose consciences have been cauterised, numbed by repeated sin. This particular error was false asceticism: forbidding marriage and requiring abstinence from certain foods as a path to holiness. Such teachings appeared in the early church and have recurred throughout history, for example in religious systems requiring compulsory celibacy of clergy or binding dietary rules on believers. Paul answered: "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (4:4-5; Genesis 1:31; 9:3).

Chapter 4:6-10 — Exercise unto Godliness

By teaching these things, Timothy would be "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (4:6). A minister must first feed himself on God's Word.

> *But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*
>
> **1 Timothy 4:7-8**

Like an athlete in training, the believer must discipline himself for godliness. Physical training has some value, but only for this life; godliness benefits every area, now and for eternity. "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (4:10). God is the Saviour of all people in that He preserves and provides for all and has provided salvation sufficient for all; He is Saviour in the fullest sense "specially" of those who believe.

Chapter 4:11-16 — An Example of the Believers

> *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*
>
> **1 Timothy 4:12**

Timothy was probably in his thirties, young in comparison with the elders. The answer to those who might despise his youth was an example that could not be faulted: in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity.

> *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*
>
> **1 Timothy 4:13-14**

Timothy's ministry centred on the public reading of Scripture, exhortation (applying it) and doctrine (teaching it). He must not neglect the gift God had given him, confirmed when the elders laid hands on him. "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (4:15).

> *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*
>
> **1 Timothy 4:16**

A minister must watch both his life and his teaching. Faithfulness in both would "save" (deliver and preserve) Timothy and his hearers from the false teaching around them and lead them on in salvation.

Section V: Care for Groups in the Church (5:1-6:2)

Chapter 5:1-16 — Relationships and Widows

Treating others as family (5:1-2). "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity." The church is a family, and every relationship should reflect respect, affection and purity.

Widows (5:3-16). In a world without pensions or social security, widows were often destitute. "Honour widows that are widows indeed" (5:3), meaning those truly alone and in need. Paul gave careful guidelines:

- **Families first (5:4, 8, 16):** children and grandchildren should care for widowed relatives, "to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God" (5:4).

> *But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*
>
> **1 Timothy 5:8**

Even unbelievers care for their families; a professing Christian who refuses to do so contradicts the faith he claims.

- **The widow indeed (5:5-6):** "trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day." In contrast, "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."
- **The church's list (5:9-10):** a widow supported by the church should be at least sixty, "the wife of one man," and known for good works: raising children, hospitality, washing the saints' feet, relieving the afflicted, following every good work.
- **Younger widows (5:11-15):** should not be put on the list, since they may wish to remarry, and without responsibilities they might become idle gossips. Paul counselled them "marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (5:14).
- **Church resources protected (5:16):** believers with widowed relatives should support them, "that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."

Chapter 5:17-25 — Elders

Honour and support (5:17-18).

> *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*
>
> **1 Timothy 5:17-18**

Elders who lead well, especially those who preach and teach, deserve respect and adequate financial support ("honour" included payment). Remarkably, Paul quotes both Deuteronomy 25:4 and the words of Jesus recorded in Luke 10:7 and calls both "scripture," showing that New Testament writings were already being recognised as Scripture alongside the Old.

Accusations and discipline (5:19-21). "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" (5:19; Deuteronomy 19:15). Leaders are vulnerable to false accusations and must be protected. But "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (5:20). Discipline must be impartial, "without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (5:21).

Caution in appointing leaders (5:22-25). "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (5:22). Leaders should not be appointed in haste. Paul added a personal note: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (5:23), a medicinal use for Timothy's health problems, given perhaps because Timothy was abstaining entirely. Some people's sins are obvious; others' come to light later; likewise good works will eventually be evident (5:24-25). Time reveals character.

Chapter 6:1-2 — Servants and Masters

Christian slaves should honour their masters, "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed" (6:1). Those with believing masters should not despise them because they are brothers, but serve them all the better (6:2). The gospel's reputation is at stake in how believers work.

Section VI: Final Charges (6:3-21)

Chapter 6:3-10 — Godliness, Contentment and the Love of Money

Anyone who rejects "wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" is "proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words," producing envy, strife and evil suspicions (6:3-4). Such teachers suppose "that gain is godliness," using religion to get rich; "from such withdraw thyself" (6:5).

> *But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:6-8**

Real gain is godliness combined with contentment (Philippians 4:11). We came with nothing and leave with nothing (Job 1:21; Ecclesiastes 5:15). If we have food and clothing, we have enough.

> *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:9-10**

Money itself is not evil; "the love of money" is "the root of all evil," the source from which every kind of evil can grow. Those determined to be rich fall into traps that drown them. Some have wandered from the faith in pursuit of wealth and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Chapter 6:11-16 — The Man of God

> *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:11-12**

The "man of God" (a title used of Moses, Elijah and the prophets) must flee greed and pursue six virtues. He must fight (the word is used for an athletic contest) the good fight of faith, taking hold of the eternal life to which he was called. Paul charged him before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, "who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession" (6:13), to keep this commandment without fault "until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14).

> *Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:15-16**

At the right time God will reveal Christ. He is the only true Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords (a title given to Christ in Revelation 17:14; 19:16), the only One with immortality in Himself, dwelling in unapproachable light (Exodus 33:20).

Chapter 6:17-19 — Charge to the Rich

> *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

Wealthy believers are not told to give up all their wealth, but warned against pride and trusting in riches. God gives all things richly to enjoy. The rich should be rich in good works, generous and ready to share, so laying up treasure for the future (Matthew 6:19-21).

Chapter 6:20-21 — Guard the Deposit

> *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.*
>
> **1 Timothy 6:20-21**

"That which is committed to thy trust" is the deposit of truth, the gospel entrusted to Timothy like valuables placed in safekeeping. He must guard it and avoid godless chatter and the contradictions of what is falsely called "science" (Greek gnosis, knowledge), the claims to superior knowledge that would later flower into Gnosticism. Some who professed such knowledge had wandered from the faith.

Part Three: Christ in 1 Timothy

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	Our hope
1:12	The One who enables and appoints His servants
1:14	The source of abundant grace, faith and love
1:15	Came into the world to save sinners
1:16	The pattern of all longsuffering toward sinners
2:5	The one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
2:6	Gave Himself a ransom for all
3:16	God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on, received up into glory
4:6	The Master whose good minister Timothy is
5:21	The Lord before whom ministers serve
6:3	The One whose words are wholesome
6:13	The faithful witness before Pontius Pilate
6:14	The One whose appearing believers await
6:15	The King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16)

Qualifications for Church Officers

Qualification	Bishop (Pastor/Elder) 3:1-7	Deacon 3:8-13	Compare Titus 1:5-9
Blameless / above reproach	Yes (3:2)	"Blameless" after being proved (3:10)	Yes
Husband of one wife	Yes (3:2)	Yes (3:12)	Yes
Self-controlled, sober, respectable	Vigilant, sober, of good behaviour (3:2)	Grave (3:8)	Sober, just, holy, temperate
Hospitable	Yes (3:2)	(Not stated)	Yes
Able to teach	"Apt to teach" (3:2)	"Holding the mystery of the faith" (3:9)	Holding fast the faithful word; able to exhort and convince
Not given to wine	Yes (3:3)	"Not given to much wine" (3:8)	Yes
Not violent or quarrelsome	No striker, patient, not a brawler (3:3)	(Not stated)	No striker, not soon angry

Qualification	Bishop (Pastor/Elder) 3:1-7	Deacon 3:8-13	Compare Titus 1:5-9
Not greedy	Not greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous (3:3)	Not greedy of filthy lucre (3:8)	Yes
Honest in speech	(Implied)	Not doubletongued (3:8)	(Implied)
Manages his household well	Yes (3:4-5)	Yes (3:12)	Faithful children
Not a recent convert	Yes (3:6)	Proved first (3:10)	(Implied)
Good reputation with outsiders	Yes (3:7)	(Implied)	(Implied)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	1 Timothy	Fulfillment
Christ came into the world to save sinners	1:15	Fulfilled in His incarnation and death
The ransom for all, testified in due time	2:6	Fulfilled at the cross and in the gospel's proclamation
Christ preached to the Gentiles and believed on in the world	3:16	Fulfilled in the spread of the gospel
Some will depart from the faith in the latter times	4:1	Seen throughout church history; increasing in the last days
False teachers forbidding marriage and foods	4:3	Fulfilled in ascetic movements in the early church and later religious systems
The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ	6:14	Still future
God showing the King of kings in His times	6:15	Still future (Revelation 19:16)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Timothy 1:15-16 — The Chief of Sinners

The gospel in one sentence: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Paul, the persecutor, is the pattern proving that Christ's patience reaches the worst of sinners.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 — Prayer and the One Mediator

The church must pray for all people, especially rulers. God desires all to be saved; there is one God and one Mediator, Christ, who gave Himself a ransom for all.

1 Timothy 2:11-15 — Women in the Church

Women are to learn, but are not to teach or exercise authority over men in the church, a principle grounded in creation and the fall, not in culture. Men and women are equal in worth but different in role.

1 Timothy 3:1-13 — Qualifications for Leaders

Church leaders must be men of proven, godly character in their marriages, homes, habits and reputations, and pastors must be able to teach.

1 Timothy 3:15-16 — The Church and the Mystery of Godliness

The church is God's household, the pillar and ground of the truth. At its heart is the mystery of godliness: Christ, God manifest in the flesh, from incarnation to ascension.

1 Timothy 4:1-5 — Doctrines of Devils

False teaching originates with deceiving spirits and often takes the form of man-made rules about marriage and food. Everything God created is good when received with thanksgiving.

1 Timothy 4:7-16 — The Minister's Discipline

Train yourself for godliness; be an example in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith and purity; devote yourself to Scripture reading, exhortation and teaching; watch your life and doctrine.

1 Timothy 5:8 — Providing for One's Own

Caring for one's family is a basic Christian duty. Neglecting it denies the faith.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 — Honouring Faithful Elders

Pastors who lead well, especially in preaching and teaching, deserve respect and support; and Paul calls the words of Jesus in Luke "scripture."

1 Timothy 6:6-12 — Contentment and the Love of Money

Godliness with contentment is great gain. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. The man of God must flee greed, pursue godliness, and fight the good fight of faith.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 — The Rich

The wealthy must not be proud or trust in riches, but in God; they must be rich in good works, generous and ready to share.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Timothy

1. Sound Doctrine

Healthy teaching produces love and godliness; false teaching produces speculation and strife (1:3-10; 6:3-5).

2. The Proper Use of the Law

The law exposes and restrains sin; it cannot save (1:8-11).

3. Salvation by Grace

Christ came to save sinners, even the chief of sinners (1:15-16).

4. One God, One Mediator

Christ alone mediates between God and man, having given Himself a ransom for all (2:5-6).

5. Prayer

Prayer for all people, including rulers, is the church's first priority (2:1-2, 8).

6. Male Headship in the Church

Women are not to teach or exercise authority over men in the church, based on creation and the fall (2:11-14).

7. Church Officers

Pastors (bishops or elders) and deacons must meet high standards of character (3:1-13).

8. The Church

God's household and the pillar and ground of the truth (3:15).

9. The Incarnation and Exaltation of Christ

God manifest in the flesh, received up into glory (3:16).

10. Apostasy

Some will depart from the faith, following doctrines of devils (4:1-3).

11. Godliness

Profitable for this life and the next (4:7-8; 6:6).

12. The Minister's Example and Diligence

In life and doctrine (4:12-16).

13. Care for Widows and Families

Families provide for their own; the church cares for those truly alone (5:3-16).

14. Honour and Discipline of Elders

Faithful elders are honoured and supported; accusations require witnesses; sin is rebuked impartially (5:17-22).

15. Money

The love of money is the root of all evil; the rich must be generous (6:6-10, 17-19).

16. Guarding the Truth

The deposit of the gospel must be kept (6:20).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Timothy Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Timothy and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Adam formed first, then Eve (2:7, 21-22; 1 Timothy 2:13); the woman deceived (3:6, 13; 1 Timothy 2:14); the woman's Seed (3:15; 1 Timothy 2:15); all food given to man (9:3; 1 Timothy 4:3-4)
Exodus	The Ten Commandments (20; 1 Timothy 1:9-10); no man can see God and live (33:20; 1 Timothy 6:16)
Deuteronomy	Not muzzling the ox (25:4; 1 Timothy 5:18); two or three witnesses (19:15; 1 Timothy 5:19); God of gods and Lord of lords (10:17; 1 Timothy 6:15)
Job	Naked I came, naked I return (1:21; 1 Timothy 6:7)
Psalms	The rich carry nothing away (49:16-17; 1 Timothy 6:7)
Proverbs	Give me neither poverty nor riches (30:8-9; 1 Timothy 6:8-9)
Ecclesiastes	As he came forth, so shall he return (5:15; 1 Timothy 6:7)
Jeremiah	Seek the peace of the city and pray for it (29:7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2)
Ezekiel	God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (33:11; 1 Timothy 2:4)
Daniel	The God of gods and Lord of kings (2:47; 1 Timothy 6:15)

1 Timothy and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Treasure in heaven (6:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:17-19); two or three witnesses (18:16; 1 Timothy 5:19)
Mark	The Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many (10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6)
Luke	"The labourer is worthy of his hire" (10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18)
John	The Word made flesh (1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16); Christ before Pilate (18:33-37; 1 Timothy 6:13)
Acts	Timothy's background (16:1-3); Paul's charge to the Ephesian elders (20:17-35)
Romans	Submission to and prayer for authorities (13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2)
1 Corinthians	Women's silence in the churches (14:34-35); headship (11:3-9); support for ministers (9:9-14)
Galatians	The law and grace (3:10-25; 1 Timothy 1:8-10)
Ephesians	Christ's gifts of pastors and teachers (4:11-12)
Philippians	Bishops and deacons (1:1); contentment (4:11-12)
Colossians	Man-made rules about food and touching (2:20-23; 1 Timothy 4:3)

Book	Link
2 Timothy and Titus	The other Pastoral Epistles: sound doctrine, leaders, guarding the truth (Titus 1:5-9)
Hebrews	Christ the Mediator of a better covenant (8:6; 9:15; 12:24); contentment (13:5); obeying leaders (13:17)
James	Pure religion: visiting widows (1:27); warnings to the rich (5:1-6)
1 Peter	Women's adornment (3:3-4; 1 Timothy 2:9-10); elders as shepherds (5:1-4)
2 Peter and Jude	False teachers motivated by greed (2 Peter 2:3, 14-15; Jude 11)
Revelation	The King of kings and Lord of lords (17:14; 19:16; 1 Timothy 6:15)

Themes That Run from 1 Timothy Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 1 Timothy	Developed in the New Testament
One Mediator	Job 9:33; Isaiah 53:12	2:5	Hebrews 8:6; 9:15
The incarnation	Isaiah 7:14; 9:6	3:16	John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-8
Church leadership	Exodus 18:21; Numbers 11:16	3:1-13; 5:17	Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4
Care for widows	Deuteronomy 10:18; 24:17-22	5:3-16	Acts 6:1; James 1:27
The danger of riches	Deuteronomy 8:11-18; Proverbs 23:4-5	6:9-10, 17-19	Matthew 6:24; James 5:1-6
Apostasy	Deuteronomy 13:1-5	4:1-3	2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1
Godliness	Psalm 4:3	4:7-8; 6:6, 11	2 Peter 1:3-7; Titus 2:12

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Reject teaching that produces arguments rather than godliness** (1:4).
- **Aim at love from a pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith** (1:5).
- **Use the law to expose sin, not to earn salvation** (1:8-9).
- **Never think yourself beyond grace, or others beyond it** (1:15-16).
- **Praise the King eternal, immortal, invisible** (1:17).
- **Keep faith and a good conscience together** (1:19).
- **Make prayer for all people your first priority** (2:1).
- **Pray for rulers and those in authority** (2:2).
- **Come to God only through the one Mediator** (2:5).
- **Pray with holy hands, free of anger** (2:8).
- **Dress modestly, and adorn yourself with good works** (2:9-10).
- **Respect God's order in the church** (2:11-12).
- **Honour the office of pastor as a good work** (3:1).
- **Choose leaders by character, not merely ability** (3:2-12).
- **Remember the church is the pillar and ground of the truth** (3:15).
- **Beware of doctrines that forbid what God has given** (4:1-3).
- **Receive God's gifts with thanksgiving** (4:4-5).
- **Train yourself for godliness** (4:7-8).
- **Be an example, whatever your age** (4:12).
- **Give attention to Scripture reading, exhortation and doctrine** (4:13).
- **Don't neglect your gift** (4:14).
- **Watch your life and doctrine** (4:16).
- **Treat fellow believers as family** (5:1-2).
- **Provide for your own family** (5:8).
- **Honour and support faithful pastors** (5:17-18).
- **Don't accept accusations against elders without witnesses** (5:19).
- **Don't appoint leaders hastily** (5:22).
- **Work well, so God's name is not blasphemed** (6:1).
- **Be content with food and clothing** (6:6-8).
- **Beware the love of money** (6:9-10).
- **Flee evil; follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness** (6:11).
- **Fight the good fight of faith** (6:12).
- **If you are rich, trust God and be rich in good works** (6:17-18).
- **Guard the truth entrusted to you** (6:20).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:5	Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned
1:15	This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.
1:17	Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.
2:1-2	That, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority
2:5	For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
3:15	The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
3:16	And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh
4:8	For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things
4:12	Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
4:16	Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them
5:8	But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith
6:6	But godliness with contentment is great gain.
6:10	For the love of money is the root of all evil
6:12	Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life
6:17	Trust... in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy
6:20	O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust

Conclusion

1 Timothy is Paul's instruction to his beloved son in the faith, left at Ephesus to set the church in order and confront false teachers. Paul charged him to stop those who taught speculations instead of sound doctrine, and reminded him of the gospel that had saved Paul himself: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom he was chief. He told the church to pray for all men, including rulers, because God desires all to be saved and there is one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all. He set out God's order in worship and the qualifications for bishops and deacons, men of proven character in their homes and lives. He described the church as the household of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, centred on the great mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh. He warned of departures from the faith and doctrines of devils, urged Timothy to train himself in godliness, to be an example despite his youth, and to watch his life and doctrine. He gave wise counsel about widows, elders and servants, warned that the love of money is the root of all evil, and charged the man of God to flee greed, fight the good fight of faith, and guard the truth entrusted to him until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

> *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
>
> **1 Timothy 1:15**

2 Timothy

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul (final imprisonment) • Date: c. AD 66-67 • Chapters: 4

> *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:16**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Timothy

Paul's Last Letter

2 Timothy is the last letter Paul wrote, his final testament to his beloved son in the faith. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my dearly beloved son" (1:1-2). He wrote from a Roman prison, chained as a criminal (1:8, 16; 2:9), knowing that his execution was near: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" (4:6).

The Setting

After his release from his first Roman imprisonment (around AD 62), Paul travelled to Ephesus, Macedonia, Crete, Nicopolis, Troas, Corinth and Miletus (1 Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:5; 3:12; 2 Timothy 4:13, 20). He was then arrested again, perhaps during the persecution that followed the great fire of Rome in AD 64, when the emperor Nero blamed the Christians. This imprisonment was far harsher than the first. He was no longer in a rented house receiving visitors (Acts 28:30), but chained in a prison, hard to find (1:17). Early Christian tradition holds that he was beheaded (as a Roman citizen, he could not be crucified) on the road to Ostia outside Rome, around AD 67-68.

Paul felt keenly alone. "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me" (1:15). "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (4:10). "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me" (4:16). "Only Luke is with me" (4:11). Winter was coming, and he asked Timothy to bring his cloak, his books and the parchments, and to come quickly (4:13, 21).

Purpose and Theme

Paul wrote to urge Timothy to come to him before winter (4:9, 21), and to charge him to remain faithful: to guard the gospel, to suffer hardship for it, to pass it on to faithful men, to resist the rising tide of apostasy, to rely on the inspired Scriptures, and to preach the Word. The theme is faithfulness to Christ and His Word in the face of suffering and apostasy.

> *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:2**

> *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:16**

> *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:7**

The Faithful and the Unfaithful

2 Timothy names many people, showing the faithfulness and failures of believers in Paul's final days:

Faithful	2 Timothy	Unfaithful	2 Timothy
Lois and Eunice, Timothy's grandmother and mother, with unfeigned faith	1:5	Phygellus and Hermogenes, who turned away	1:15
Onesiphorus, who was not ashamed of Paul's chain and sought him out in Rome	1:16-18; 4:19	Hymenaeus and Philetus, who taught the resurrection was past	2:17-18
Luke, alone with Paul	4:11	Demas, who forsook Paul, loving this present world	4:10
Mark, "profitable to me for the ministry"	4:11	Alexander the coppersmith, who did Paul much evil	4:14-15
Tychicus, sent to Ephesus	4:12	All who forsook Paul at his first defence	4:16
Prisca and Aquila	4:19	Jannes and Jambres (as examples from the past)	3:8

Outline of 2 Timothy

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Guard the Gospel	1	Unashamed
Thanksgiving for Timothy	1:1-5	"Unfeigned faith"
Stir up the gift; don't be ashamed	1:6-12	"I know whom I have believed"
Hold fast and keep	1:13-18	"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep"
II. Pass On the Gospel and Endure	2	A good soldier
Commit to faithful men	2:1-2	Four generations of teaching
Pictures of the faithful servant	2:3-13	Soldier, athlete, farmer
A workman approved	2:14-19	"Rightly dividing the word of truth"
A vessel of honour; the Lord's servant	2:20-26	"Meet for the master's use"
III. Continue in the Gospel	3	Perilous times
The character of the last days	3:1-9	"A form of godliness"
Paul's example of suffering	3:10-13	"All that will live godly... shall suffer"
The sufficiency of Scripture	3:14-17	"All scripture is given by inspiration of God"
IV. Preach the Gospel	4	Finishing the course
The solemn charge	4:1-5	"Preach the word"
Paul's farewell	4:6-8	"I have fought a good fight"
Final requests and greetings	4:9-22	"The Lord stood with me"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Guard the Gospel (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-5 — Thanksgiving for Timothy

Paul served God "with pure conscience" as his forefathers had, and constantly remembered Timothy in prayer "night and day" (1:3). "Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy" (1:4): Timothy had evidently wept at their last parting.

> *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:5**

Timothy's genuine faith had been passed down through godly women of two generations. Although his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1), his mother and grandmother had taught him the Scriptures from childhood (3:15). Faith cannot be inherited, but a godly home is one of God's chief means of producing it.

Chapter 1:6-12 — Stir Up the Gift; Don't Be Ashamed

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (1:6). Like fanning a fire into full flame, Timothy needed to rekindle his ministry gift, perhaps dampened by discouragement and fear.

> *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:7**

Timidity does not come from God. His Spirit gives power to serve, love for others, and a disciplined, self-controlled mind.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (1:8). To be associated with a condemned prisoner and a despised message was dangerous, but Timothy must share in suffering, by God's power. Then Paul summarises the gospel:

> *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, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:9-10**

Salvation is entirely God's doing: not by our works, but according to His purpose and grace, planned in eternity and revealed in history through Christ's first coming. Christ "abolished death," breaking its power over believers, and brought life and immortality into full light through the gospel. Paul faced

execution, but death had lost its sting.

> *For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:12**

Paul did not say, "I know what I have believed," but "whom." His confidence rested in a Person. He had entrusted himself, his life and soul, to Christ, and was fully persuaded that Christ was able to keep it safe until the day of His return.

Chapter 1:13-18 — Hold Fast and Keep

> *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:13-14**

"Form" means a pattern or model: Timothy must keep to the pattern of healthy teaching Paul had given him, holding it with faith and love. As Paul had committed himself to Christ's keeping (1:12), so God had committed the gospel to Timothy's keeping, and he must guard it, not in his own strength, but by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Paul then contrasted the unfaithful with the faithful. "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes" (1:15): perhaps they abandoned Paul out of fear, unwilling to be associated with him. But Onesiphorus "oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me" (1:16-17). In a city of a million people, searching the prisons for a condemned Christian was dangerous, but he persisted. Paul prayed for mercy on him and his household (1:18).

Section II: Pass On the Gospel and Endure (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-2 — Commit to Faithful Men

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2:1).

> *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:2**

Here are four generations of teaching: Paul to Timothy, Timothy to faithful men, and they to others also. The gospel and sound doctrine must be passed from one generation to the next through faithful, capable teachers. This is the principle of discipleship and of training ministers.

Chapter 2:3-13 — Pictures of the Faithful Servant

Paul uses three pictures of dedication:

- **The soldier (2:3-4):** "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." A soldier on duty endures hardship, avoids distractions and seeks to please his commanding officer.
- **The athlete (2:5):** "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." The athlete must compete by the rules to win the prize; the servant of Christ must serve in God's way.
- **The farmer (2:6):** "The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits." The hard-working farmer is the first to enjoy the harvest; diligent labour brings reward.

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (2:7).

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2:8). In discouragement, remember the risen Christ, the Son of David, the heart of the gospel. Paul suffered as an evildoer, "even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound" (2:9). Chains could hold Paul, but not the Word. He endured everything "for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2:10). Then another faithful saying:

> *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:11-13**

Those who have died with Christ will live with Him; those who endure will reign with Him. Those who deny Him, in final, persistent rejection, will be denied by Him (Matthew 10:33); such denial shows that a profession was never genuine (1 John 2:19). But "if we believe not" (if we are faithless, weak and failing), "yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Christ remains true to His character and promises even when His people falter, as with Peter.

Chapter 2:14-19 — A Workman Approved

Timothy must remind the believers not to quarrel about words, which is useless and ruins the hearers (2:14).

> *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:15**

"Study" means "be diligent," "make every effort." The goal is God's approval, not man's. The minister is a workman whose work will be inspected. "Rightly dividing" literally means "cutting straight," like a builder cutting a stone accurately or a farmer ploughing a straight furrow. The Word of truth must be handled accurately: interpreted correctly in context, applied rightly, and taught without distortion. (Many Baptist teachers also apply this to recognising the distinctions in God's dealings with people in different periods of Scripture.)

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker" (2:16-17): false teaching spreads like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus taught "that the resurrection is past already," destroying the faith of some (2:17-18). Yet the church stands firm:

> *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:19**

God's foundation, His true church, cannot be shaken. It bears a seal with two inscriptions, drawn from the rebellion of Korah (Numbers 16:5, 26). On God's side: "The Lord knoweth them that are his": He knows His own, and none can be lost. On man's side: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity": those who truly belong to Him prove it by turning from sin. Divine security and human responsibility stand together.

Chapter 2:20-26 — A Vessel of Honour and the Lord's Servant

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour" (2:20). In a large household there are fine vessels for honourable use and common ones for menial use.

> *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:21**

A believer who separates himself from false teaching and sin becomes a vessel the Master can use for honourable purposes, set apart, useful and ready. "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2:22). "Youthful lusts" include not only sexual desires but impatience, pride, love of argument and novelty. "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes" (2:23).

> *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*
>
> **2 Timothy 2:24-26**

The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome, but kind, able to teach, patient, and gentle in correcting opponents. The goal is not to win an argument but to win the person, hoping that God will grant repentance, so that they escape the devil's trap.

Section III: Continue in the Gospel (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-9 — Perilous Times

> *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:1-5**

"The last days" began with Christ's first coming (Hebrews 1:2) and will intensify toward His return. Paul lists nineteen marks of the age. The list begins with "lovers of their own selves" and ends with "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God": love of self and pleasure displaces love for God, and every other sin follows. Strikingly, these people are religious: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." They keep the outward appearance of religion but reject the life-changing power of the gospel. "From such turn away."

Such people "creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts" (3:6), exploiting the spiritually weak. They are "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (3:7). "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth" (3:8). Jannes and Jambres are the names Jewish tradition gave to Pharaoh's magicians, who imitated Moses' miracles (Exodus 7:11, 22). False teachers often counterfeit the truth. But "their folly shall be manifest unto all men" (3:9).

Chapter 3:10-13 — Paul's Example and the Certainty of Persecution

In contrast, Timothy had closely followed Paul's "doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra" (3:10-11), the very places in Timothy's home region where Paul had been driven out and stoned (Acts 13-14). "But out of them all the Lord delivered me."

> *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:12-13**

Persecution is not exceptional but normal for those who are determined to live godly lives. And deceivers will grow worse, deceiving others and themselves.

Chapter 3:14-17 — The Sufficiency of Scripture

> *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:14-15**

The answer to apostasy is to continue in the truth already learned from trustworthy teachers, and above all in the Holy Scriptures, which Timothy had known since early childhood. The Scriptures make a person wise unto salvation, by leading him to faith in Christ.

> *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 perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

This is the foundational statement on the nature of Scripture:

- **"All scripture":** every part, not merely some portions; the Old Testament, and by extension the New Testament writings, which Peter already ranked with "the other scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15-16; compare 1 Timothy 5:18).
- **"Given by inspiration of God":** one Greek word, theopneustos, "God-breathed." Scripture is the product of God's own breath, His very words, written through human authors as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21). Because it comes from God, it is true and without error.
- **"Profitable":** it is useful for four things:

Use	Meaning	Answers the Question
Doctrine	Teaching what is true	What is right?
Reproof	Exposing error and sin	What is not right?
Correction	Restoring to the right way	How do I get right?
Instruction in righteousness	Training in right living	How do I stay right?

- **"That the man of God may be perfect":** complete, fully equipped.
- **"Throughly furnished unto all good works":** Scripture is sufficient. The believer needs no other revelation, tradition or authority to be fully equipped for everything God calls him to do.

Section IV: Preach the Gospel (Chapter 4)

Chapter 4:1-5 — The Solemn Charge

> *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:1-2**

Paul gave his final charge in the presence of God and Christ, the coming Judge of the living and the dead. The command: "Preach the word." Not opinions, philosophies or entertainment, but the inspired Scripture just described. "Be instant" means be ready, urgent, whether the time seems convenient or not. The preacher must reprove (convict), rebuke (warn) and exhort (encourage), with patience and sound teaching.

> *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

The urgency is that a time is coming, and has often come, when people will reject healthy teaching. Wanting their ears tickled, they will gather teachers who say what they want to hear, turning from truth to myths. The answer is not to give people what they want, but to preach the Word faithfully.

> *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:5**

Timothy must stay alert, endure hardship, evangelise the lost, and fully carry out his ministry.

Chapter 4:6-8 — Paul's Farewell

> *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:6-8**

"Offered" means poured out as a drink offering (Philippians 2:17): Paul's life was already being poured out on God's altar. "Departure" was used for a ship loosing its moorings or a soldier striking camp: death meant setting sail for home. Looking back, Paul could say:

- **"I have fought a good fight":** like an athlete or soldier, he had contended faithfully.
- **"I have finished my course":** like a runner, he had completed the race God set for him (Acts 20:24).
- **"I have kept the faith":** like a steward, he had guarded the truth entrusted to him.

Looking forward, he saw "a crown of righteousness," awarded by the righteous Judge, not only to Paul but to everyone who loves Christ's appearing.

Chapter 4:9-22 — Final Requests and Greetings

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (4:9-10). Demas, once a fellow labourer (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24), had abandoned Paul for love of the world. Crescens had gone to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia (4:10).

> *Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:11**

Luke, the faithful physician, remained. Mark, the young man Paul had once refused to take with him because he had deserted the mission (Acts 15:37-39), was now "profitable... for the ministry." Failure need not be final.

"The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments" (4:13). Facing a cold dungeon and death, Paul wanted his cloak for warmth, and his books and parchments (perhaps copies of the Scriptures) to keep studying to the end.

"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also" (4:14-15). Paul left vengeance to the Lord.

> *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:16-17**

At his preliminary hearing, every human friend abandoned him; like Christ (Luke 23:34) and Stephen (Acts 7:60), Paul prayed for their forgiveness. But the Lord stood by him and strengthened him, so that he proclaimed the gospel even before the Roman court, and he was rescued for the time being "out of the mouth of the lion" (Psalm 22:21).

> *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:18**

Paul knew he would soon die, but he was confident that the Lord would keep him from every evil and bring him safely into His heavenly kingdom. Death would be his final deliverance.

Paul greeted Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus (4:19). "Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick" (4:20). (Paul did not, or could not, heal his co-worker; the apostolic sign gifts were not used for personal convenience, and seem to have been diminishing.) "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (4:21): sailing ceased in winter, and if Timothy delayed, it might be too late. Greetings from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus (traditionally a leader of the Roman church), Claudia and all the brethren (4:21). Paul's last recorded words:

> *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:22**

Part Three: Christ in 2 Timothy

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	The One in whom is the promise of life
1:9	The One in whom grace was given before the world began
1:10	Our Saviour, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light
1:12	The One whom Paul knew and trusted, able to keep what was committed to Him
1:13	The source of faith and love
2:1	The source of strengthening grace
2:3	The Commander whose good soldiers endure hardness
2:8	Of the seed of David, raised from the dead
2:11-12	The One with whom believers die, live and reign
2:13	Faithful, even when we are faithless; He cannot deny Himself
2:19	The Lord who knows them that are His
2:21	The Master whose vessels are sanctified for His use
4:1	The Judge of the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom
4:8	The righteous Judge who gives the crown of righteousness
4:17	The Lord who stood with Paul when all forsook him
4:18	The Deliverer and Preserver who brings His people to His heavenly kingdom
4:22	The Lord Jesus Christ who is with His servants' spirits

Pictures of the Christian Servant

Servant Picture	2 Timothy	Lesson
A son	2:1	Strengthened by grace, trained by a spiritual father
A teacher	2:2	Passes the truth to faithful men
A soldier	2:3-4	Endures hardship, avoids entanglement, pleases his commander
An athlete	2:5	Competes by the rules to win the crown
A farmer	2:6	Labours diligently and shares the harvest
A workman	2:15	Handles the Word accurately, seeking God's approval
A vessel	2:20-21	Kept clean and ready for the Master's use
A servant	2:24	Gentle, patient and able to teach
An evangelist	4:5	Proclaims the gospel to the lost

The Crowns of Reward

Crown	Given For	Reference
Incorruptible crown	Disciplined, self-controlled service	1 Corinthians 9:25
Crown of rejoicing	Winning souls to Christ	1 Thessalonians 2:19
Crown of righteousness	Loving His appearing; finishing the course	2 Timothy 4:8
Crown of life	Enduring trials, faithful unto death	James 1:12; Revelation 2:10
Crown of glory	Faithfully shepherding God's flock	1 Peter 5:4

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	2 Timothy	Fulfillment
Christ abolished death and brought life and immortality to light	1:10	Fulfilled at His resurrection
The Word of God not bound	2:9	Fulfilled as the gospel spread despite persecution
Perilous times in the last days	3:1-5	Increasingly evident throughout the church age
Evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse	3:13	Continuing and intensifying
A time when men will not endure sound doctrine	4:3-4	Fulfilled repeatedly throughout church history
Paul's departure at hand	4:6	Fulfilled in his martyrdom (about AD 67-68)
The Lord preserving Paul unto His heavenly kingdom	4:18	Fulfilled at his death
Christ's appearing, judgment and kingdom	4:1, 8	Still future
The resurrection (not "past already")	2:18	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Timothy 1:7 — Power, Love and a Sound Mind

Fear and timidity do not come from God. His Spirit gives believers power for service, love for others, and self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:9-12 — Saved by Grace; Kept by Christ

Salvation is God's work, by His purpose and grace from eternity, revealed through Christ who abolished death. Believers can say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed," and trust Him to keep what they have committed to Him.

2 Timothy 2:2 — Faithful Men

The truth must be passed on from generation to generation through faithful, capable teachers. Every believer should be both learning from someone and teaching someone.

2 Timothy 2:3-6 — Soldier, Athlete, Farmer

The Christian life requires endurance, single-minded devotion, discipline according to God's rules, and diligent labour.

2 Timothy 2:15 — Rightly Dividing the Word

Diligently seek God's approval by handling His Word accurately and faithfully.

2 Timothy 2:19-22 — God's Sure Foundation

God knows His own, and His own depart from iniquity. Those who cleanse themselves from sin and error become vessels fit for the Master's use.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 — The Gentle Servant

The Lord's servant must patiently and gently instruct opponents, hoping God will grant them repentance and freedom from the devil's snare.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 — The Last Days

In the last days people will love themselves, money and pleasure more than God, and keep an outward form of religion while denying its power.

2 Timothy 3:12 — Persecution

All who determine to live godly lives in Christ will be persecuted.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 — The Inspired, Sufficient Scriptures

All Scripture is God-breathed, profitable for teaching, rebuke, correction and training in righteousness, making the man of God complete and fully equipped. It also makes people wise unto salvation through faith in Christ.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 — Preach the Word

The preacher's task is to proclaim God's Word, in season and out of season, especially when people prefer teachers who tickle their ears.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 — Finishing Well

Paul faced death with the testimony of a finished race, a fought fight and a kept faith, and the certainty of a crown laid up for him and for all who love Christ's appearing.

2 Timothy 4:16-18 — The Lord Stood with Me

When every human friend fails, the Lord stands by His servants, strengthens them, and will bring them safely into His heavenly kingdom.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Timothy

1. The Gift and Calling of the Minister

God gives gifts that must be stirred up and used (1:6).

2. Salvation by Grace

Not by works, but by God's eternal purpose and grace in Christ (1:9).

3. The Abolition of Death

Christ has destroyed death's power and revealed life and immortality (1:10).

4. Assurance

Christ is able to keep what believers commit to Him (1:12).

5. Guarding the Truth

The pattern of sound words must be held fast and guarded by the Spirit (1:13-14).

6. Discipleship and Teaching

Truth must be passed on to faithful men (2:2).

7. Endurance in Suffering

Believers must endure hardship like good soldiers; the godly will be persecuted (2:3; 3:12).

8. Faithful Handling of Scripture

Diligent, accurate interpretation and teaching (2:15).

9. The Security of God's People

The Lord knows them that are His; He remains faithful (2:13, 19).

10. Personal Holiness

Flee youthful lusts and depart from iniquity (2:19-22).

11. Apostasy in the Last Days

Increasing self-love, pleasure-seeking and empty religion (3:1-9; 4:3-4).

12. The Inspiration and Sufficiency of Scripture

All Scripture is God-breathed and fully equips the man of God (3:16-17).

13. The Priority of Preaching

Preach the Word in season and out of season (4:2).

14. The Second Coming and Rewards

Christ will judge at His appearing and reward the faithful with crowns (4:1, 8).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Timothy Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Timothy and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Exodus	Jannes and Jambres, Pharaoh's magicians who withstood Moses (7:11, 22; 2 Timothy 3:8)
Numbers	"The LORD will shew who are his"; "depart... from the tents of these wicked men" (16:5, 26; 2 Timothy 2:19)
Deuteronomy	Teaching God's words to children (6:6-9; 2 Timothy 3:15)
1 Samuel	David delivered from the lion and the bear (17:37; 2 Timothy 4:17)
Psalms	"Save me from the lion's mouth" (22:21; 2 Timothy 4:17); God renders to every man according to his work (62:12; 2 Timothy 4:14)
Isaiah	People who say, "Speak unto us smooth things" (30:10; 2 Timothy 4:3); "by thee only will we make mention of thy name" (26:13; 2 Timothy 2:19)
Jeremiah	False prophets who speak a vision of their own heart (23:16-17; 2 Timothy 4:3-4)
Daniel	The dead awaking to judgment (12:2; 2 Timothy 4:1)

2 Timothy and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Whoever denies Christ will be denied (10:33; 2 Timothy 2:12); false prophets and love waxing cold in the last days (24:11-12)
John	None of Christ's sheep lost (10:28-29; 17:12; 2 Timothy 2:19)
Acts	Timothy's background (16:1-3); persecutions at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra (13-14; 2 Timothy 3:11); Mark's earlier failure (15:37-39)
Romans	Suffer with Christ and be glorified with Him (8:17; 2 Timothy 2:12); the vices of the ungodly (1:29-31; 2 Timothy 3:2-4)
1 Corinthians	Running for an incorruptible crown (9:24-27; 2 Timothy 2:5; 4:7-8); the resurrection (15; 2 Timothy 2:18)
Philippians	Poured out as a drink offering; to depart and be with Christ (2:17; 1:23; 2 Timothy 4:6)
Colossians and Philemon	Mark, Luke and Demas with Paul in his first imprisonment (Colossians 4:10, 14; Philemon 24)
1 Timothy	Guard the deposit; Hymenaeus; fight the good fight (6:12, 20; 1:20)
Titus	The other Pastoral Epistle; Titus sent to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10)
Hebrews	The word of God quick and powerful (4:12); Timothy set at liberty (13:23)
James	The crown of life (1:12)
1 Peter	The crown of glory (5:4)

Book	Link
2 Peter	Peter's own approaching departure (1:13-15); holy men moved by the Holy Ghost (1:20-21); Paul's letters counted as Scripture (3:15-16)
1 John	Those who went out from us were not of us (2:19; 2 Timothy 2:12)
Jude	Contending for the faith; apostates in the last time (3, 17-19)
Revelation	Faithful unto death, the crown of life (2:10)

Themes That Run from 2 Timothy Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 2 Timothy	Developed in the New Testament
The inspiration of Scripture	2 Samuel 23:2; Jeremiah 1:9	3:16	2 Peter 1:20-21
Passing on the faith	Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalm 78:4-7	1:5; 2:2; 3:15	Titus 2:3-5
Apostasy	Deuteronomy 13; Jeremiah 23	3:1-9; 4:3-4	2 Peter 2; Jude
Suffering for righteousness	Psalm 34:19	1:8; 2:3; 3:12	1 Peter 4:12-16
Rewards	Daniel 12:3	4:8	1 Corinthians 3:12-15; Revelation 22:12
God's faithfulness	Deuteronomy 7:9; Lamentations 3:22-23	2:13	1 Thessalonians 5:24; Hebrews 10:23

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Pray for others night and day** (1:3).
- **Pass on genuine faith in your home** (1:5).
- **Stir up the gift God has given you** (1:6).
- **Reject the spirit of fear** (1:7).
- **Don't be ashamed of the gospel or of Christ's suffering servants** (1:8).
- **Know whom you have believed, and trust Him to keep you** (1:12).
- **Hold fast the pattern of sound words** (1:13).
- **Be an Onesiphorus: seek out and refresh those who suffer** (1:16-17).
- **Be strong in grace** (2:1).
- **Teach faithful people who will teach others** (2:2).
- **Endure hardness as a good soldier** (2:3).
- **Don't get entangled with this life's affairs** (2:4).
- **Serve by God's rules** (2:5).
- **Work hard, and you will share the harvest** (2:6).
- **Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead** (2:8).
- **Study the Word diligently and handle it accurately** (2:15).
- **Shun empty, ungodly talk** (2:16).
- **Rest in the truth that the Lord knows His own** (2:19).
- **Depart from iniquity** (2:19).
- **Keep yourself clean and ready for the Master's use** (2:21).
- **Flee youthful lusts** (2:22).
- **Be gentle and patient with opponents** (2:24-25).
- **Recognise the marks of the last days** (3:1-5).
- **Turn away from those with a form of godliness but no power** (3:5).
- **Expect persecution for living godly** (3:12).
- **Continue in what you have learned from Scripture** (3:14).
- **Teach children the Scriptures from infancy** (3:15).
- **Trust the Bible as God-breathed and sufficient** (3:16-17).
- **Preach the Word, in season and out of season** (4:2).
- **Don't seek teachers who tickle your ears** (4:3).
- **Do the work of an evangelist** (4:5).
- **Aim to finish well** (4:7).
- **Love His appearing** (4:8).
- **Don't love this present world like Demas** (4:10).

- **Give failures a second chance, as Paul did with Mark** (4:11).
- **Keep reading and studying to the end** (4:13).
- **Trust the Lord to stand with you when others forsake you** (4:16-17).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:7	For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
1:9	Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace
1:12	For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.
2:2	The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
2:3	Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
2:13	If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.
2:15	Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
2:19	The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.
2:22	Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace
3:12	Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
3:16-17	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 perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.
4:2	Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
4:7	I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith
4:8	Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness... unto all them also that love his appearing.
4:18	And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom

Conclusion

2 Timothy is Paul's farewell. Chained in a Roman prison, abandoned by many, awaiting execution, the aged apostle wrote to his beloved son in the faith with urgency and tenderness. He urged Timothy to stir up his gift, to reject fear, and to share in suffering for the gospel, because God saved us by His own purpose and grace, and Christ has abolished death. Paul's confidence was personal: "I know whom I have believed." He charged Timothy to guard the truth and to commit it to faithful men who would teach others, to endure as a good soldier, compete lawfully as an athlete, and labour as a farmer, to handle the Word of truth accurately, to keep himself a clean vessel for the Master's use, and to correct opponents gently. He warned of perilous last days, when people would love themselves and pleasure more than God and keep a form of godliness without its power, and he pointed Timothy to the unchanging anchor: the God-breathed Scriptures, able to make him wise unto salvation and fully equipped for every good work. Then came the final charge: "Preach the word." And with death before him, Paul wrote words that have inspired believers ever since: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Though all men forsook him, the Lord stood with him, and Paul was certain that the Lord would preserve him unto His heavenly kingdom.

> *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
>
> **2 Timothy 4:7-8**

Titus

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul • Date: c. AD 62-64 • Chapters: 3

> *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*
>
> **Titus 3:5**

Part One: Introduction to Titus

The Author and Recipient

"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ... To Titus, mine own son after the common faith" (1:1, 4). Titus was a Greek, a Gentile believer who was never circumcised (Galatians 2:3). He may have been converted through Paul, who calls him his "son." Although Titus is never mentioned in Acts, Paul's letters show that he was one of his most capable and trusted co-workers:

Event	Reference
Accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem as an uncircumcised test case	Galatians 2:1-3
Sent to Corinth to deal with a difficult situation and bring back a report	2 Corinthians 2:13; 7:6-7, 13-15
Organised the collection for Jerusalem at Corinth	2 Corinthians 8:6, 16-17, 23; 12:18
Called "my partner and fellowhelper"	2 Corinthians 8:23
Left in Crete to set the churches in order	Titus 1:5
Asked to join Paul at Nicopolis for the winter	Titus 3:12
Sent to Dalmatia during Paul's final imprisonment	2 Timothy 4:10

Titus was a strong, reliable leader, sent where problems were hardest.

Date and Setting

After his release from his first Roman imprisonment, Paul visited Crete with Titus and left him there to complete the work (1:5). He wrote this letter around AD 63-65, between 1 and 2 Timothy, probably from Macedonia or on his way to Nicopolis on the western coast of Greece, where he planned to spend the winter (3:12).

The Island of Crete

Crete is a large, mountainous island south of Greece. Cretans were present in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 2:11), and some may have brought the gospel home. Paul's ship had sailed along its coast on the way to Rome (Acts 27:7-13). The Cretans had a poor reputation. Paul quoted one of their own poets, Epimenides, a Cretan of the sixth century BC: "The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies" (1:12). The Greeks even coined a verb, "to cretize," meaning to lie. (One reason for the saying was that Cretans claimed to have the tomb of Zeus, though Zeus was supposed to be immortal.) Paul agreed: "This witness is true" (1:13).

The Situation

The Cretan churches were young and unorganised. They needed qualified elders in every city (1:5). False teachers, especially "they of the circumcision," were upsetting whole families with Jewish myths and human rules, for the sake of money (1:10-14). And the moral standards of the surrounding culture threatened the churches' testimony.

Purpose and Theme

Paul wrote to instruct Titus to appoint elders, silence false teachers, and teach sound doctrine that produces godly living in every group in the church. The great theme of Titus is that sound doctrine must produce good works. The phrase "good works" appears six times (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14), and "sound" doctrine five times (1:9, 13; 2:1, 2, 8). Yet good works never save: salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy" (3:5). Grace saves, and grace teaches us to live godly lives.

> *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*
>
> **Titus 2:11-13**

> *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*
>
> **Titus 3:5**

God Our Saviour and Christ Our Saviour

Titus calls both the Father and the Son "Saviour," three times each, in alternating pairs, a powerful testimony to the deity of Christ:

God Our Saviour	Christ Our Saviour
"The commandment of God our Saviour" (1:3)	"The Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour" (1:4)

God Our Saviour	Christ Our Saviour
"The doctrine of God our Saviour" (2:10)	"The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2:13)
"The kindness and love of God our Saviour" (3:4)	"Jesus Christ our Saviour" (3:6)

Titus and 1 Timothy

Feature	1 Timothy	Titus
Location	Ephesus, an established church	Crete, young and unorganised churches
Leadership	Correcting and maintaining elders and deacons	Appointing elders in every city
False teachers	Fables, genealogies, law, asceticism, greed	Jewish fables, commandments of men, greed
Emphasis	Church order and the minister's conduct	Sound doctrine producing good works
Great doctrinal passage	"God was manifest in the flesh" (3:16)	"The grace of God that bringeth salvation" (2:11-14); "according to his mercy he saved us" (3:4-7)

Outline of Titus

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Order in the Church	1	Leaders and false teachers
Greeting: the truth after godliness	1:1-4	"God, that cannot lie"
Appointing elders	1:5-9	"Holding fast the faithful word"
Silencing false teachers	1:10-16	"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him"
II. Order in the Home and Life	2	Sound doctrine in practice
Older men and women; younger women and men	2:1-6	Teaching the next generation
Titus' example	2:7-8	"A pattern of good works"
Servants	2:9-10	"Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour"
The grace that teaches	2:11-15	"That blessed hope"
III. Order in Society	3	Good works before the world
Good citizens	3:1-2	"Ready to every good work"
Saved by mercy	3:3-7	"The washing of regeneration"
Maintain good works; avoid divisions	3:8-11	"Careful to maintain good works"
Final instructions	3:12-15	"That they be not unfruitful"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Order in the Church (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-4 — The Truth After Godliness

> *Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began*
>
> **Titus 1:1-2**

Paul's ministry aimed at the faith of God's chosen people and their knowledge of "the truth which is after godliness": truth that leads to godly living. This sets the theme of the whole letter: true doctrine produces a godly life. Their hope of eternal life rests on the promise of "God, that cannot lie" (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:18), a pointed contrast with the lying Cretans (1:12). God "hath in due times manifested his word through preaching" (1:3).

Chapter 1:5-9 — Appointing Elders

> *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee*
>
> **Titus 1:5**

"Set in order" was a medical term for setting a broken bone. Each local church needed qualified leaders. Paul uses "elder" (1:5) and "bishop" (1:7) for the same office: "elder" stresses the man's maturity and dignity, "bishop" (overseer) his function. The qualifications fall into four groups:

Area	Qualification	Titus
His reputation	Blameless (above reproach)	1:6, 7
His home	The husband of one wife; having faithful (believing) children, not accused of riot (wild living) or unruly	1:6
His character (negatively)	Not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre	1:7
His character (positively)	A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate	1:8
His doctrine	Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, able by sound doctrine to exhort and to convince the gainsayers	1:9

An elder is "the steward of God" (1:7), managing God's household. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy Word so that he can both encourage believers with sound teaching and refute those who oppose it (1:9).

Chapter 1:10-16 — Silencing False Teachers

Qualified elders were urgently needed because "there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (1:10-11). These teachers were rebellious, full of empty talk, deceptive, Jewish legalists, destructive to families, and motivated by money. Their mouths had to be stopped by the sound teaching of the elders.

Paul quoted the Cretan poet Epimenides, "The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies," and agreed: "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (1:12-14). The goal of sharp rebuke is health in the faith.

> *Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.*
>
> **Titus 1:15**

The false teachers imposed rules about ritual purity, perhaps food laws. Paul answered that purity is a matter of the heart. To those whose hearts have been cleansed, created things are not defiling (Mark 7:15; Romans 14:20); to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, because their minds and consciences are corrupted.

> *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*
>
> **Titus 1:16**

Their lives contradicted their profession. Saying one knows God while denying Him by one's conduct reveals a false faith (James 2:14-26; 1 John 2:4).

Section II: Order in the Home and Life (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-6 — Older and Younger Believers

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (2:1). In contrast to the false teachers, Titus must teach what fits healthy doctrine. Paul addresses different groups:

Church Group	Instructions	Titus
Older men	Sober (clear-headed), grave (dignified), temperate (self-controlled), sound in faith, in charity, in patience	2:2
Older women	Reverent in behaviour; not false accusers (slanderers); not given to much wine; teachers of good things	2:3
Younger women	Taught by the older women to be sober, to love their husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands	2:4-5
Younger men	Sober minded (self-controlled)	2:6

Church Group	Instructions	Titus
Titus himself	A pattern of good works; uncorrupt doctrine; gravity; sincerity; sound speech that cannot be condemned	2:7-8
Servants	Obedient to their masters; pleasing them; not answering back; not stealing; showing all good faithfulness	2:9-10

Older women have an essential teaching ministry: training younger women in godly living in the home. The reason for these instructions is the testimony of the gospel: "that the word of God be not blasphemed" (2:5).

Chapter 2:7-8 — Titus' Example

> *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.*
>
> **Titus 2:7-8**

A leader's life must match his teaching, so that opponents have nothing to criticise.

Chapter 2:9-10 — Adorning the Doctrine

Servants (slaves) were to be submissive, pleasing their masters, "not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (2:9-10). "Adorn" (from the Greek word that gives us "cosmetic") means to make attractive. Even the lowest member of society, by honest and faithful work, can make the gospel beautiful to those who watch.

Chapter 2:11-15 — The Grace That Teaches

Why should believers live this way? Because of the grace of God:

> *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*
>
> **Titus 2:11-14**

This passage moves between two "appearings":

- **The grace of God "hath appeared"** (2:11): God's saving grace appeared in Christ's first coming, offered "to all men." This grace not only saves; it teaches. It trains believers to say no to ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live self-controlled ("soberly"), upright ("righteously") and devout ("godly") lives in this present age: toward self, toward others, and toward God.
- **"The glorious appearing"** (2:13): believers are "looking for that blessed hope," Christ's return in glory. He is "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ": the grammar of the Greek indicates that

one Person is called both "the great God" and "our Saviour." This is one of the clearest statements of Christ's deity in the New Testament.

Between the two appearings stands the cross: He "gave himself for us," with a double purpose:

- **To redeem us from all iniquity:** to set us free, by paying the price, not only from sin's penalty but from its power (Psalm 130:8).
- **To purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:** "peculiar" means His own special possession, as Israel was called God's "peculiar treasure" (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 14:2; 1 Peter 2:9). His people are to be eager to do good.

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (2:15).

Section III: Order in Society (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-2 — Good Citizens

> *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.*
>
> **Titus 3:1-2**

The Cretans were known for being rebellious and quarrelsome. Believers must be law-abiding, ready to do good, not slanderous or quarrelsome, but gentle and courteous to everyone (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

Chapter 3:3-7 — Saved by Mercy

Why should believers be gentle toward unbelievers? Because they remember what they themselves once were:

> *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*
>
> **Titus 3:3**

Then God intervened:

> *But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*
>
> **Titus 3:4-7**

This is one of the most complete summaries of salvation in the Bible:

Aspect of Salvation	Titus 3:4-7
Its source	"The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man" (the Greek word is philanthropia, love for mankind)
What it is not based on	"Not by works of righteousness which we have done"
What it is based on	"According to his mercy"
How it is applied	"By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"
How the Spirit is given	"Shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour"
Its legal result	"Justified by his grace"
Its future result	"Heirs according to the hope of eternal life"

All three Persons of the Trinity are involved: God the Father's kindness and love, the Holy Ghost's regenerating and renewing work, and Jesus Christ through whom the Spirit is poured out. "The washing of regeneration" is the spiritual cleansing that occurs in the new birth, the Spirit's work of making a person new (John 3:5; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Ephesians 5:26). Baptists understand it not as water baptism, which pictures this cleansing but does not produce it, since salvation is explicitly "not by works of righteousness which we have done." The Spirit was "shed... abundantly," poured out lavishly, as Joel foretold (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:33).

Chapter 3:8-11 — Maintain Good Works; Avoid Divisions

> *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*
>
> **Titus 3:8**

Salvation is not by works (3:5), but it leads to works. Those who have believed must be careful to devote themselves to good works, which benefit everyone.

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (3:9). Endless speculation and arguments about the law achieve nothing.

> *A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*
>
> **Titus 3:10-11**

"Heretick" (Greek hairetikos) here means a divisive, factious person who causes splits by promoting his own opinions. After two warnings, the church should have nothing more to do with him (Romans 16:17; Matthew 18:15-17). Such a person is "subverted" (twisted) and self-condemned.

Chapter 3:12-15 — Final Instructions

Paul would send Artemas or Tychicus to replace Titus, and asked him to come to Nicopolis, "for I have determined there to winter" (3:12). Titus should help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey, making sure they lacked nothing (3:13).

> *And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*
>
> **Titus 3:14**

Believers should learn to devote themselves to good works that meet real needs, so that their lives bear fruit. "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen" (3:15).

Part Three: Christ in Titus

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	The One whose apostle Paul is
1:4	The Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour
2:11	The appearing of God's saving grace
2:13	The great God and our Saviour, whose glorious appearing is the blessed hope
2:14	The One who gave Himself to redeem us from all iniquity and purify a special people
3:6	Jesus Christ our Saviour, through whom the Holy Ghost is shed abundantly
3:7	The One through whose grace we are justified and made heirs

Good Works in Titus

Reference	Teaching
1:16	False teachers are "unto every good work reprobate"
2:7	Leaders must be "a pattern of good works"
2:14	Christ redeemed a people "zealous of good works"
3:1	Believers must be "ready to every good work"
3:5	Salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done"
3:8	Believers must be "careful to maintain good works"
3:14	Believers must "learn to maintain good works for necessary uses"

Titus holds together two truths: good works can never save (3:5), and those who are saved must be zealous for good works (2:14; 3:8). Works are the fruit of salvation, never its root (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-26).

The Two Appearings

The First Appearing (2:11)	The Second Appearing (2:13)
"The grace of God... hath appeared"	"The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour"
Past: Christ's first coming	Future: Christ's return
Grace that brings salvation	Glory that completes salvation
Teaches us to live godly now	Gives us a blessed hope

The First Appearing (2:11)	The Second Appearing (2:13)
"Who gave himself for us"	"Looking for that blessed hope"

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Titus	Fulfillment
Eternal life promised before the world began	1:2	Genesis 3:15; fulfilled in Christ and the gospel
The grace of God appearing to all men	2:11	Fulfilled in Christ's first coming
A people for God's own possession	2:14	Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 14:2; fulfilled in the church (1 Peter 2:9)
Redemption from all iniquity	2:14	Psalm 130:8; fulfilled at the cross
Cleansing and a new spirit	3:5	Ezekiel 36:25-27; fulfilled in the new birth
The Spirit shed abundantly	3:6	Joel 2:28; fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:33)
The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour	2:13	Still future
Heirs of eternal life	3:7	Fully realised in the future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Titus 1:5-9 — Qualified Elders

Every local church needs leaders who are blameless, faithful in marriage and family, self-controlled, hospitable, holy, and able to teach sound doctrine and refute error.

Titus 1:15-16 — Profession and Practice

Purity is a matter of the heart. Those who profess to know God but deny Him by their works show that their faith is false.

Titus 2:1-10 — Sound Doctrine in Everyday Life

Healthy teaching produces godly older men, older women who teach younger women, self-controlled young men, faithful workers and exemplary leaders, so that God's Word is not blasphemed and the gospel is adorned.

Titus 2:11-14 — Grace That Saves and Teaches

God's grace, which appeared in Christ, both saves and trains us to reject ungodliness and live godly lives while we look for the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, who gave Himself to redeem us and make us His own people, zealous for good works.

Titus 3:1-2 — Good Citizenship

Believers should submit to authorities, be ready to do good, speak evil of no one, and show gentleness to all people.

Titus 3:3-7 — Saved by Mercy

We were once foolish and enslaved. God saved us, not by our works, but by His mercy, through the regenerating and renewing work of the Holy Spirit, justifying us by grace and making us heirs of eternal life.

Titus 3:8-11 — Maintaining Good Works; Rejecting Divisive People

Believers must devote themselves to good works, avoid fruitless controversies, and, after two warnings, reject divisive people.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Titus

1. The Truthfulness of God

God cannot lie, and His promise of eternal life is sure (1:2).

2. Church Leadership

Qualified elders (bishops) must be appointed in every church (1:5-9).

3. Confronting False Teaching

False teachers must be silenced by sound doctrine and sharp rebuke (1:9-14).

4. True Purity

Purity is of the heart, not external rituals (1:15).

5. Sound Doctrine Produces Godly Living

Doctrine and conduct cannot be separated (1:1, 16; 2:1).

6. The Ministry of Older Women

Older women teach younger women godly living (2:3-5).

7. Adorning the Gospel

Godly conduct makes the gospel attractive (2:5, 8, 10).

8. The Grace of God

Grace brings salvation and teaches godliness (2:11-12).

9. The Deity of Christ

Jesus Christ is "the great God and our Saviour" (2:13).

10. The Blessed Hope

Believers look for Christ's glorious appearing (2:13).

11. Redemption and Purification

Christ gave Himself to redeem and purify a special people (2:14).

12. Salvation by Mercy, Not Works

God saves by His mercy through regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit (3:5).

13. Justification by Grace

Believers are justified by grace and made heirs of eternal life (3:7).

14. Good Works

The saved must be careful to maintain good works (2:14; 3:8, 14).

15. Good Citizenship

Submission to authority and gentleness toward all (3:1-2).

16. Church Discipline of the Divisive

Factious people are to be rejected after two warnings (3:10-11).

Part Seven: Connections — How Titus Links to the Rest of the Bible

Titus and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The promise of redemption from the beginning (3:15; Titus 1:2)
Exodus	God's "peculiar treasure" (19:5; Titus 2:14)
Numbers	"God is not a man, that he should lie" (23:19; Titus 1:2)
Deuteronomy	A people for God's own possession (7:6; 14:2; Titus 2:14)
1 Samuel	The Strength of Israel will not lie (15:29; Titus 1:2)
Psalms	He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities (130:8; Titus 2:14)
Proverbs	The virtuous woman who serves her household (31:10-31; Titus 2:3-5)
Isaiah	God pouring His Spirit on His people (44:3; Titus 3:6)
Ezekiel	Clean water, a new heart and a new spirit (36:25-27; Titus 3:5); "they shall be my people" (37:23)
Joel	"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (2:28; Titus 3:6)

Titus and the New Testament

Book	Link
Mark	Defilement comes from within (7:15; Titus 1:15)
John	Born of water and of the Spirit (3:5; Titus 3:5)
Acts	Cretans at Pentecost (2:11); Paul's voyage past Crete (27:7-13); the Spirit poured out (2:33; Titus 3:6)
Romans	Subjection to rulers (13:1-7; Titus 3:1); all things pure (14:20; Titus 1:15); mark those causing divisions (16:17; Titus 3:10)
1 Corinthians	"Such were some of you: but ye are washed" (6:11; Titus 3:3-5)
2 Corinthians	Titus' ministry at Corinth (7-8)
Galatians	Titus not compelled to be circumcised (2:1-3)
Ephesians	Saved by grace, not of works, unto good works (2:8-10); the washing of water by the word (5:26)
1 Timothy	The parallel qualifications for bishops (3:1-7); older and younger believers (5:1-2); women's conduct (2:9-15)
2 Timothy	Titus sent to Dalmatia (4:10)
James	Faith without works is dead (2:14-26; Titus 1:16)
1 Peter	A peculiar people (2:9; Titus 2:14); submission to authorities (2:13-17; Titus 3:1); wives' conduct (3:1-6; Titus 2:4-5)

Book	Link
2 Peter	Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ (1:1; Titus 2:13)
1 John	Every man that hath this hope purifieth himself (3:2-3; Titus 2:12-13)

Themes That Run from Titus Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Titus	Developed in the New Testament
Grace that saves	Genesis 6:8; Exodus 34:6	2:11; 3:7	Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:24
Regeneration	Ezekiel 36:25-27	3:5	John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23
God's special people	Exodus 19:5-6	2:14	1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6
The blessed hope	Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 25:9	2:13	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:2
Good works as fruit	Isaiah 1:16-17	2:14; 3:8	Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14-26
Church leadership	Exodus 18:21	1:5-9	1 Timothy 3; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let your knowledge of truth produce godliness** (1:1).
- **Rest on the promises of God who cannot lie** (1:2).
- **Set things in order where they are lacking** (1:5).
- **Choose leaders of proven character who hold fast the Word** (1:6-9).
- **Know sound doctrine well enough to encourage and to refute** (1:9).
- **Rebuke error sharply, aiming at health in the faith** (1:13).
- **Reject human rules presented as God's commands** (1:14).
- **Make sure your works match your profession** (1:16).
- **Older men: be self-controlled, dignified and sound in faith** (2:2).
- **Older women: live reverently and teach younger women** (2:3-4).
- **Younger women: love your husbands and children, and manage your homes well** (2:4-5).
- **Younger men: be self-controlled** (2:6).
- **Leaders: be a pattern of good works** (2:7).
- **Let your speech be sound and beyond reproach** (2:8).
- **Adorn the gospel by honest, faithful work** (2:9-10).
- **Let grace teach you to say no to ungodliness** (2:11-12).
- **Live soberly, righteously and godly** (2:12).
- **Keep looking for the blessed hope** (2:13).
- **Be zealous of good works** (2:14).
- **Be a good citizen, ready to do good** (3:1).
- **Speak evil of no one; be gentle to all** (3:2).
- **Remember what you were before grace** (3:3).
- **Rejoice that you were saved by mercy, not works** (3:5).
- **Be careful to maintain good works** (3:8).
- **Avoid fruitless arguments** (3:9).
- **Deal firmly with divisive people** (3:10).
- **Support Christian workers on their journeys** (3:13).
- **Meet real needs so that your life is fruitful** (3:14).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2	In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began
1:9	Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.
1:15	Unto the pure all things are pure
1:16	They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him
2:7	In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works
2:11-12	For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world
2:13	Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ
2:14	Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.
3:1	Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work
3:5	Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost
3:8	They which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.

Conclusion

Titus is Paul's letter to a trusted co-worker left on the island of Crete, among a people known for lying, laziness and rebellion, to set young churches in order. Paul instructed him to appoint elders in every city, men of proven character who could hold fast the faithful Word, encourage believers with sound doctrine and refute the false teachers who were upsetting whole families for money. He insisted that true doctrine must show itself in godly lives: older men and women, younger women and men, servants and Titus himself were all to live in a way that would adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour and give opponents nothing evil to say. At the heart of the letter are two great passages about grace. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared, teaching us to deny ungodliness and live soberly, righteously and godly, while we look for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself to redeem us and purify a people zealous of good works. And God saved us, not by works of righteousness we have done, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, that being justified by His grace we should be heirs of eternal life. Because we have been saved by grace, we must be careful to maintain good works.

> *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*
>
> **Titus 2:11-13**

Philemon

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Paul (from prison) • Date: c. AD 60-62 • Chapters: 1

> *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account*
>
> **Philemon 1:18**

Part One: Introduction to Philemon

The Book

Philemon is the shortest of Paul's letters, just twenty-five verses, and the most personal. It is a private letter about a private matter: a runaway slave who had become a Christian and was now returning to his master. Yet it has been preserved as Scripture because it shows the gospel at work in real relationships, and because it gives one of the most beautiful pictures in the Bible of what Christ has done for sinners.

The Author and Date

"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother" (v1). Paul wrote from prison, almost certainly during his first Roman imprisonment, around AD 60-62, at the same time as Colossians and Ephesians. The same people are named in Colossians and Philemon: Timothy, Onesimus, Archippus, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke (Colossians 1:1; 4:7-17; Philemon 1-2, 10, 23-24). Onesimus carried the letter home, travelling with Tychicus, who carried Colossians (Colossians 4:7-9).

The People

Person Named	Description	Reference
Paul	"The aged," a prisoner of Jesus Christ; Onesimus' spiritual father	1, 9-10
Philemon	A wealthy believer at Colosse, host of a church in his home, converted through Paul	1-2, 5-7, 19
Apphia	Probably Philemon's wife, called "our beloved" (or "sister")	2
Archippus	Probably Philemon's son; a minister in the church (Colossians 4:17)	2
Onesimus	Philemon's runaway slave, converted through Paul in Rome	10-16
Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke	Paul's fellow workers who send greetings	23-24

The Story Behind the Letter

Onesimus was a slave belonging to Philemon, a Christian at Colosse in Asia Minor. He ran away, apparently taking or owing something (v18), and made his way to Rome, the great city where a fugitive could disappear among a million people. There, in God's providence, he met Paul, whether in prison or by seeking him out, and was converted (v10). He became dear to Paul and useful to him (v11-13). But Onesimus was still legally Philemon's slave, and he had wronged him. Paul sent him back to Colosse with this letter, asking Philemon to receive him not merely as a slave but as a beloved brother in Christ.

Under Roman law, runaway slaves could be severely punished: flogged, branded on the forehead with "F" (for fugitivus), or even executed, as a warning to others. Slaves may have made up a third of the population of the Roman world. Onesimus' return was a costly act of repentance, and Philemon's response would show whether the gospel truly transformed relationships.

Onesimus' Name

"Onesimus" means "profitable" or "useful," a common name for slaves. Paul makes a gentle play on it: "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me" (v11). Before his conversion, "Mr. Useful" had been useless; now, transformed by Christ, he lived up to his name.

Purpose and Theme

Paul wrote to persuade Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus as a brother, and perhaps to send him back to serve Paul (v13-14, 21). The theme is forgiveness and reconciliation through Christ, and the way the gospel transforms social relationships. It is also a picture of the gospel itself: as Paul interceded for Onesimus and offered to pay his debt, so Christ intercedes for sinners and has paid their debt.

> *Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved*
>
> **Philemon 16**

> *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account*
>
> **Philemon 18**

Philemon and Slavery

Why did Paul not command Philemon to free Onesimus or condemn slavery outright? Paul worked within the social order of his day (1 Corinthians 7:20-24; Ephesians 6:5-9), knowing that a call to revolt would bring bloodshed and discredit the gospel. But he planted principles that undermine slavery from within:

- In Christ there is "neither bond nor free" (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).
- Masters and slaves have the same Master in heaven, who shows no partiality (Ephesians 6:9).
- Slaves should gain their freedom if they can (1 Corinthians 7:21).
- "Menstealers" (slave-traders) are condemned (1 Timothy 1:10).
- A slave is a "brother beloved" (Philemon 16), and a master must receive him as he would receive the apostle himself (v17).

Once a master sees his slave as a brother, the institution cannot survive. Christian abolitionists in later centuries, such as William Wilberforce, drew on these principles.

Outline of Philemon

Section	Verses	Theme
I. Greeting	1-3	To Philemon and the church in his house
II. Thanksgiving and Prayer for Philemon	4-7	His love and faith refresh the saints
III. The Appeal for Onesimus	8-21	Receive him as a brother
Appeal on the basis of love	8-11	"For love's sake I rather beseech thee"

Section	Verses	Theme
Paul's sacrifice in sending him	12-14	"Mine own bowels"
God's providence	15-16	"That thou shouldest receive him for ever"
Paul's partnership and pledge	17-19	"Put that on mine account"
Paul's confidence	20-21	"Thou wilt also do more than I say"
IV. Final Requests and Greetings	22-25	"Prepare me also a lodging"

Part Two: Verse-by-Verse Analysis

Section I: Greeting (Verses 1-3)

> *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **Philemon 1-3**

Paul does not call himself "an apostle" here, as in most of his letters, but "a prisoner of Jesus Christ." He wants to appeal, not to command. He was a prisoner not of Rome, but of Christ, who had a purpose in his chains. Philemon was "dearly beloved" and a "fellowlabourer." The letter is also addressed to Apphia and Archippus, probably members of his household, and "the church in thy house." Early churches met in homes; the whole church would be watching how Philemon treated Onesimus.

Section II: Thanksgiving and Prayer for Philemon (Verses 4-7)

> *I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.*
>
> **Philemon 4-6**

Philemon was known for his faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all the saints. Paul prayed that "the communication of thy faith" (the fellowship or sharing that flows from his faith) would become effective as he recognised every good thing believers have in Christ. In other words, Paul prayed that Philemon's faith would work itself out in practical generosity, exactly what he was about to ask.

> *For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.*
>
> **Philemon 7**

"Bowels" in the King James English means the inner being, the heart, the seat of affection. Philemon had refreshed the hearts of many believers. Paul would soon ask him to refresh Paul's heart too (v20), by receiving Onesimus. Paul's tact is striking: he begins by sincerely praising Philemon's character before making his request.

Section III: The Appeal for Onesimus (Verses 8-21)

Verses 8-11 — An Appeal of Love

> *Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.*
>
> **Philemon 8-9**

As an apostle, Paul could have commanded Philemon to do what was right. Instead, he appealed on the basis of love, as an old man and a prisoner for Christ. Love persuades rather than compels.

> *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me*
>
> **Philemon 10-11**

Paul delays naming the slave until he has called him "my son... whom I have begotten in my bonds": Paul had led him to Christ while in prison. Then the play on his name: once unprofitable, now truly "Onesimus," profitable. Conversion had made the useless useful, both to his master and to Paul. Christ makes new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Verses 12-14 — Paul's Sacrifice

> *Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.*
>
> **Philemon 12-14**

Sending Onesimus back was like tearing out Paul's own heart. Paul would have liked to keep him as a helper, serving Paul on Philemon's behalf. But he would not do so without Philemon's consent, so that any kindness would be voluntary, not forced. True Christian generosity is willing (2 Corinthians 9:7). Onesimus' return also shows that repentance includes making things right with those we have wronged (Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 19:8).

Verses 15-16 — God's Providence

> *For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?*
>
> **Philemon 15-16**

Paul gently suggests God's hand in what had happened. Onesimus "departed" (Paul does not say "ran away"), perhaps so that Philemon might have him back forever, as an eternal brother. Like Joseph's brothers, Onesimus meant his flight for his own ends, but God meant it for good (Genesis 50:20;

Romans 8:28). Now Onesimus was more than a slave: "a brother beloved," both "in the flesh" (as a person and member of the household) and "in the Lord" (as a fellow believer). The gospel had transformed the relationship.

Verses 17-19 — "Put That on Mine Account"

> *If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.*
>
> **Philemon 17-19**

Here is the heart of the letter. Paul identifies himself completely with Onesimus: "receive him as myself." Whatever welcome Philemon would give to Paul, he should give to Onesimus. And whatever Onesimus owed, Paul would pay: "put that on mine account." Taking up the pen himself, Paul wrote a binding promissory note: "I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." Then, with a touch of humour, he reminded Philemon that he owed Paul his very self, his spiritual life, since he had been converted through Paul.

This is a vivid picture of the gospel. The sinner owes a debt to God he can never pay. Christ, our Advocate, says to the Father, "Put that on mine account," and pays it with His own blood (Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 2:14). And He says, "Receive him as myself": God accepts believers "in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6), as He accepts His own Son. Martin Luther wrote that "we are all His Onesimi." This is the doctrine of imputation pictured in a personal letter: our debt charged to Christ, and Christ's standing credited to us.

Verses 20-21 — Paul's Confidence

> *Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.*
>
> **Philemon 20-21**

Philemon had refreshed others' hearts (v7); now Paul asked him to refresh Paul's. There is another wordplay here: "let me have joy [profit] of thee" uses a word related to Onesimus' name. Paul was confident that Philemon would obey, and would "do more than I say," perhaps a gentle hint that Philemon should free Onesimus or send him back to serve Paul.

Section IV: Final Requests and Greetings (Verses 22-25)

> *But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.*
>
> **Philemon 22**

Paul expected to be released through their prayers and planned to visit. (This was evidently fulfilled after his first imprisonment; see the Pastoral Epistles.) His coming visit would also be a gentle encouragement for Philemon to act well.

Paul sent greetings from "Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers" (v23-24). Mark, once a deserter, was now restored and useful; Demas would later forsake Paul (2 Timothy 4:10).

> *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.*
>
> **Philemon 25**

Part Three: Christ in Philemon

A Picture of Redemption

Philemon contains no direct doctrinal statement about Christ's work, yet it is one of the clearest illustrations of it in Scripture:

In Philemon	In the Gospel
Onesimus, a runaway slave	The sinner, who has run from God
Onesimus had wronged his master and owed him a debt	The sinner has offended God and owes a debt he cannot pay
Onesimus was "unprofitable"	"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable" (Romans 3:12)
Paul found him and led him to faith	Christ seeks and saves the lost (Luke 19:10)
Onesimus became "profitable," a new man	Believers are new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
Paul interceded for him with his master	Christ is our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25)
"Put that on mine account"	Our sins were laid on Christ (Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
"I will repay it"	Christ paid our debt in full (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24)
"Receive him as myself"	We are accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6)
Received back "for ever," no longer a servant but a brother	Believers are no longer servants but sons (Galatians 4:7) and brothers of Christ (Hebrews 2:11)

Christ Named in Philemon

Paul calls himself "a prisoner of Jesus Christ" (v1, 9) and his fellow prisoner Epaphras a prisoner "in Christ Jesus" (v23). Grace and peace come from God our Father "and the Lord Jesus Christ" (v3). Philemon's faith is "toward the Lord Jesus" (v5). Every good thing is ours "in Christ Jesus" (v6). Onesimus is a brother "in the Lord" (v16). The letter ends, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit" (v25). The whole letter is lived out "in Christ."

Part Four: Prophecies and Promises Fulfilled

Promise or Expectation	Philemon	Fulfillment
Onesimus returns to Colosse	12	Sent with Tychicus and the letter to the Colossians (Colossians 4:7-9)
Paul's hope of release through their prayers	22	Apparently fulfilled; Paul travelled again (1 Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:5; 3:12)
God's providence turning wrong to good	15	Onesimus' flight led to his salvation (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28)
Mark profitable again	24	Confirmed in 2 Timothy 4:11
The gospel breaking down social barriers	16	Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; increasingly realised in Christian history

Early Christian tradition is intriguing: around AD 110, Ignatius wrote to the church at Ephesus and mentioned its bishop, named Onesimus. Some have suggested this may have been the same man, though this cannot be proven.

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Philemon 4-7 — A Refreshing Believer

Philemon's faith in Christ and love for all the saints refreshed the hearts of others. Genuine faith shows itself in practical love and generosity.

Philemon 8-10 — Appealing Through Love

Paul had authority to command, but chose to appeal through love. Christian leaders should persuade with love wherever possible.

Philemon 11 — From Unprofitable to Profitable

Christ transforms useless lives into useful ones. No one is beyond His power to change.

Philemon 15-16 — Providence and Brotherhood

God can use even sinful choices to bring about His good purposes. In Christ, social distinctions are transcended: a slave becomes a beloved brother.

Philemon 17-19 — "Put That on Mine Account"

Paul's offer to pay Onesimus' debt and his plea, "receive him as myself," picture Christ's substitution and our acceptance with God through Him.

Philemon 21 — Doing More Than Asked

Love does not do the minimum; it goes beyond what is required.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Philemon

1. The Power of the Gospel to Transform

A runaway slave became a profitable brother (v10-11).

2. Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Christians must forgive and receive those who have wronged them, especially fellow believers (v15-17; Colossians 3:13).

3. Restitution

Repentance includes returning to make things right (v12, 18-19).

4. Substitution and Imputation

The debt of one is charged to another, and the welcome due to one is given to another (v17-18).

5. Christian Brotherhood

In Christ, master and slave are brothers (v16).

6. The Providence of God

God works through human actions, even wrong ones, for good (v15).

7. Love Rather Than Command

Love persuades and gives willingly (v8-9, 14).

8. The Church in the Home

Early churches met in homes, where family and fellowship overlapped (v2).

9. Christian Partnership

Believers are partners in the gospel and in the fellowship of faith (v6, 17).

Part Seven: Connections — How Philemon Links to the Rest of the Bible

Philemon and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Judah offers himself as surety for Benjamin: "of my hand shalt thou require him" (43:9; 44:32-33; Philemon 18-19); God meant it for good (50:20; Philemon 15)
Exodus	Hebrew servants released in the seventh year; the servant who chooses to stay for ever (21:2-6; Philemon 15)
Leviticus	A brother not to be treated as a bondservant (25:39-43; Philemon 16)
Deuteronomy	Escaped servants not to be oppressed (23:15-16)
Job	The same God made master and servant (31:13-15; Philemon 16)
Proverbs	A brother born for adversity (17:17)
Isaiah	The LORD laid on Him the iniquity of us all (53:6; Philemon 18)

Philemon and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Be reconciled to your brother (5:23-24); forgive as you have been forgiven (18:21-35)
Luke	The prodigal's return and the father's welcome (15:11-32); restitution (19:8)
Acts	Paul's Roman imprisonment, receiving all who came to him (28:30-31)
Romans	All things work together for good (8:28)
1 Corinthians	Slaves called in the Lord are the Lord's freemen (7:21-23); one body, bond or free (12:13)
2 Corinthians	A new creature; Christ made sin for us (5:17, 21)
Galatians	Neither bond nor free; no more a servant but a son (3:28; 4:7)
Ephesians	Servants and masters with one Master in heaven (6:5-9); accepted in the Beloved (1:6); forgiving one another (4:32)
Colossians	Onesimus, "a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you" (4:9); Archippus (4:17); masters and servants (3:22-4:1); forgiving one another (3:13)
1 Timothy	Servants honouring believing masters as brethren (6:1-2)
Titus	Servants adorning the doctrine (2:9-10)
Hebrews	Christ's intercession (7:25); not ashamed to call us brethren (2:11)
1 Peter	Servants subject to masters, following Christ's example (2:18-25)
1 John	Our Advocate with the Father (2:1-2)

Themes That Run from Philemon Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Philemon	Developed in the New Testament
Substitution	Genesis 22:13; 44:33; Isaiah 53	18-19	2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18
Forgiveness	Genesis 50:15-21	15-17	Matthew 18:21-35; Ephesians 4:32
Providence	Genesis 50:20	15	Romans 8:28
Brotherhood in God's family	Leviticus 25:39-43	16	Galatians 3:28; Hebrews 2:11
Intercession	Exodus 32:30-32	10-17	Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Refresh the hearts of other believers** (7).
- **Let your faith work out in practical generosity** (6).
- **Appeal with love rather than command** (8-9).
- **Pray for and lead others to Christ, wherever you are** (10).
- **Believe that Christ can make the unprofitable profitable** (11).
- **Make restitution where you have wronged others** (12, 18).
- **Do good willingly, not under pressure** (14).
- **Look for God's hand in difficult events** (15).
- **Treat fellow believers as brothers, whatever their social status** (16).
- **Receive repentant believers as you would receive Christ's own** (17).
- **Be willing to bear another's cost for the sake of reconciliation** (18-19).
- **Forgive, remembering how much you owe** (19).
- **Do more than what is asked** (21).
- **Rejoice that Christ has put your debt on His account** (18).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
6	That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.
7	The bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.
9	Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee
11	Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me
15-16	That thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved
17	If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.
18	If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account
21	Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

Conclusion

Philemon is a small letter with a large heart. Paul, an aged prisoner, wrote to a wealthy friend whose slave, Onesimus, had run away, perhaps with stolen money, and had found his way to Rome, where he met Paul and was born again. Now "Mr. Useful," once useless, was truly profitable, and Paul sent him home. Rather than commanding, Paul appealed for love's sake. He suggested that God had allowed the separation so that Philemon might receive Onesimus back for ever, not as a slave, but as a beloved brother. He identified himself with the runaway: "receive him as myself." And he offered to pay everything: "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account... I will repay it." In these few lines the gospel is pictured. Every sinner is a runaway who owes a debt to God he cannot pay. Christ has found us, interceded for us, taken our debt on His account and paid it with His blood, and presented us to the Father to be received as He Himself is received. Those who have been received in this way must, in turn, receive and forgive one another as brothers.

> *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it*
>
> **Philemon 18-19**

Hebrews

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Unknown (many hold Paul) • Date: c. AD 64-68 (before AD 70) • Chapters: 13

> *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*
>
> **Hebrews 1:1-2**

Part One: Introduction to Hebrews

The General Epistles

With Hebrews, the New Testament turns from Paul's letters to the "General Epistles": Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude. Most were written to wider groups of believers rather than to a single church. Hebrews stands first, a bridge between Paul's letters and the others.

The Author

Hebrews does not name its author. The King James Version's heading, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews," reflects the long tradition, especially in the eastern church, that Paul wrote it. Several possibilities have been suggested:

Suggested Author	Reasons Given	Considerations
Paul	Ancient eastern tradition; mention of "our brother Timothy" (13:23); Pauline themes such as the new covenant and faith	The style is more polished than Paul's letters; the writer says the gospel was "confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (2:3), while Paul insisted he received it directly from Christ (Galatians 1:12); Paul usually names himself
Barnabas	Suggested by Tertullian; a Levite familiar with the priesthood; the "son of consolation," and Hebrews calls itself a "word of exhortation" (13:22; Acts 4:36)	No surviving letter of his for comparison
Apollos	Suggested by Luther; an eloquent Jew from Alexandria, "mighty in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24)	No ancient tradition supports it
Luke, Silas, Priscilla, others	Various suggestions	Speculative

The early scholar Origen concluded, "Who wrote the epistle, in truth, God knows." The inspiration and authority of Hebrews do not depend on knowing its human author. Its divine Author is clear: "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (1:1-2).

The Recipients

The title "to the Hebrews" and the content show that the letter was written to Jewish Christians who knew the Old Testament, the priesthood and the sacrifices thoroughly. They had believed in Christ and suffered for it: "ye endured a great fight of afflictions... took joyfully the spoiling of your goods" (10:32-34). But they had not yet suffered martyrdom ("Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," 12:4). Under pressure, and perhaps drawn by the familiar ceremonies of the temple, some were tempted to drift back to Judaism and abandon their confession of Christ. They had also become spiritually sluggish and immature (5:11-14). They may have lived in Rome ("They of Italy salute you," 13:24), or in Judea.

Date

Hebrews was almost certainly written before the destruction of the temple in AD 70. The writer speaks of the priests and sacrifices as still continuing (8:4-5; 9:6-9; 10:1-3, 11; 13:10-11), and the destruction of the temple would have been the most powerful proof of his argument that the old system was "ready to vanish away" (8:13), had it already happened. Timothy had recently been released from prison (13:23). A date around AD 64-68 is likely.

Purpose and Theme

Hebrews was written to show that Jesus Christ is superior to everything in the old covenant, so that Jewish believers would hold fast to Him and not turn back. Its key word is "better," which appears thirteen times. Christ is better than the prophets, the angels, Moses, Joshua and Aaron; He brings a better hope, a better covenant, better promises, a better sanctuary, better sacrifices, a better country and a better resurrection. The letter is the New Testament's great explanation of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, and of how the Old Testament ceremonies foreshadowed Him.

> *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*
>
> **Hebrews 1:1-2**

> *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*
>
> **Hebrews 7:25**

The "Better" Things of Hebrews

Better Thing	Hebrews
Better than the angels	1:4
Better things that accompany salvation	6:9
The less is blessed of the better	7:7
A better hope	7:19
A better testament (covenant)	7:22; 8:6
Better promises	8:6
Better sacrifices	9:23
A better and enduring substance in heaven	10:34
A better country, a heavenly	11:16
A better resurrection	11:35
Some better thing for us	11:40
Blood that speaks better things than Abel's	12:24

The Five Warnings

Woven through Hebrews are five solemn warning passages, interrupting the teaching to apply it urgently:

Warning	Hebrews	The Danger
1	2:1-4	Drifting away; neglecting so great salvation
2	3:7-4:13	Hardening the heart in unbelief, like Israel in the wilderness
3	5:11-6:20	Spiritual immaturity; falling away
4	10:26-39	Wilful sin; treading underfoot the Son of God; drawing back
5	12:14-29	Refusing Him that speaketh from heaven

These warnings have been understood in different ways. Baptists, who hold the eternal security of every true believer (6:9; 7:25; 10:14; 13:5; John 10:28), generally understand them in one of two ways: as warnings to professing believers in the congregation, some of whom might prove by turning back that their faith was never genuine (3:6, 14; 1 John 2:19); or as warnings to true believers about God's discipline and the loss of reward, not the loss of salvation. Either way, they are meant to be taken seriously, and they drive readers to persevere in faith. The writer himself was confident of "better things" for his readers (6:9).

Outline of Hebrews

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Superior Person of Christ	1:1-4:13	Better than all
Better than the prophets	1:1-3	God's final word in His Son
Better than the angels	1:4-2:18	The Son of God and Son of man (Warning 1: 2:1-4)
Better than Moses	3:1-6	The Son over His house
Better than Joshua	3:7-4:13	The true rest (Warning 2)
II. The Superior Priesthood of Christ	4:14-10:18	A better High Priest, covenant, sanctuary and sacrifice
Better than Aaron	4:14-5:10	Our sympathetic High Priest
Warning against immaturity and falling away	5:11-6:20	Warning 3; the anchor of the soul
After the order of Melchizedek	7	A priest for ever
A better covenant	8	The new covenant
A better sanctuary and sacrifice	9:1-10:18	"Once for all"
III. The Superior Life of Faith	10:19-13:25	Draw near, hold fast, run, endure
Draw near and hold fast	10:19-39	Full assurance (Warning 4)
The heroes of faith	11	"Without faith it is impossible to please him"
Running the race and enduring discipline	12:1-13	"Looking unto Jesus"

Section	Chapters	Theme
Mount Sion, not Sinai	12:14-29	Warning 5
Christian living and benediction	13	"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Superior Person of Christ (1:1-4:13)

Chapter 1 — Better Than the Prophets and the Angels

God's final word (1:1-3).

> *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*
>
> **Hebrews 1:1-3**

The letter opens without a greeting, with one of the most majestic sentences in Scripture. God spoke in the past through many prophets, in many portions and ways. But now He has spoken His final and complete word in His Son. Seven truths describe the Son:

- **"Heir of all things":** everything belongs to Him (Psalm 2:8).
- **"By whom also he made the worlds":** He is the Creator (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16).
- **"The brightness of his glory":** the radiance of God's glory, as light shines from the sun; not a reflection, but the outshining of God Himself.
- **"The express image of his person":** the exact representation of God's nature, like the impression a seal makes in wax (John 14:9).
- **"Upholding all things by the word of his power":** He sustains the universe (Colossians 1:17).
- **"When he had by himself purged our sins":** He alone accomplished the cleansing of sin, by Himself.
- **"Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high":** His work finished, He took the place of highest honour and authority (Psalm 110:1).

Better than the angels (1:4-14). Many Jews held angels in very high regard; the law had been given through angels (2:2; Acts 7:53). The Son is "so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (1:4). The writer proves this with seven Old Testament quotations:

Quotation	Source	What It Proves
"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"	Psalm 2:7	He is the Son, a title never given to an angel
"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son"	2 Samuel 7:14	The Davidic Son is God's Son
"Let all the angels of God worship him"	Deuteronomy 32:43 (Greek); Psalm 97:7	Angels worship Him; He is God

Quotation	Source	What It Proves
"Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire"	Psalm 104:4	Angels are servants
"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"	Psalm 45:6-7	The Father calls the Son "God"
"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth... thou remainest... thy years shall not fail"	Psalm 102:25-27	The Son is the eternal, unchanging Creator, the LORD
"Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool"	Psalm 110:1	He reigns; no angel was ever told to sit

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (1:14). Angels are servants of God who serve believers; the Son is God enthroned.

Chapter 2 — The Son of Man, Our Brother and High Priest

Warning 1: Don't drift (2:1-4).

> *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*
>
> **Hebrews 2:1**

"Let them slip" pictures a boat drifting past its harbour, or a ring slipping off a finger. The danger is not sudden rebellion but gradual neglect. If the word spoken through angels (the law) carried strict penalties, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost" (2:2-4). The gospel was spoken by the Lord Himself, confirmed by apostolic eyewitnesses, and attested by God through miracles.

Jesus, made lower than the angels (2:5-9). God did not subject the world to come to angels, but to man. Psalm 8 declares, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?... Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour... Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet" (2:6-8). Humanity was created to rule creation, but "now we see not yet all things put under him" because of the fall.

> *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*
>
> **Hebrews 2:9**

What humanity lost, Jesus, the true Man, has regained. He became a man to die, tasting death for every person, and is now crowned with glory.

Why Christ became man (2:10-18). "For it became him... in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (2:10). "Captain" means pioneer, the leader who goes first and opens the way. Through suffering He became fully qualified as Saviour. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (2:11-13; Psalm 22:22; Isaiah 8:17-18). Then the reasons for His

incarnation:

> *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*
>
> **Hebrews 2:14-15**

He became human:

- **To die:** only by taking flesh and blood could He die.
- **To destroy the devil's power:** by His death He rendered powerless the one who used death to terrify humanity (Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8).
- **To set free those enslaved by the fear of death.**

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham" (2:16). He did not come to save fallen angels, but human beings.

> *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*
>
> **Hebrews 2:17-18**

- **To be our High Priest:** merciful to us and faithful to God, making propitiation for our sins, and able to help us in temptation, because He has suffered temptation Himself. This introduces the letter's central theme.

Chapter 3 — Better Than Moses

> *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus*
>
> **Hebrews 3:1**

Christ is the Apostle (sent from God to us) and the High Priest (representing us to God). Moses was the most revered figure in Judaism, and he was faithful. But "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant... But Christ as a son over his own house" (3:5-6). Moses was a servant in God's house; Christ is the Son who built it and owns it (3:3-4). "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (3:6). Holding fast is the evidence of belonging.

Warning 2: Don't harden your hearts (3:7-19). The writer quotes Psalm 95:7-11:

> *Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*

> **Hebrews 3:7-9**

The Holy Ghost speaks through the Old Testament (3:7). Israel had seen God's mighty works, yet hardened their hearts at Kadesh-barnea and refused to enter the promised land (Numbers 14). God swore they would not enter His rest, and that generation died in the wilderness.

> *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end*
>
> **Hebrews 3:12-14**

Unbelief is not a weakness but an evil; it leads to departing from God. Sin deceives and hardens. The remedy is mutual daily exhortation. Again, perseverance proves the reality of faith: "we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold." Israel "could not enter in because of unbelief" (3:19).

Chapter 4 — The Rest of God; Our Great High Priest

The promised rest (4:1-11). "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (4:1). Israel heard the good news of the promised land, "but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (4:2). "For we which have believed do enter into rest" (4:3). God's rest goes back to creation, when He rested on the seventh day (4:4; Genesis 2:2). Joshua (called "Jesus" in 4:8, the Greek form of Joshua) led Israel into Canaan, but that was not the final rest, for David, long afterward, still spoke of "To day" (4:7-8).

> *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest*
>
> **Hebrews 4:9-11**

The word for "rest" here means a Sabbath-rest. It is the rest of salvation, ceasing from our own works to trust in Christ's finished work, now, and its completion in eternal rest with God. "Labour" (be diligent) to enter it by faith.

The living Word (4:12-13).

> *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*
>
> **Hebrews 4:12-13**

God's Word is living ("quick"), active and penetrating. Like a surgeon's blade, it cuts to the deepest part of a person, exposing motives and attitudes. It distinguishes the soul (the natural life) from the spirit (the part that relates to God). Nothing is hidden from God.

Our great High Priest (4:14-16).

> *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*
>
> **Hebrews 4:14-16**

After the searching Word comes the sympathetic Priest. Jesus is "great": He has passed through the heavens and is the Son of God. He fully understands our weaknesses, because He was tempted in every way we are, yet never sinned. His sinlessness does not make Him less sympathetic; He felt temptation's full force because He never yielded. Therefore we may come boldly, with confidence, to God's throne, which has become for us a throne of grace, to receive mercy for our failures and grace for our needs.

Section II: The Superior Priesthood of Christ (4:14-10:18)

Chapter 5 — A Priest After the Order of Melchizedek

Qualifications of a high priest (5:1-4). Every high priest is taken from among men, appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins, able to deal gently with the ignorant and erring because he too is weak, and called by God, as Aaron was (5:1-4).

Christ's qualifications (5:5-10). Christ did not appoint Himself. God said, "Thou art my Son" (Psalm 2:7) and "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Psalm 110:4) (5:5-6). His humanity and suffering qualified Him to sympathise:

> *Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*
>
> **Hebrews 5:7-9**

This describes Gethsemane (Luke 22:41-44). Christ "learned obedience," not because He was ever disobedient, but because He experienced obedience through suffering. "Made perfect" means fully qualified and completed as Saviour, not morally improved. He is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, that is, who obey the gospel by believing (Romans 1:5; 10:16).

Warning 3 begins: Spiritual immaturity (5:11-14). The writer had much to say about Melchizedek, "seeing ye are dull of hearing" (5:11).

> *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*
>
> **Hebrews 5:12**

By now they should have been teaching others, but they needed to relearn the basics. "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (5:14). Maturity comes through practice in applying God's Word.

Chapter 6 — Go On to Maturity; the Anchor of Hope

Leaving the foundations (6:1-3).

> *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*
>
> **Hebrews 6:1-2**

The six foundational truths listed (repentance and faith, washings, laying on of hands, resurrection, judgment) were basic teachings shared by Judaism and the gospel. "Leaving" them does not mean abandoning them, but building on them rather than endlessly relaying the foundation. They must go on to maturity in Christ.

The impossibility of renewal (6:4-8).

> *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*
>
> **Hebrews 6:4-6**

This is one of the most debated passages in the Bible. The people described had remarkable experiences: they were enlightened by the truth, tasted the heavenly gift, shared in the Holy Spirit's work among them, tasted the goodness of God's Word, and saw miraculous powers. If they fall away, renouncing Christ, it is impossible to bring them back to repentance, because they have rejected the only sacrifice for sin, in effect siding with those who crucified Him.

Baptist interpreters, holding that true believers cannot lose their salvation, generally take one of two views:

- **Professing but unregenerate:** these were people who came very close, experiencing the convicting and illuminating work of the Spirit within the believing community, "tasting" without truly feeding, like Judas or those in John 6:66, but never truly saved. If they turned back to Judaism, rejecting Christ with full knowledge, there would be no other way of salvation and no further renewal.
- **A hypothetical warning:** the writer argues that if a believer could fall away, it would be impossible to renew him, since Christ cannot be crucified again; so there is no point relaying the foundation; go on to maturity. The writer then makes clear that he does not believe this applies to his readers.

The illustration of the land supports this: land that drinks in the rain and produces good crops is blessed, while land that produces only thorns and briers is rejected; fruit reveals the nature of the soil (6:7-8; Matthew 13:3-23).

> *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*
>
> **Hebrews 6:9-10**

The writer was confident that his readers were genuinely saved, as their ongoing love and ministry showed. He urged them to be diligent "to the full assurance of hope unto the end," not sluggish, "but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (6:11-12).

The anchor of the soul (6:13-20). God promised to bless Abraham, and "because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself" (6:13; Genesis 22:16-17). Abraham patiently endured and obtained the promise (6:15).

> *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*
>
> **Hebrews 6:18-20**

God's promise and His oath are two unchangeable things. Believers have fled to Christ for refuge, like a fugitive running to a city of refuge (Numbers 35). Their hope is an anchor, fixed not in the shifting sands of this world but in heaven itself, "within the veil," where Jesus has entered as our forerunner, the One who goes ahead to prepare the way. An anchor holds a ship steady in a storm; this hope holds the believer secure.

Chapter 7 — Melchizedek and the Priesthood of Christ

Who was Melchizedek? (7:1-3). Melchizedek appears briefly in Genesis 14:18-20 and is mentioned again in Psalm 110:4. He was "king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all" (7:1-2). His name and title are significant: Melchizedek means "King of righteousness," and Salem means "peace," so he is "King of peace" (7:2).

> *Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.*
>
> **Hebrews 7:3**

Genesis records no genealogy, birth or death for Melchizedek. Unlike the Levitical priests, whose right to serve depended entirely on proven descent from Aaron, his priesthood did not depend on ancestry. Scripture's silence makes him a type, "made like unto the Son of God," whose priesthood is eternal. (Some believe Melchizedek was an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ, but most understand him as a real historical king-priest whom Scripture presents as a picture of Christ.)

Melchizedek greater than Levi (7:4-10). "Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils" (7:4). The Levitical priests received tithes from their brethren; but Abraham, the ancestor of Levi, paid tithes to Melchizedek and was blessed by him. "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better" (7:7). In a sense, Levi himself, still "in the loins of his father," paid tithes to Melchizedek (7:9-10). So Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to Aaron's.

A new and better priesthood (7:11-22). "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood... what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" (7:11). The prediction of a new priesthood in Psalm 110 proves the old one was inadequate. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (7:12). Jesus came from Judah, not Levi (7:14); His priesthood rests not on physical descent "but after the power of an endless life" (7:16). "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" (7:19). His priesthood was confirmed by God's oath, "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever" (7:20-21), making Jesus "a surety of a better testament" (7:22), the guarantee of the new covenant.

The permanent, perfect Priest (7:23-28). The Levitical priests were many, because death kept removing them, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (7:23-24).

> *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*
>
> **Hebrews 7:25**

Because Christ lives for ever and never stops interceding, He saves completely and for ever all who come to God through Him. The believer's security rests on Christ's endless life and constant intercession (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1).

> *For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*
>
> **Hebrews 7:26-27**

Christ is the perfect Priest: holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He had no sins of His own to atone for, and He offered one sacrifice, Himself, once for all. The law appointed weak men as priests; God's oath appointed the Son, "who is consecrated for evermore" (7:28).

Chapter 8 — The Better Covenant

> *Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.*
>
> **Hebrews 8:1-2**

Here is the main point: our High Priest is seated (His work is finished) at God's right hand, serving in the true, heavenly sanctuary. The earthly priests "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (8:5; Exodus 25:40). The tabernacle was a copy and shadow of heavenly realities.

> *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*
>
> **Hebrews 8:6**

If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second (8:7). God found fault with the people and promised a new covenant. The writer quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34, the longest Old Testament quotation in the New Testament (8:8-12):

- **An inward law:** "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."
- **A personal relationship:** "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."
- **Universal knowledge of God:** "All shall know me, from the least to the greatest."
- **Complete forgiveness:** "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Christ established this new covenant by His blood (Luke 22:20).

> *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*
>
> **Hebrews 8:13**

The old covenant system was about to disappear. Within a few years, in AD 70, the temple was destroyed and its sacrifices ended for ever.

Chapter 9 — The Better Sanctuary and the Better Sacrifice

The earthly tabernacle (9:1-10). The first covenant had an earthly sanctuary with two rooms. The first (the holy place) contained the candlestick, the table and the shewbread. Behind the second veil was the holiest of all, with the golden censer and the ark of the covenant, containing the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded and the tables of the covenant, with the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat (9:2-5). The priests ministered daily in the first room, but only the high priest entered the second, "once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (9:7), on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).

> *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing*
>
> **Hebrews 9:8**

The very arrangement showed that access to God was not yet open. The sacrifices "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (9:9). They were external regulations "imposed on them until the time of reformation" (9:10).

Christ's better sacrifice (9:11-14).

> *But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*
>
> **Hebrews 9:11-12**

Christ entered the true holy place, heaven, with His own blood, once for all, and obtained eternal redemption.

> *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
>
> **Hebrews 9:13-14**

The old sacrifices gave outward ceremonial cleansing (Numbers 19). Christ's blood cleanses the conscience. Here the whole Trinity is involved: Christ offered Himself, through the eternal Spirit, to God.

The Mediator and the testament (9:15-22). Christ is "the mediator of the new testament," whose death redeems even those who sinned under the first covenant (9:15). A "testament" (a will) takes effect only when the one who made it dies (9:16-17). The first covenant was inaugurated with blood: Moses sprinkled the book and the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you" (9:18-20; Exodus 24:8).

> *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*
>
> **Hebrews 9:22**

Forgiveness requires the shedding of blood, a death in the place of the sinner (Leviticus 17:11).

Three appearings of Christ (9:23-28). The heavenly things themselves required better sacrifices (9:23).

Appearing	Hebrews	Time	Purpose
"He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"	9:26	Past	His first coming and the cross
"To appear in the presence of God for us"	9:24	Present	His intercession in heaven
"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"	9:28	Future	His return

> *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*
>
> **Hebrews 9:27-28**

Each person dies once and then faces judgment; there is no reincarnation, no second chance after death. Christ died once, bearing the sins of many, and will come again, not to deal with sin, but to complete the salvation of those who wait for Him.

Chapter 10:1-18 — Once for All

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (10:1). If the sacrifices had truly cleansed, they would have stopped; instead, "in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (10:3-4).

The writer quotes Psalm 40:6-8 as Christ's words on entering the world: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me... Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (10:5-7). God took away the old sacrifices to establish the new (10:9).

> *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*
>
> **Hebrews 10:10**

Believers are set apart to God, made holy in their standing, once for all, by Christ's single offering.

> *And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*
>
> **Hebrews 10:11-14**

There was no chair in the tabernacle: the priests' work was never done. Christ sat down, because His work was finished. One offering has "perfected for ever" those who are sanctified, a powerful statement of the completeness of Christ's work and the eternal security of the believer. The Holy Spirit witnesses through Jeremiah's promise: "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (10:17-18). No further sacrifice, whether of the Mass or of human works, can be added to the finished work of Christ.

Section III: The Superior Life of Faith (10:19-13:25)

Chapter 10:19-39 — Draw Near, Hold Fast; Don't Draw Back

Three exhortations (10:19-25).

> *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God*
>
> **Hebrews 10:19-21**

When Christ died, the temple veil was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). His torn flesh opened the way into God's presence. Every believer now has boldness to enter. Therefore:

- **"Let us draw near"** (faith): "with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (10:22). Like the priests who were sprinkled and washed for service, believers are cleansed inwardly and outwardly.
- **"Let us hold fast"** (hope): "the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" (10:23).
- **"Let us consider one another"** (love): "to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (10:24-25). Faithful attendance at church gatherings is essential, especially as Christ's return draws near.

Warning 4: Wilful sin (10:26-31).

> *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*
>
> **Hebrews 10:26-27**

"Sin wilfully" here does not refer to ordinary sins of believers, but to deliberate, persistent rejection of Christ after receiving full knowledge of the truth, the sin of apostasy. For those who turn from Christ's sacrifice, there is no other sacrifice; the old temple offerings could not save. Those who rejected Moses' law died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 17:6); how much worse for one who "hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (10:28-29). ("Sanctified" here may refer to the outward setting apart of one who had associated with God's people.) "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord... It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:30-31; Deuteronomy 32:35-36).

Confidence and endurance (10:32-39). The writer reminded them of their early courage, when they endured suffering, stood with the persecuted, and "took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (10:32-34).

> *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*
>
> **Hebrews 10:35-39**

Quoting Habakkuk 2:3-4, the writer applies it to Christ's coming. The righteous live by faith, persevering. Then the confident conclusion: "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." True believers persevere.

Chapter 11 — The Heroes of Faith

Having said "the just shall live by faith," the writer illustrates what faith looks like through the lives of Old Testament believers.

> *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:1**

Faith gives present reality ("substance," assurance) to future promises and proof ("evidence," conviction) of unseen realities. It is not wishful thinking but confident trust in what God has said. By it "the elders obtained a good report" (11:2).

> *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:3**

Creation from nothing, by God's word, is understood by faith (Genesis 1).

Faith before the flood (11:4-7).

- **Abel** offered "a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," and "being dead yet speaketh" (11:4).
- **Enoch** "was translated that he should not see death... for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (11:5).

> *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:6**

- **Noah**, "warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (11:7).

Faith of the patriarchs (11:8-22).

- **Abraham** obeyed God's call, "and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (11:8). He lived in tents in the promised land, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and

maker is God" (11:9-10).

- **Sara** received strength to conceive in old age, "because she judged him faithful who had promised" (11:11-12).

> *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth... But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:13, 16**

- **Abraham offering Isaac** (11:17-19): he offered his only son, "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Genesis 22).
- **Isaac**, **Jacob** and **Joseph** looked forward to God's future promises (11:20-22), Joseph even giving instructions about his bones.

Faith of Moses and Israel (11:23-31).

- **Moses' parents** hid him, unafraid of the king (11:23).

> *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:24-26**

Moses gave up position, pleasure and wealth because he valued the eternal reward more. "He endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (11:27). He kept the Passover (11:28). Israel passed through the Red Sea (11:29); the walls of Jericho fell (11:30); and **Rahab** the harlot was spared, "when she had received the spies with peace" (11:31).

Faith of the judges, kings and prophets (11:32-38). "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets" (11:32). Through faith some "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong" (11:33-34). But faith does not always bring deliverance. Others "were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection," were mocked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, "sawn asunder" (tradition says this happened to Isaiah), slain, or wandered destitute in sheepskins and goatskins, "(Of whom the world was not worthy:)" (11:35-38). Faith is proven both in triumph and in suffering.

> *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:39-40**

The Old Testament believers did not see the fulfilment of the promise of Christ; their final perfection awaits the completion of God's plan, together with New Testament believers.

Chapter 12 — Running the Race; Mount Sion

Looking unto Jesus (12:1-4).

> *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
>
> **Hebrews 12:1-2**

The heroes of chapter 11 are "witnesses," those who testify by their lives that faith is worth it. The Christian life is a long-distance race. Runners must strip off every unnecessary weight (things not necessarily sinful, but hindering) and especially "the sin which doth so easily beset us," entangling like a long robe. They must run with endurance, fixing their eyes on Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of faith. He endured the cross, scorning its shame, for the joy set before Him, and now reigns. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (12:3-4).

The Father's discipline (12:5-13). Quoting Proverbs 3:11-12:

> *My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*
>
> **Hebrews 12:5-6**

Hardships are not signs of God's rejection but of His fatherly love. "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (12:8). Earthly fathers disciplined us imperfectly for a short time; God disciplines us "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (12:10).

> *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*
>
> **Hebrews 12:11**

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet" (12:12-13).

Warning 5: Don't refuse Him who speaks (12:14-29).

> *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*
>
> **Hebrews 12:14**

Holiness is not optional; it is the evidence of genuine salvation. "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (12:15). Bitterness, like a poisonous root, spreads and defiles others. Beware of being like Esau, a "profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright," valuing immediate pleasure over

spiritual blessing; afterward he "found no place of repentance" (no way to change Isaac's decision), "though he sought it carefully with tears" (12:16-17; Genesis 27:34-38).

The writer then contrasts two mountains:

Mount Sinai (12:18-21)	Mount Sion (12:22-24)
A mountain that could be touched	The city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem
Fire, blackness, darkness and tempest	An innumerable company of angels
A trumpet and a voice so terrible the people begged not to hear more	The general assembly and church of the firstborn, written in heaven
Even a beast touching it must be stoned	God the Judge of all; the spirits of just men made perfect
Moses: "I exceedingly fear and quake"	Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than Abel's

Abel's blood cried out for vengeance (Genesis 4:10); Christ's blood speaks forgiveness. Believers have come not to the terrors of the law but to the grace of the new covenant.

> *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven*
>
> **Hebrews 12:25**

God will once more shake heaven and earth (12:26; Haggai 2:6), removing everything that can be shaken, so that what cannot be shaken will remain.

> *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.*
>
> **Hebrews 12:28-29**

(Deuteronomy 4:24.)

Chapter 13 — Christian Living and Benediction

Love and purity (13:1-6).

- "Let brotherly love continue" (13:1).
- "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (13:2), as Abraham and Lot did (Genesis 18-19).
- "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them" (13:3).

> *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

Hebrews 13:4

> *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:5-6**

Contentment rests on God's promise of His presence (Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:5; Psalm 118:6). In the Greek, the promise uses a strong, repeated negative: "I will never, no never, leave thee."

Faithful leaders and the unchanging Christ (13:7-9). "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (13:7).

> *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:8**

Leaders come and go, but Christ never changes. Therefore, "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established with grace; not with meats" (13:9).

Outside the camp (13:10-16). "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (13:10). The Christian's altar is Christ's cross and sacrifice (not the Lord's Supper as a sacrifice), from which those clinging to the old system cannot benefit. On the Day of Atonement, the bodies of the sin offerings were burned outside the camp (Leviticus 16:27). "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (13:12-14). Jewish believers were called to leave the security of the old religious system and identify fully with the rejected Christ.

> *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:15-16**

The Christian's sacrifices are not animals but praise, good works and sharing with others.

Leaders and prayer (13:17-19).

> *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:17**

Church leaders are accountable to God for the souls in their care; believers should make their work a joy. "Pray for us" (13:18).

Benediction (13:20-21).

> *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:20-21**

This is one of the richest blessings in Scripture. Christ is the "great shepherd," raised from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant; God equips His people and works in them what pleases Him.

Closing (13:22-25). "Suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words" (13:22). "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty" (13:23). "They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen" (13:24-25).

Part Three: Christ in Hebrews

Christ Better Than All

Christ Is Better Than	Hebrews	Why
The prophets	1:1-3	They spoke in part; He is God's final word, the Son
The angels	1:4-2:18	They are servants who worship Him; He is the Son, God enthroned
Moses	3:1-6	Moses was a faithful servant in God's house; Christ is the Son over it
Joshua	4:8-10	Joshua gave an earthly land; Christ gives the true rest
Aaron	4:14-7:28	Aaron was a sinful, dying priest; Christ is the sinless, eternal Priest after the order of Melchizedek
The old covenant	8	The new covenant has better promises and a better Mediator
The earthly tabernacle	9:1-11, 24	Christ ministers in the true, heavenly sanctuary
Animal sacrifices	9:12-10:18	His one offering of Himself perfects for ever

Aaron, Melchizedek and Christ

Aaron's Priesthood	Melchizedek's Priesthood	Christ's Priesthood
Based on descent from Levi	Without recorded genealogy	After the power of an endless life (7:16)
Received tithes from Israel	Received tithes from Abraham	Greater than Abraham and Levi
Priest only	King and priest	King of righteousness and peace, and Priest (7:1-2; Zechariah 6:13)
Many priests, interrupted by death	Abides a priest continually	An unchangeable priesthood (7:23-24)
Appointed without an oath	(Type of the One appointed with an oath)	Appointed by God's oath (7:20-21)
Offered for his own sins	(Not recorded)	Holy, harmless, undefiled; no sin of His own (7:26-27)
Daily, repeated sacrifices	(Brought bread and wine)	One sacrifice, once for all (7:27; 10:12)
Ministered in an earthly tabernacle	(King of Salem)	Ministers in the true tabernacle in heaven (8:2)

The Tabernacle Fulfilled in Christ

Tabernacle Item	Hebrews	Fulfilled in Christ
The tabernacle itself	8:2, 5; 9:11, 24	The true sanctuary in heaven; Christ who tabernacled among us (John 1:14)
The candlestick	9:2	The light of the world (John 8:12)
The table and shewbread	9:2	The bread of life (John 6:35)
The veil	9:3; 10:20	His flesh, torn to open the way to God (Matthew 27:51)
The golden censer	9:4	His intercession, like incense before God (7:25; Revelation 8:3-4)
The ark of the covenant	9:4	Christ, in whom the law is kept perfectly
The mercy seat	9:5	Christ our propitiation (Romans 3:25)
The high priest entering once a year with blood	9:7	Christ entering heaven once for all with His own blood (9:12)
The blood of bulls and goats	9:13; 10:4	The blood of Christ, which truly takes away sin (9:14)
The bodies burned outside the camp	13:11	Jesus suffered outside the gate (13:12)

Titles of Christ in Hebrews

Christ's Title	Hebrews
The Son, heir of all things	1:2
The brightness of God's glory and express image of His person	1:3
God, whose throne is for ever and ever	1:8
The Lord who laid the foundation of the earth	1:10
The Captain (Pioneer) of salvation	2:10
A merciful and faithful High Priest	2:17
The Apostle and High Priest of our profession	3:1
A great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God	4:14
The Author of eternal salvation	5:9
The Forerunner	6:20
A Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek	5:6; 7:17
The Surety of a better testament	7:22
The Mediator of a better covenant	8:6; 9:15; 12:24
The Author and Finisher of our faith	12:2
The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever	13:8
That great Shepherd of the sheep	13:20

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Hebrews quotes the Old Testament about thirty-five times, showing that Christ fulfils it:

Prophecy	Old Testament	Fulfillment in Hebrews
The Son begotten and enthroned	Psalm 2:7	1:5; 5:5
The Son of David as God's Son	2 Samuel 7:14	1:5
God's eternal throne for the Son	Psalm 45:6-7	1:8-9
The eternal Creator who remains	Psalm 102:25-27	1:10-12
Seated at God's right hand	Psalm 110:1	1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12
Man crowned with glory, all things under his feet	Psalm 8:4-6	2:6-9
Declaring God's name to His brethren	Psalm 22:22	2:12
A priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek	Psalm 110:4	5:6; 7:17, 21
The new covenant	Jeremiah 31:31-34	8:8-12; 10:16-17
"A body hast thou prepared me... Lo, I come to do thy will"	Psalm 40:6-8	10:5-10
"He that shall come will come, and will not tarry"	Habakkuk 2:3-4	10:37-38
The old covenant ready to vanish away	(Implied in Jeremiah 31)	8:13; fulfilled in AD 70
Enemies made His footstool	Psalm 110:1	10:13; still future in full
His second appearing unto salvation	(Daniel 7:13)	9:28; still future
Heaven and earth shaken once more	Haggai 2:6	12:26-27; still future
The city which hath foundations	(Isaiah 65:17-19)	11:10, 16; 13:14; still future (Revelation 21)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Hebrews 1:1-3 — God's Final Word

God has spoken finally and fully in His Son, the Heir, Creator, radiance of God's glory, exact image of His being, Sustainer of all things, Purifier of sins, and enthroned King.

Hebrews 2:14-18 — Why Christ Became Man

Christ took on flesh and blood to die, to destroy the devil's power, to free us from the fear of death, and to become a merciful and faithful High Priest able to help the tempted.

Hebrews 3:7-4:13 — Today, Hear His Voice

Israel's unbelief in the wilderness is a warning. Today is the day to respond to God's voice, enter His rest by faith, and let His living Word search the heart.

Hebrews 4:14-16 — The Throne of Grace

Because our High Priest understands our weakness and was tempted without sin, we may come boldly to God for mercy and grace in every time of need.

Hebrews 6:4-9 — The Warning and the Confidence

Those who reject Christ after full exposure to the truth have no other sacrifice. Yet the writer was persuaded of "better things" for genuine believers, whose fruit shows the reality of their salvation.

Hebrews 6:17-20 — The Anchor of the Soul

God's promise and oath give believers a hope anchored in heaven, where Jesus has entered as our Forerunner.

Hebrews 7:25-27 — Saved to the Uttermost

Because Christ lives for ever to intercede, He saves completely. He is holy and sinless and offered Himself once for all.

Hebrews 8:6-13 — The New Covenant

Christ mediates a better covenant: God's law written on the heart, a personal knowledge of God, and sins remembered no more.

Hebrews 9:11-14, 22 — The Blood of Christ

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Christ's blood, offered through the eternal Spirit, obtains eternal redemption and cleanses the conscience.

Hebrews 9:27-28 — Death, Judgment and the Second Coming

Every person dies once and then faces judgment. Christ died once to bear sins, and will appear a second time to bring salvation to those who wait for Him.

Hebrews 10:10-14 — Perfected for Ever

Christ's one sacrifice has sanctified and perfected believers for ever. His sitting down shows His work is complete. Nothing can be added to it.

Hebrews 10:19-25 — Draw Near, Hold Fast, Consider One Another

Believers have bold access to God through Christ. They must draw near in faith, hold fast their hope, encourage one another to love and good works, and not neglect the gathering of the church.

Hebrews 11 — The Life of Faith

Faith is assurance of the unseen and hoped-for. Without it, no one can please God. The heroes of faith trusted God's promises, obeyed, endured, and looked for a heavenly city, whether they experienced deliverance or martyrdom.

Hebrews 12:1-3 — Looking unto Jesus

Believers run their race by laying aside hindrances and sin, enduring patiently, and fixing their eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross for the joy set before Him.

Hebrews 12:5-11 — The Father's Discipline

God disciplines His children because He loves them, for their good, that they may share His holiness.

Hebrews 13:5-8 — Contentment and the Unchanging Christ

Believers can be content because God has promised never to leave them, and because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Hebrews

1. The Deity of Christ

The Son is called God, Creator and Lord, the radiance and exact image of God (1:2-3, 8-12).

2. The Humanity of Christ

He shared flesh and blood, was tempted, suffered and learned obedience (2:14-18; 4:15; 5:7-8).

3. The Finality of God's Revelation in Christ

God's last word has been spoken in His Son (1:1-2).

4. The High Priesthood of Christ

He is the eternal Priest after the order of Melchizedek, interceding for His people (5-7).

5. The New Covenant

Better promises, the law written on the heart, and complete forgiveness (8; 10:15-18).

6. The Sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice

One offering, once for all, never to be repeated (9:12, 25-28; 10:10-14, 18).

7. The Necessity of Blood Atonement

Without shedding of blood is no remission (9:22).

8. Access to God

Believers may come boldly into God's presence through Christ (4:16; 10:19-22).

9. The Security of the Believer

Christ saves to the uttermost and has perfected for ever those who are sanctified (7:25; 10:14; 13:5).

10. The Necessity of Perseverance

Genuine faith endures; the warnings call for perseverance (3:6, 14; 10:23, 36-39).

11. The Danger of Apostasy

Those who reject Christ after full knowledge have no other sacrifice (6:4-8; 10:26-31).

12. Faith

The substance of things hoped for; without it, it is impossible to please God (11).

13. The Discipline of God

Proof of sonship and means of holiness (12:5-11).

14. Holiness

Without holiness no man shall see the Lord (12:14).

15. Death and Judgment

Appointed once to die, then the judgment (9:27).

16. The Second Coming

Christ will appear the second time unto salvation (9:28; 10:37).

17. The Church and Its Leaders

Believers must assemble, encourage one another, and obey faithful leaders (10:25; 13:7, 17).

Part Seven: Connections — How Hebrews Links to the Rest of the Bible

Hebrews and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Creation by God's word (1; Hebrews 11:3); God's rest on the seventh day (2:2; Hebrews 4:4); Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph (4-50; Hebrews 11); Melchizedek (14:18-20; Hebrews 7); God's oath to Abraham (22:16-17; Hebrews 6:13-14); Esau's birthright (25:29-34; 27:34-38; Hebrews 12:16-17); angels entertained unawares (18-19; Hebrews 13:2)
Exodus	The pattern shown on the mount (25:40; Hebrews 8:5); the tabernacle and its furniture (25-40; Hebrews 9:1-5); the blood of the covenant (24:8; Hebrews 9:20); Sinai's terrors (19; Hebrews 12:18-21); Moses' faithfulness (40; Hebrews 3:2-5)
Leviticus	The Day of Atonement (16; Hebrews 9:7, 25; 13:11); the life in the blood (17:11; Hebrews 9:22)
Numbers	Israel's unbelief at Kadesh-barnea (14; Hebrews 3:16-19); the ashes of the red heifer (19; Hebrews 9:13); cities of refuge (35; Hebrews 6:18)
Deuteronomy	"Let all the angels of God worship him" (32:43 Greek; Hebrews 1:6); "I will never leave thee" (31:6; Hebrews 13:5); vengeance belongs to God (32:35-36; Hebrews 10:30); God a consuming fire (4:24; Hebrews 12:29)
Joshua	Joshua's rest in the land (Hebrews 4:8); Rahab and Jericho (2; 6; Hebrews 11:30-31)
2 Samuel	"I will be to him a Father" (7:14; Hebrews 1:5)
Psalms	2:7 (Hebrews 1:5; 5:5); 8:4-6 (2:6-8); 22:22 (2:12); 40:6-8 (10:5-7); 45:6-7 (1:8-9); 95:7-11 (3:7-11; 4:3-7); 102:25-27 (1:10-12); 104:4 (1:7); 110:1, 4 (1:13; 5:6; 7:17); 118:6 (13:6)
Proverbs	The Lord's chastening (3:11-12; Hebrews 12:5-6)
Isaiah	"I and the children which the LORD hath given me" (8:17-18; Hebrews 2:13)
Jeremiah	The new covenant (31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12; 10:16-17)
Habakkuk	"The just shall live by faith" (2:3-4; Hebrews 10:37-38)
Haggai	"Yet once... I will shake the heavens" (2:6; Hebrews 12:26)

Hebrews and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The temple veil torn (27:51; Hebrews 10:20); the blood of the new testament (26:28; Hebrews 9:20)
Luke	The new testament in Christ's blood (22:20; Hebrews 8:6); Gethsemane's agony (22:41-44; Hebrews 5:7)
John	The Word, Creator and Light (1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2-3); "It is finished" (19:30; Hebrews 10:12-14); the Lamb of God (1:29); Christ's intercessory prayer (17; Hebrews 7:25)
Acts	Stephen's speech on the tabernacle and the temple (7)

Book	Link
Romans	Justification by faith (1:17; Hebrews 10:38); Christ's intercession (8:34; Hebrews 7:25); propitiation (3:25)
2 Corinthians	The old and new covenants (3; Hebrews 8)
Galatians	The law and the promise (3; Hebrews 7:18-19)
Colossians	The law as a shadow; Christ the substance (2:16-17; Hebrews 10:1); Christ the Creator and Sustainer (1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2-3)
Philippians	Christ humbled and exalted (2:6-11; Hebrews 2:9; 12:2)
1 Timothy	One Mediator (2:5; Hebrews 8:6)
James	Abraham's faith shown in offering Isaac (2:21-23; Hebrews 11:17-19); patience in trials (1:2-4)
1 Peter	Redeemed by precious blood (1:18-19); a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices (2:5; Hebrews 13:15); the chief Shepherd (5:4; Hebrews 13:20)
1 John	Christ our Advocate (2:1)
Revelation	Christ our Priest-King (1:5-6, 13); the heavenly temple (11:19); the holy city, the new Jerusalem (21; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22)

Themes That Run from Hebrews Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In Hebrews	Developed in the New Testament
The priesthood	Exodus 28-29; Leviticus 8-9	4:14-10:18	1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6
Melchizedek	Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4	5:6-10; 7	(Unique to Hebrews)
Blood atonement	Exodus 12; Leviticus 16-17	9:7-28	Romans 3:25; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9
The new covenant	Jeremiah 31:31-34	8:6-13	Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:6
The rest of God	Genesis 2:2; Psalm 95	3:7-4:11	Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 14:13
Faith	Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4	11	Romans 4; Galatians 3:6-11
The heavenly city	Psalm 87; Isaiah 60	11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14	Revelation 21-22

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Listen to God's final word, spoken in His Son** (1:1-2).
- **Worship Christ as God** (1:6, 8).
- **Don't drift; pay careful attention to the gospel** (2:1).
- **Don't neglect so great salvation** (2:3).
- **Take comfort that Christ understands your temptations** (2:18; 4:15).
- **Consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest** (3:1).
- **Respond to God's voice today; don't harden your heart** (3:7-8, 15).
- **Exhort one another daily** (3:13).
- **Enter God's rest by faith** (4:3, 11).
- **Let God's Word search your heart** (4:12).
- **Come boldly to the throne of grace** (4:16).
- **Grow up; move from milk to meat** (5:12-14).
- **Go on to maturity** (6:1).
- **Persevere with diligence to the end** (6:11).
- **Hold the anchor of hope** (6:19).
- **Trust Christ to save you to the uttermost** (7:25).
- **Rejoice that God remembers your sins no more** (8:12).
- **Let Christ's blood cleanse your conscience** (9:14).
- **Prepare for death and judgment** (9:27).
- **Look for His second appearing** (9:28).
- **Rest in the finished work of Christ** (10:12-14).
- **Draw near to God with a true heart** (10:22).
- **Hold fast your profession without wavering** (10:23).
- **Stir others up to love and good works** (10:24).
- **Don't forsake the assembling of believers** (10:25).
- **Don't throw away your confidence** (10:35).
- **Live by faith** (10:38; 11:6).
- **Seek God diligently; He rewards** (11:6).
- **Live as a stranger and pilgrim** (11:13).
- **Choose God's people over sin's pleasures** (11:25).
- **Lay aside every weight and besetting sin** (12:1).
- **Run with patience, looking unto Jesus** (12:1-2).
- **Accept God's discipline as love** (12:5-11).
- **Follow peace and holiness** (12:14).

- **Uproot bitterness** (12:15).
- **Don't trade eternal blessings for momentary pleasure** (12:16).
- **Serve God with reverence and godly fear** (12:28).
- **Show brotherly love and hospitality** (13:1-2).
- **Keep marriage pure** (13:4).
- **Be content; God will never leave you** (13:5).
- **Follow the faith of godly leaders** (13:7).
- **Stand firm against strange doctrines** (13:9).
- **Bear Christ's reproach outside the camp** (13:13).
- **Offer the sacrifice of praise continually** (13:15).
- **Do good and share** (13:16).
- **Obey and support your spiritual leaders** (13:17).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:1-2	God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son
1:3	Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power
2:3	How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation
2:18	For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.
4:12	For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword
4:15-16	For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities... Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace
6:19	Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast
7:25	Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.
9:22	And without shedding of blood is no remission.
9:27	And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment
10:14	For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
10:25	Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together
11:1	Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
11:6	But without faith it is impossible to please him
12:1-2	Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith
12:6	For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth
12:14	Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord
13:5	I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
13:8	Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Conclusion

Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were tempted, under persecution and spiritual weariness, to drift back from Christ to the familiar rituals of the old covenant. The writer's answer is that Christ is better in every way. He is God's final word, the Son, the radiance of God's glory and the Creator of all, enthroned above the angels, who worship Him. He became truly man to die, to destroy the devil's power and to become a merciful and faithful High Priest. He is greater than Moses as a son is greater than a servant, and He gives the true rest that Joshua could not. He is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, holy and sinless, living for ever to intercede, able to save to the uttermost. He mediates a better covenant, with God's law on the heart and sins remembered no more. He entered the true sanctuary in heaven, not with the blood of animals but with His own blood, once for all, obtaining eternal redemption and perfecting for ever those who are sanctified. Therefore believers have boldness to draw near to God, and they must hold fast, encourage one another, not forsake the assembly, and not draw back. Like the heroes of faith who looked for a heavenly city, they run their race with patience, looking unto Jesus, accepting the Father's loving discipline, pursuing holiness, and serving God with reverence, because they have come not to Sinai but to Mount Sion, and have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Through it all, the anchor holds: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

> *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*
>
> **Hebrews 7:25**

James

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: James, the Lord's brother • Date: c. AD 45-50 • Chapters: 5

> *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*
>
> **James 2:26**

Part One: Introduction to James

The Author

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). Several men named James appear in the New Testament: James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, who was martyred by Herod around AD 44 (Acts 12:2), too early to have written this letter; James the son of Alphaeus, another of the twelve; and James the brother of the Lord. The early church identified the author as the last of these, James the Lord's brother (half-brother), the son of Joseph and Mary (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3).

James did not believe in Jesus during His ministry: "For neither did his brethren believe in him" (John 7:5). But the risen Christ appeared to him (1 Corinthians 15:7), and James became a believer. He was with the disciples praying before Pentecost (Acts 1:14) and became the leading elder of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13-21; 21:18). Paul called him one of the "pillars" of the church (Galatians 1:19; 2:9). He was known as "James the Just" for his righteousness. Early tradition says he prayed so much that his knees became hard like a camel's. The Jewish historian Josephus records that around AD 62 the high priest Ananus had him stoned to death.

It is a mark of his humility that the Lord's own brother does not call himself "the brother of the Lord," but simply "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." He calls the One he once doubted "the Lord of glory" (2:1). His brother Jude, the author of the letter of Jude, likewise calls himself "the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (Jude 1).

The Recipients and Date

James wrote "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (1:1), Jewish Christians living outside Palestine, perhaps including those scattered by the persecution after Stephen's death (Acts 8:1; 11:19). He calls their meeting an "assembly" (2:2), using the Greek word for synagogue. The letter shows no awareness of the controversy over Gentiles and the law that led to the Jerusalem council (Acts 15, about AD 49), and many believe it was written around AD 45-49, making it possibly the earliest book of the New Testament. In any case, it was written before James's death in AD 62.

Character and Style

James is the most practical book in the New Testament. Its 108 verses contain about 54 commands. It resembles the book of Proverbs in its short, pointed sayings and vivid illustrations drawn from nature and daily life: waves of the sea, the withering flower, a mirror, a horse's bit, a ship's rudder, a forest fire, a spring of water, the farmer waiting for rain, a vapour. James also echoes the teaching of his brother Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount, more than any other New Testament letter (see Part Three).

Purpose and Theme

James wrote to believers under trial and pressure, many of them poor and oppressed by the rich, whose faith was in danger of becoming mere words. His theme is that genuine, living faith shows itself in a changed life. He gives a series of tests by which faith can be recognised: how we respond to trials, what we do with God's Word, how we treat the poor, whether our faith produces works, how we use our tongues, what kind of wisdom we show, whether we love the world, how we plan, how we use wealth,

and how we pray.

> *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*
>
> **James 1:22**

> *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*
>
> **James 2:17**

James and Paul

Martin Luther, struggling to understand James 2 in the light of Paul's teaching on justification by faith, once called James "an epistle of straw" in comparison with the books that most clearly proclaim Christ. But James and Paul do not contradict each other; they address different errors and use the word "justify" with different emphases.

Point	Paul (Romans 3-4; Galatians 2-3)	James (James 2)
The error opposed	Legalism: trying to earn salvation by works of the law	Dead orthodoxy: claiming faith that produces no change
The question answered	How is a sinner made right with God?	How is genuine faith shown to be real?
"Justified"	Declared righteous before God, by faith alone	Shown to be righteous, vindicated by works before men
"Works"	Works of the law done to earn salvation	Works of love and obedience that flow from faith
"Faith"	Genuine trust in Christ	A professed faith that may be mere intellectual assent ("the devils also believe")
Abraham	Justified by faith in Genesis 15:6, before circumcision	His faith proven by offering Isaac in Genesis 22, about thirty years later
Summary	The root: faith alone saves	The fruit: the faith that saves is never alone

Both quote Genesis 15:6: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3; James 2:23). Paul says that Abraham was declared righteous by faith before he did any works. James says that, years later, Abraham's obedience in offering Isaac demonstrated that his faith was real, "and the scripture was fulfilled." Paul himself teaches that faith works by love (Galatians 5:6) and that believers are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10). As the Reformers put it, "faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone."

Tests of Living Faith

Test	James	Genuine Faith
Trials	1:2-12	Counts it joy, endures, asks God for wisdom
Temptation	1:13-18	Does not blame God; recognises every good gift as from Him
The Word	1:19-27	Receives it meekly and does it

Test	James	Genuine Faith
Partiality	2:1-13	Loves rich and poor alike
Works	2:14-26	Shows itself in deeds of love and obedience
The tongue	3:1-12	Controls speech
Wisdom	3:13-18	Shows wisdom from above: pure, peaceable, merciful
Worldliness	4:1-10	Submits to God and resists the devil
Judging	4:11-12	Does not slander or judge others
Presumption	4:13-17	Says, "If the Lord will"
Wealth	5:1-6	Does not hoard or oppress
Patience	5:7-12	Waits for the Lord's coming
Prayer	5:13-18	Prays in every circumstance
Restoration	5:19-20	Seeks to restore the wanderer

Outline of James

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Faith Tested by Trials and Temptation	1:1-18	Joy, wisdom and the source of temptation
II. Faith Tested by Response to the Word	1:19-27	Doers, not hearers only
III. Faith Tested by Love and Works	2	No partiality; faith without works is dead
IV. Faith Tested by the Tongue and Wisdom	3	Taming the tongue; wisdom from above
V. Faith Tested by Worldliness and Pride	4	Friendship with the world; humility; "If the Lord will"
VI. Faith Tested by Wealth, Patience and Prayer	5	Rich oppressors; waiting for the Lord; the prayer of faith

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Chapter 1 — Trials, Temptation and the Word

1:2-12 — Joy in Trials

> *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*
>
> **James 1:2-4**

"Temptations" here means trials, the various hardships believers "fall into." James does not say trials are pleasant, but that believers should "count" (consider) them occasions for joy, because of what they produce. Testing develops "patience" (endurance), and endurance, allowed to do its full work, produces maturity: "perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Romans 5:3-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7).

> *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*
>
> **James 1:5-6**

In trials we need wisdom to understand and respond rightly. God gives it generously and without scolding us for asking. But we must ask in faith, not doubting. The doubter is like a wave tossed by the wind; "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (1:8).

Trials bring perspective on wealth. The poor believer should rejoice in his exalted position in Christ; the rich believer should rejoice in being humbled, for riches fade like the flower of the grass under the scorching sun (1:9-11; Isaiah 40:6-8).

> *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*
>
> **James 1:12**

Those who endure, proving their love for God, will receive "the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

1:13-18 — The Source of Temptation

The same Greek word means both "trial" (testing designed to strengthen) and "temptation" (enticement to sin). God sends trials, but He never tempts anyone to sin:

> *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

James 1:13-15

The source of temptation is within: our own evil desires. James describes the process in two pictures: a fish drawn out from cover and lured by bait ("drawn away... and enticed"), and a birth: desire conceives, gives birth to sin, and sin, fully grown, brings death. We cannot blame God, as Adam tried to (Genesis 3:12).

> *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*
>
> **James 1:17**

Far from tempting us, God is the source of every good thing. He is the "Father of lights," the Creator of the sun, moon and stars. Unlike heavenly bodies, which change and cast shifting shadows, God never changes. His greatest gift is new birth: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).

1:19-27 — Hearing and Doing the Word

> *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*
>
> **James 1:19-20**

Quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger: this is wise advice for all relationships, and especially for receiving God's Word. Human anger does not produce the righteous life God desires. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness [overflowing wickedness], and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (1:21). God's Word, planted in the heart, saves and continues to deliver.

> *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.*
>
> **James 1:22-24**

Hearing without doing is self-deception. The Word is like a mirror; it shows us what we are. But a person who glances at the mirror and walks away unchanged gains nothing.

> *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*
>
> **James 1:25**

The one who gazes intently into God's Word, "the perfect law of liberty" (it frees rather than enslaves), and keeps on obeying it, is blessed in his doing.

> *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*
>
> **James 1:26-27**

"Religion" here means outward religious practice. True religion is shown in a controlled tongue, practical compassion for the helpless, and personal purity from the world's corruption.

Chapter 2 — Love Without Partiality; Faith That Works

2:1-13 — No Respect of Persons

> *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.*
>
> **James 2:1**

James gives an example: a rich man with gold rings and fine clothes enters the assembly and is given a good seat, while a poor man in shabby clothes is told to stand or sit on the floor (2:2-3). Such partiality makes believers judges with evil motives (2:4).

> *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*
>
> **James 2:5**

God honours the poor, yet they dishonoured them; and it was the rich who oppressed them, dragged them into court and blasphemed Christ's name (2:6-7). If they fulfil "the royal law," "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," they do well (2:8; Leviticus 19:18). But favouritism is sin; it breaks that law (2:9).

> *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*
>
> **James 2:10**

The law is a unity, the expression of one Lawgiver's will. To break one command is to become a lawbreaker; the same God who forbade adultery forbade murder (2:11). This shows that no one can be justified by keeping the law (Galatians 3:10). "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (2:12-13; Matthew 5:7).

2:14-26 — Faith Without Works Is Dead

> *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*
>
> **James 2:14**

Notice the word "say": James is testing a claim to faith. The question means, "Can that kind of faith (faith that produces no works) save him?" The expected answer is no.

Illustration 1: Empty words (2:15-17). If a brother or sister is cold and hungry, and someone says, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," but gives them nothing, what good is it? "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (2:17).

Illustration 2: Demonic faith (2:18-20). "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (2:18). Faith is invisible; works make it visible.

> *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*
>
> **James 2:19-20**

Believing correct doctrine, even the great confession of Israel, "The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4), is not saving faith. The demons have perfect orthodoxy; they even tremble; but they are not saved. Saving faith is not mere agreement with facts, but trust that commits the whole person to God.

Illustration 3: Abraham (2:21-24). "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (2:21; Genesis 22). Abraham had been declared righteous by faith decades earlier (Genesis 15:6). When he offered Isaac, his faith was demonstrated and brought to maturity: "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God" (2:22-23; 2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8).

> *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*
>
> **James 2:24**

James means that a person is shown to be righteous, vindicated as a true believer, by his works, not by a bare profession of faith that produces nothing. Paul teaches how a sinner is declared righteous before God (by faith, apart from works); James teaches how a believer's righteousness is shown (by works that flow from faith).

Illustration 4: Rahab (2:25). Rahab the harlot showed her faith by hiding the spies and sending them out another way (Joshua 2; Hebrews 11:31). From the patriarch to the prostitute, genuine faith acts.

> *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*
>
> **James 2:26**

Chapter 3 — The Tongue and True Wisdom

3:1-12 — Taming the Tongue

> *My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*
>
> **James 3:1-2**

"Masters" means teachers. Teachers will face stricter judgment, because they handle God's Word and influence others with their words. Everyone stumbles in many ways, and controlling the tongue is the ultimate test of maturity.

James uses vivid pictures:

- **A bit and a rudder (3:3-4):** a small bit turns a large horse; a tiny rudder steers a great ship. The tongue, though small, directs the whole life.
- **A fire (3:5-6):** "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity... it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." A spark can destroy a forest; one careless word can destroy reputations, friendships and churches. Its fire is lit from hell itself.
- **A wild beast and poison (3:7-8):** humans have tamed every kind of animal, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Only God can control it.
- **A spring and a tree (3:9-12):** "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." A spring does not give both fresh and bitter water; a fig tree does not bear olives. Inconsistent speech reveals a problem in the heart (Matthew 12:34).

3:13-18 — Two Kinds of Wisdom

> *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*
>
> **James 3:13**

True wisdom shows itself in a good life and humble deeds. False wisdom is marked by "bitter envying and strife in your hearts"; it "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (3:14-16).

> *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*
>
> **James 3:17-18**

Godly wisdom is pure, peace-loving, considerate, open to reason, full of mercy and good deeds, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers sow seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Chapter 4 — Worldliness, Humility and Presumption

4:1-10 — Friendship with the World

> *From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*
>
> **James 4:1-3**

Conflicts among believers come from selfish desires warring within. They do not have because they do not ask God, or they ask with selfish motives, to spend on their own pleasures.

> *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*
>
> **James 4:4**

God's people are like a wife; loving the world, its values and pleasures in rebellion against God, is spiritual adultery (1 John 2:15-17). "The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy" (4:5) is difficult; it probably means that God jealously longs for the full devotion of the spirit He made to dwell in us.

> *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*
>
> **James 4:6-8**

God's demand is great, but His grace is greater. He opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34; 1 Peter 5:5). Ten commands follow in quick succession: submit to God, resist the devil, draw near to God, cleanse your hands (actions), purify your hearts (motives), be afflicted, mourn, weep, turn laughter to mourning (genuine repentance over sin, 4:9), and:

> *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*
>
> **James 4:10**

4:11-12 — Don't Slander or Judge

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren" (4:11). Slandering and condemning a brother sets oneself up as judge over God's law, which commands love. "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (4:12).

4:13-17 — "If the Lord Will"

> *Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*
>
> **James 4:13-15**

James does not condemn planning, but planning that leaves God out. Life is as brief and uncertain as morning mist (Psalm 39:5; Proverbs 27:1). Believers should plan with humble dependence: "If the Lord will." Boasting in one's own plans is evil (4:16).

> *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*
>
> **James 4:17**

Sin is not only doing wrong but failing to do the good we know we should do: the sin of omission.

Chapter 5 — Wealth, Patience and Prayer

5:1-6 — Warning to Rich Oppressors

> *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*
>
> **James 5:1-3**

Like an Old Testament prophet, James pronounces judgment on wealthy unbelievers who oppressed the poor. Their hoarded wealth would rot and testify against them. They had cheated their workers: "the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth" (5:4; Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14-15). "The Lord of sabaoth" (the Lord of hosts) hears the cry of the oppressed. They lived in luxury, fattening themselves "as in a day of slaughter," and condemned and killed the righteous, who did not resist them (5:5-6).

5:7-12 — Patience Until the Lord Comes

> *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*
>
> **James 5:7-8**

The suffering believer's hope is the Lord's return, when wrongs will be righted. Like a farmer waiting for the autumn rains (to soften the ground for planting) and the spring rains (to ripen the crop) (Deuteronomy 11:14; Joel 2:23), believers must wait patiently and strengthen their hearts. "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door" (5:9).

Examples of endurance: the prophets, who suffered while speaking in the Lord's name (5:10), and Job:

> *Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*
>
> **James 5:11**

Job did not understand his suffering, but he endured, and saw the Lord's purpose in the end, when God restored him double (Job 42:10-17). God is full of compassion and mercy.

> *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.*
>
> **James 5:12**

Echoing Jesus (Matthew 5:34-37), James forbids the casual use of oaths to make one's words seem more reliable. A believer's simple word should be completely trustworthy. (Most Christians understand this as forbidding careless and deceptive swearing in ordinary speech, not solemn oaths required in a court of law; God Himself swore by Himself, Hebrews 6:13-17.)

5:13-18 — The Prayer of Faith

> *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*
>
> **James 5:13**

Every circumstance should lead to God: trouble to prayer, joy to praise.

> *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*
>
> **James 5:14-15**

The sick believer should call for the church's elders to pray over him. The anointing with oil may have been medicinal (oil was used as medicine, Luke 10:34) or symbolic, setting the person apart to God's care (Mark 6:13). The emphasis is on prayer "in the name of the Lord." It is "the prayer of faith," not the

oil, that saves (heals) the sick, and it is "the Lord" who raises him up. Prayer is offered according to God's will (1 John 5:14). If the sickness is connected with sin, as it sometimes is (1 Corinthians 11:30), confession brings forgiveness. This passage is not about last rites for the dying, but prayer for the healing of the sick.

> *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*
>
> **James 5:16**

Believers should confess their sins to those they have wronged and to trusted fellow believers, and pray for one another. (This is mutual confession among believers, not confession to a priest; confession for forgiveness is made directly to God, 1 John 1:9.) The earnest prayer of a righteous person is powerful.

Elijah is the example: "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain" (5:17-18; 1 Kings 17-18; Luke 4:25). He was an ordinary man with an extraordinary God.

5:19-20 — Restoring the Wanderer

> *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*
>
> **James 5:19-20**

The letter ends abruptly, with a call to restore those who wander from the truth. Turning a sinner back saves a soul from death (whether the premature physical death that can come as God's discipline, or spiritual death for one whose profession proves false) and covers a multitude of sins, as love covers sins through forgiveness and restoration (Proverbs 10:12; 1 Peter 4:8).

Part Three: Christ in James

Christ Named in James

Although James mentions Jesus by name only twice (1:1; 2:1), Christ is present throughout:

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	"The Lord Jesus Christ," whose servant James is
2:1	"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory," the object of faith
2:7	"That worthy name by the which ye are called"
5:7-8	The Lord whose coming draws nigh
5:9	The Judge who stands before the door
5:11	The Lord who is very pitiful and of tender mercy
5:14	The Lord in whose name the elders pray
5:15	The Lord who raises up the sick

The half-brother who once did not believe in Jesus (John 7:5) now calls Him "the Lord of glory," a title of deity (Psalm 24:7-10; 1 Corinthians 2:8).

James and the Sermon on the Mount

James's letter is saturated with the teaching of his brother Jesus:

James	Teaching	Sermon on the Mount
1:2	Joy in trials	Matthew 5:10-12
1:4	Be perfect	Matthew 5:48
1:5	Ask and it shall be given	Matthew 7:7-11
1:9; 2:5	The poor exalted and rich in faith	Matthew 5:3
1:20	Human anger	Matthew 5:22
1:22-25	Doers of the word	Matthew 7:24-27
2:10	Keeping the whole law	Matthew 5:19
2:13	Mercy to the merciful	Matthew 5:7
3:12	A tree known by its fruit	Matthew 7:16-20
3:18	Peacemakers	Matthew 5:9
4:4	Friendship with the world; serving two masters	Matthew 6:24
4:8	The pure in heart	Matthew 5:8
4:9	Those who mourn	Matthew 5:4
4:11-12	Judge not	Matthew 7:1-5
5:2-3	Moth and rust corrupting treasure	Matthew 6:19-20

James	Teaching	Sermon on the Mount
5:10	The prophets persecuted	Matthew 5:12
5:12	Swear not; let your yea be yea	Matthew 5:34-37

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	James	Fulfillment
The crown of life promised to those who love God	1:12	Future reward (Revelation 2:10)
The poor heirs of the kingdom	2:5	Fulfilled as the gospel is received by the poor; completed in the kingdom
Elijah's prayer stopping and sending rain	5:17-18	Fulfilled in Elijah's day (1 Kings 17:1; 18:41-45)
Miseries coming on the oppressive rich	5:1-6	Foreshadowed in the destruction of Judea, AD 66-70; completed at the final judgment
The coming of the Lord draweth nigh	5:7-8	Still future
The Judge standing before the door	5:9	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

James 1:2-8 — Joy, Endurance and Wisdom in Trials

Trials test and strengthen faith, producing endurance and maturity. In them, believers may ask God for wisdom, which He gives generously to those who ask in faith.

James 1:13-17 — The Source of Temptation and the Source of Good

God never tempts anyone to sin; temptation comes from our own desires, which lead to sin and death. Every good gift comes from the unchanging Father of lights.

James 1:22-27 — Doers of the Word

Hearing God's Word without obeying it is self-deception. True religion shows itself in a controlled tongue, care for the helpless, and purity from the world.

James 2:1-13 — No Favouritism

Showing partiality to the rich and despising the poor contradicts faith in the Lord of glory and breaks the royal law of love.

James 2:14-26 — Faith That Works

A faith that produces no works is dead, no better than the demons' belief. Genuine faith, like Abraham's and Rahab's, shows itself in action. We are declared righteous by faith alone, but true faith is never alone.

James 3:1-12 — The Tongue

The tongue is small but powerful, like a bit, a rudder or a spark; it can defile the whole person and is set on fire by hell. Only God can tame it. Blessing and cursing should never come from the same mouth.

James 3:13-18 — Wisdom from Above

Earthly wisdom produces envy, selfish ambition and disorder; heavenly wisdom is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, merciful and sincere.

James 4:4-10 — Humble Yourselves

Friendship with the world is enmity with God. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit to God, resist the devil, draw near to God, and He will lift you up.

James 4:13-17 — "If the Lord Will"

Life is a vapour. Plan humbly, depending on God's will. Knowing the right thing and not doing it is sin.

James 5:7-11 — Patience Until He Comes

Like the farmer and like Job, believers must wait patiently for the Lord's coming, trusting His compassion and mercy.

James 5:13-18 — The Power of Prayer

Pray in trouble, praise in joy, call for the elders in sickness, confess faults to one another, and pray for one another. The fervent prayer of a righteous person, like Elijah, accomplishes much.

James 5:19-20 — Restoring the Wanderer

Turning a straying believer back from error saves a soul and covers a multitude of sins.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of James

1. The Purpose of Trials

Trials test faith and produce endurance and maturity (1:2-4, 12).

2. Wisdom from God

God gives wisdom generously to those who ask in faith (1:5; 3:17).

3. The Nature of Temptation

Temptation comes from our own desires, not from God (1:13-15).

4. The Goodness and Unchangeableness of God

Every good gift comes from the Father of lights, who never changes (1:17).

5. Regeneration Through the Word

God begets us by the word of truth (1:18, 21).

6. Obedience to the Word

True hearers are doers (1:22-25).

7. True Religion

Compassion for the needy and personal purity (1:27).

8. Impartial Love

Favouritism violates the royal law of love (2:1-13).

9. Living Faith

Genuine faith produces works; faith without works is dead (2:14-26).

10. The Power of Speech

The tongue must be controlled (1:19, 26; 3:1-12).

11. Humility and Submission

God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (4:6-10).

12. The Danger of Worldliness

Friendship with the world is enmity with God (4:4).

13. Dependence on God's Will

"If the Lord will" (4:15).

14. Sins of Omission

Failing to do known good is sin (4:17).

15. Justice for the Oppressed

God hears the cry of the defrauded and will judge oppressors (5:1-6).

16. The Coming of the Lord

The hope that sustains patient endurance (5:7-9).

17. Prayer

For the afflicted, the sick, the sinning and one another (5:13-18).

18. Restoration

Believers should restore those who wander (5:19-20).

Part Seven: Connections — How James Links to the Rest of the Bible

James and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Man made in God's likeness (1:26; James 3:9); Abraham believed God (15:6; James 2:23); Abraham offering Isaac (22; James 2:21)
Exodus	The commandments against adultery and murder (20:13-14; James 2:11)
Leviticus	No partiality in judgment; love thy neighbour; withholding wages (19:13, 15, 18; James 2:1, 8; 5:4)
Deuteronomy	"The LORD our God is one LORD" (6:4; James 2:19); the early and latter rain (11:14; James 5:7); paying the poor labourer (24:14-15; James 5:4)
Joshua	Rahab and the spies (2; James 2:25)
1 Kings	Elijah's prayer for drought and rain (17:1; 18:41-45; James 5:17-18)
2 Chronicles	Abraham the friend of God (20:7; James 2:23)
Job	The patience of Job and the end of the Lord (1-2; 42; James 5:11)
Psalms	Life a breath (39:5; James 4:14)
Proverbs	Wisdom from the LORD (2:6; James 1:5); God resists the proud (3:34; James 4:6); love covers sins (10:12; James 5:20); the power of the tongue (18:21); boast not of tomorrow (27:1; James 4:13-14)
Isaiah	The flower of the grass withering (40:6-8; James 1:10-11); Abraham God's friend (41:8)
Jeremiah	Prepared for the day of slaughter (12:3; James 5:5)
Joel	The former and latter rain (2:23; James 5:7)
Amos	Woe to the luxurious rich who oppress the poor (6:1-6; 8:4-6; James 5:1-6)

James and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The Sermon on the Mount (5-7; see the table above); the sheep and goats judged by their care for the needy (25:31-46; James 2:15-16)
Mark	Anointing the sick with oil (6:13; James 5:14)
Luke	Woe to the rich; the rich fool; the rich man and Lazarus (6:24; 12:16-21; 16:19-31; James 5:1-6); Elijah and the three years and six months (4:25)
John	James's unbelief (7:5)
Acts	James before Pentecost (1:14); leader of the Jerusalem church (12:17; 15:13-21; 21:18)
Romans	Justification by faith (3-4); the doers of the law (2:13); God no respecter of persons (2:11)
1 Corinthians	The risen Christ appeared to James (15:7); the Lord of glory (2:8)

Book	Link
Galatians	James a pillar of the church (1:19; 2:9); faith which worketh by love (5:6)
Ephesians	Saved by grace through faith, created unto good works (2:8-10)
Hebrews	Abraham's faith in offering Isaac; Rahab (11:17-19, 31)
1 Peter	Trials testing faith (1:6-7); God resists the proud; resist the devil (5:5-9); love covers sins (4:8)
1 John	Love in deed and truth (3:17-18; James 2:15-16); not loving the world (2:15-17; James 4:4); confession (1:9)
Jude	Jude, "brother of James" (1)
Revelation	The crown of life (2:10; James 1:12)

Themes That Run from James Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In James	Developed in the New Testament
Faith and works	Genesis 15:6; 22	2:14-26	Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:8
Wisdom	Proverbs 2:6; 9:10	1:5; 3:13-18	1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3
The tongue	Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 18:21	1:26; 3:1-12	Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6
Care for the poor	Deuteronomy 15:7-11	1:27; 2:1-16	Galatians 2:10; 1 John 3:17
Humility	Proverbs 3:34; Micah 6:8	4:6-10	1 Peter 5:5-6
Patience in suffering	Job; Psalm 37:7	5:7-11	Romans 5:3-5; Hebrews 10:36
Prayer	1 Kings 17-18	5:13-18	Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Count trials as joy, because of what they produce** (1:2-3).
- **Let endurance finish its work in you** (1:4).
- **Ask God for wisdom in faith** (1:5-6).
- **Don't be double-minded** (1:8).
- **Keep riches in perspective** (1:9-11).
- **Never blame God for temptation** (1:13).
- **Stop sin at the point of desire** (1:14-15).
- **Thank God for every good gift** (1:17).
- **Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger** (1:19).
- **Receive the Word with meekness** (1:21).
- **Do what the Word says** (1:22).
- **Look into the mirror of the Word, and act on what you see** (1:23-25).
- **Bridle your tongue** (1:26).
- **Care for orphans and widows** (1:27).
- **Keep yourself unspotted from the world** (1:27).
- **Show no favouritism** (2:1-4).
- **Love your neighbour as yourself** (2:8).
- **Show mercy** (2:13).
- **Prove your faith by meeting real needs** (2:15-16).
- **Don't confuse right doctrine with saving faith** (2:19).
- **Obey God like Abraham, and act in faith like Rahab** (2:21-25).
- **Be careful about wanting to be a teacher** (3:1).
- **Guard your words; a small spark can burn a forest** (3:5-6).
- **Don't bless God and curse people with the same mouth** (3:9-10).
- **Show wisdom by a good life and humble deeds** (3:13).
- **Reject envy and selfish ambition** (3:14-16).
- **Seek the wisdom that is pure and peaceable** (3:17).
- **Be a peacemaker** (3:18).
- **Ask God with right motives** (4:3).
- **Don't be a friend of the world** (4:4).
- **Submit to God and resist the devil** (4:7).
- **Draw near to God** (4:8).
- **Humble yourself before the Lord** (4:10).
- **Don't slander or judge your brother** (4:11).

- **Plan with "If the Lord will"** (4:15).
- **Do the good you know you should do** (4:17).
- **Pay workers fairly** (5:4).
- **Wait patiently for the Lord's coming** (5:7-8).
- **Don't grumble against one another** (5:9).
- **Let your yes be yes and your no be no** (5:12).
- **Pray in trouble and sing in joy** (5:13).
- **Call for the elders when sick** (5:14).
- **Confess your faults and pray for one another** (5:16).
- **Pray fervently, like Elijah** (5:17).
- **Seek to restore those who wander** (5:19-20).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:2-3	My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
1:5	If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.
1:12	Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life
1:17	Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights
1:19	Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath
1:22	But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
1:27	Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
2:17	Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
2:26	For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
3:17	But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated
4:4	Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?
4:7-8	Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
4:10	Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.
4:14	For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.
4:17	Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
5:16	The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Conclusion

James, the half-brother of Jesus who once did not believe but became a pillar of the Jerusalem church, wrote to scattered Jewish believers whose faith was being tested by trials and threatened by empty profession. In short, vivid sayings echoing his brother's Sermon on the Mount, he showed what living faith looks like. It counts trials as joy because they produce endurance, and asks God for wisdom. It refuses to blame God for temptation, receiving every good gift from the unchanging Father of lights. It does not merely hear the Word but does it, caring for orphans and widows and keeping itself unspotted from the world. It shows no favouritism to the rich. It proves itself by works, for faith without works is dead, as dead as a body without a spirit; Abraham and Rahab showed their faith by what they did. It bridles the tongue, that small fire set on fire of hell. It displays the wisdom from above: pure, peaceable, gentle and merciful. It refuses friendship with the world, humbles itself before God, resists the devil and draws near to God. It plans with "If the Lord will," remembering that life is a vapour. It waits patiently for the coming of the Lord, like the farmer for the rain and like Job for the end of the Lord. And it prays: in affliction, in sickness and for one another, knowing that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

> *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*
>
> **James 1:22**

1 Peter

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Peter • Date: c. AD 63-64 • Chapters: 5

> *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*
>
> **1 Peter 1:18-19**

Part One: Introduction to 1 Peter

The Author

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Simon Peter, the fisherman from Galilee, was the leader among the twelve apostles, the first to confess Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16), the one who denied Him three times and was restored by the risen Lord with the charge, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). He preached the first gospel sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2) and opened the door of the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Here he calls himself "also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ" (5:1).

Peter wrote "By Silvanus, a faithful brother" (5:12). Silvanus (Silas), Paul's former companion, probably served as his secretary or helped compose the letter, which explains its polished Greek.

Place and Date

Peter wrote from "Babylon" (5:13). Most understand this as a symbolic name for Rome, the great centre of worldly power and idolatry (compare Revelation 17-18), where early tradition places Peter in his last years. "Marcus my son" (5:13), John Mark, was with him; early tradition says Mark's Gospel records Peter's preaching. The letter was probably written around AD 62-64, as hostility toward Christians was rising, shortly before or at the beginning of Nero's persecution. Tradition holds that Peter was crucified in Rome, upside down at his own request, around AD 64-68, as Jesus had foretold (John 21:18-19).

The Recipients

Peter wrote "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect" (1:1-2), regions of northern and western Asia Minor (modern Turkey). He describes them in language once used of Israel in exile ("strangers," "scattered," "sojourning"), yet many were clearly Gentile converts: they had been redeemed from the empty way of life inherited from their fathers (1:18), had once not been a people (2:10), and had formerly lived in pagan sins (4:3-4). They were believers, God's chosen people, living as foreigners in a hostile world.

Purpose and Theme

These believers were facing slander, social rejection and the threat of persecution (2:12; 3:16; 4:4, 12-16). Peter wrote to encourage them to stand firm in "the true grace of God" (5:12). His theme is hope and holiness in suffering. Words for suffering appear about sixteen times, but so do hope, glory and joy. Peter shows believers how to live as holy pilgrims in a hostile world, following the example of Christ, who suffered and then entered His glory.

> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*
>
> **1 Peter 1:3**

> *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps*
>
> **1 Peter 2:21**

Peter's Own Story in His Letter

Many phrases in 1 Peter echo Peter's own experiences with Jesus:

1 Peter	Peter's Experience
"A lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1:3)	His hope revived when he saw the risen Lord after denying Him (Luke 24:34; John 21)
"Ye also, as lively stones" (2:5)	Jesus named him Peter, "a stone" (Matthew 16:18; John 1:42)
"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again" (2:23)	Peter had drawn his sword in Gethsemane (John 18:10-11)
"The Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (2:25); "Feed the flock" (5:2)	"Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17)
"A witness of the sufferings of Christ" (5:1)	He saw Jesus arrested and tried (Mark 14:54)
"Be clothed with humility" (5:5)	Jesus girded Himself with a towel and washed Peter's feet (John 13:4-9)
"Be sober, be vigilant... the devil, as a roaring lion" (5:8)	He slept in Gethsemane; Satan desired to sift him as wheat (Luke 22:31; Mark 14:37-38)
"Stablish, strengthen, settle you" (5:10)	"When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32)

The man who once failed under pressure now writes, with the authority of experience and restoration, to strengthen others under pressure.

Outline of 1 Peter

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Our Salvation and Its Response	1:1-2:10	A living hope and a holy people
The living hope	1:1-12	Born again, kept, rejoicing in trials
A holy life	1:13-25	"Be ye holy; for I am holy"
Growth and identity	2:1-10	Living stones; a royal priesthood
II. Our Conduct Among Unbelievers	2:11-3:12	Submission and good works
Good works before the Gentiles	2:11-12	Pilgrims and strangers

Section	Chapters	Theme
Citizens	2:13-17	"Honour the king"
Servants and Christ's example	2:18-25	"Leaving us an example"
Wives and husbands	3:1-7	"Heirs together of the grace of life"
All believers	3:8-12	Blessing for evil
III. Our Suffering for Righteousness	3:13-4:19	Following the suffering Christ
Ready to give an answer	3:13-17	"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts"
Christ's suffering and victory	3:18-22	"The just for the unjust"
Armed with Christ's mind	4:1-11	"The end of all things is at hand"
The fiery trial	4:12-19	"If any man suffer as a Christian"
IV. Our Shepherds and Our Stand	5	Humility, vigilance and grace
Elders feeding the flock	5:1-4	"The chief Shepherd"
Humility and casting care on God	5:5-7	"He careth for you"
Resisting the devil	5:8-11	"Stedfast in the faith"
Closing	5:12-14	"The true grace of God"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Our Salvation and Its Response (1:1-2:10)

Chapter 1:1-12 — A Living Hope

Peter's readers were "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1:2). All three Persons of the Trinity are active in salvation: the Father's foreknowing choice, the Spirit's setting apart, and the Son's cleansing blood.

> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*
>
> **1 Peter 1:3-5**

Out of His great mercy, God has caused believers to be born again into a "lively" (living) hope, grounded in Christ's resurrection. Their inheritance cannot perish, be defiled or fade, unlike earthly inheritances, and it is reserved in heaven for them. And they themselves are "kept" (guarded, as by a military garrison) by God's power through faith until their salvation is fully revealed. The inheritance is kept for the believer, and the believer is kept for the inheritance.

> *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*
>
> **1 Peter 1:6-7**

Trials are temporary ("for a season"), necessary ("if need be") and varied ("manifold"). Like a refiner's fire that purifies gold, trials prove and purify faith, which is far more precious than gold, so that it will result in praise and glory when Christ appears.

> *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*
>
> **1 Peter 1:8-9**

Peter had seen Jesus; his readers had not, yet they loved Him and rejoiced with indescribable joy (John 20:29).

The Old Testament prophets searched diligently about this salvation, inquiring "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" (1:10-11). The Spirit of Christ inspired the prophets, revealing both His sufferings and His glory (Isaiah 53; Psalm 22). They served not themselves but us, and these are "things the angels desire to look into" (1:12).

Chapter 1:13-25 — A Holy Life

> *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*
>
> **1 Peter 1:13**

"Gird up the loins" pictures tucking up a long robe to run or work. Believers must prepare their minds for action, be self-controlled, and fix their hope fully on Christ's return.

> *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*
>
> **1 Peter 1:14-16**

God's holiness is the standard for His children (Leviticus 11:44; 19:2). If they call on the Father who judges impartially, they should live in reverent fear during their stay as foreigners here (1:17).

> *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*
>
> **1 Peter 1:18-20**

The price of redemption was not money, which perishes, but the precious blood of Christ, the perfect Lamb, like the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:5). God planned this before creation. Through Christ, believers trust in God, who raised Him and gave Him glory (1:21).

Having purified their souls by obeying the truth, they must "love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1:22):

> *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*
>
> **1 Peter 1:23-25**

New birth comes through God's living, eternal Word (Isaiah 40:6-8). Human life and glory fade like grass; God's Word endures.

Chapter 2:1-10 — Living Stones and a Royal Priesthood

Growing by the Word (2:1-3). "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (2:1-3; Psalm 34:8). Just as a newborn instinctively craves milk, believers should long for the pure Word of God, the means of spiritual growth.

Living stones (2:4-8).

> *To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:4-5**

Christ is the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God. Believers, coming to Him, become living stones built into a spiritual house, God's temple, and serve as a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices: praise, good works, and themselves (Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15-16). Every believer is a priest with direct access to God through Christ. This is the priesthood of all believers; there is no separate priestly class in the church. Notice that Peter, whom Jesus called "a stone," points not to himself but to Christ as the foundation stone. He quotes three "stone" passages:

- **The chief cornerstone (2:6):** "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (Isaiah 28:16).
- **The rejected stone (2:7):** "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (Psalm 118:22).
- **The stumbling stone (2:8):** "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence" (Isaiah 8:14), to those who disobey the Word.

The same stone is precious to believers and a stumbling block to unbelievers.

God's people (2:9-10).

> *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:9-10**

The titles God gave Israel at Sinai (Exodus 19:5-6) now describe the church: chosen, royal priests, a holy nation, God's own possession. Their purpose is to proclaim the excellencies of the God who called them from darkness into light. Gentiles who were "not a people" are now God's people (Hosea 2:23).

Section II: Our Conduct Among Unbelievers (2:11-3:12)

Chapter 2:11-17 — Pilgrims and Citizens

> *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:11-12**

Believers are foreigners and temporary residents on earth. They must resist sinful desires that wage war against the soul, and live such good lives that even slanderers will eventually glorify God (Matthew 5:16).

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors" (2:13-14). Remarkably, the "king" at the time was Nero. Believers obey the government because God established it to punish evil and praise good (Romans 13:1-7), and because good conduct silences ignorant critics (2:15). They are free, but must not use freedom as a cover for evil; they are God's servants (2:16). (Submission has limits: when rulers command sin, "We ought to obey God rather than men," Acts 5:29.)

> *Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:17**

Chapter 2:18-25 — Servants and the Example of Christ

Servants should submit to their masters, "not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (harsh) (2:18). There is no credit for enduring punishment for doing wrong; "but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (2:19-20).

> *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*
>
> **1 Peter 2:21-23**

"Example" is a word for the model letters a child traced when learning to write. Christ is the pattern for believers who suffer unjustly. He was sinless and truthful (Isaiah 53:9). When insulted, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He did not threaten; He entrusted Himself to God, the righteous Judge.

> *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:24-25**

Christ is more than an example; He is our Substitute. He personally carried our sins in His own body on the cross. The purpose was that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. "By whose stripes ye were healed" (Isaiah 53:5) refers primarily to healing from sin's deadly wound. Once wandering sheep (Isaiah 53:6), believers have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.

Chapter 3:1-7 — Wives and Husbands

Wives (3:1-6). "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (3:1-2). A believing wife with an unbelieving husband may win him not by preaching at him but by her pure, reverent life.

> *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*
>
> **1 Peter 3:3-4**

Peter does not forbid all attention to appearance, but says a woman's true beauty is inward: a gentle and quiet spirit, which God values highly. Sarah is the example; she "obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" (3:6; Genesis 18:12).

Husbands (3:7).

> *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*
>
> **1 Peter 3:7**

Husbands must live with their wives considerately, seeking to understand them, and honour them. "The weaker vessel" refers to physical strength, not worth; husband and wife are "heirs together of the grace of life," spiritual equals. A husband who mistreats his wife will find his prayers hindered.

Chapter 3:8-12 — Blessing for Evil

> *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.*
>
> **1 Peter 3:8-9**

Believers must respond to insult with blessing (Matthew 5:44). Peter quotes Psalm 34:12-16: "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil... For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers" (3:10-12).

Section III: Our Suffering for Righteousness (3:13-4:19)

Chapter 3:13-17 — Ready to Give an Answer

"And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled" (3:13-14; Isaiah 8:12-13).

> *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*
>
> **1 Peter 3:15**

The answer to fear is to set apart Christ as Lord in the heart. Then believers can be ready to give a reasoned defence (the Greek word is apologia) of their hope to anyone who asks, with gentleness and respect. Their good conscience and good conduct will shame those who slander them (3:16). "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing" (3:17).

Chapter 3:18-22 — Christ's Suffering and Victory

> *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*
>
> **1 Peter 3:18**

Christ suffered once for all; the righteous One died in place of the unrighteous; and His purpose was to bring us to God. He was put to death in His body but made alive by the Spirit in His resurrection.

> *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.*
>
> **1 Peter 3:19-20**

This is one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. The main views are:

- **Christ preached through Noah:** by the same Spirit, Christ preached through Noah (called "a preacher of righteousness," 2 Peter 2:5; compare 1:11, "the Spirit of Christ which was in them") to the disobedient people of Noah's day, who rejected the message and are now "spirits in prison," awaiting judgment. This view is widely held among Baptists.
- **Christ proclaimed His victory to fallen angels:** after His death or at His resurrection, Christ announced His triumph to the evil spirits imprisoned for their sin in Noah's time (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Genesis 6:1-4). "Preached" can mean "proclaimed" as a herald.

On either view, this passage does not teach a second chance for salvation after death (Hebrews 9:27; Luke 16:26).

Only eight souls were saved in the ark, brought safely through the water that judged the world:

> *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*
>
> **1 Peter 3:21**

Baptism is a "like figure" (a picture corresponding to the flood). Peter immediately explains that water baptism does not save by washing away sin ("not the putting away of the filth of the flesh"), but is "the answer [pledge or appeal] of a good conscience toward God." What saves is "the resurrection of Jesus Christ." As the ark carried Noah safely through judgment, so union with Christ carries believers through judgment into new life, and baptism pictures that union with Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-5). Christ "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (3:22).

Chapter 4:1-11 — Armed with the Mind of Christ

> *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin*
>
> **1 Peter 4:1**

Believers must arm themselves with Christ's attitude: a readiness to suffer rather than sin. A person willing to suffer for doing right has made a decisive break with sin. They should live the rest of their lives for God's will, not human lusts (4:2). They had spent enough time in pagan sins: "lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" (4:3). Their former friends were surprised they no longer joined them "to the same excess of riot," and slandered them; but they would give account to the Judge of the living and the dead (4:4-5). The gospel was preached to those who are now dead, so that though they were judged by men in the body (some even martyred), they might live with God in the spirit (4:6).

> *But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*
>
> **1 Peter 4:7-8**

Because the end is near, believers must be clear-minded for prayer and, above all, love one another deeply, for love forgives and covers many offences (Proverbs 10:12). They must "use hospitality one to another without grudging" (4:9).

> *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ*
>
> **1 Peter 4:10-11**

Every believer has received a gift to use in serving others. Gifts fall into two broad kinds: speaking gifts, which must be exercised as speaking God's very words (faithful to Scripture), and serving gifts, which

must be done in God's strength. The goal is that God be glorified.

Chapter 4:12-19 — The Fiery Trial

> *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*
>
> **1 Peter 4:12-13**

Persecution should not surprise believers; it is the normal experience of Christ's followers (John 15:20; 2 Timothy 3:12). It is a privilege to share in Christ's sufferings, and it leads to joy when His glory is revealed. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you" (4:14).

But believers must never suffer as a murderer, thief, evildoer or "busybody in other men's matters" (4:15).

> *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*
>
> **1 Peter 4:16**

"Christian" appears only three times in the Bible (Acts 11:26; 26:28; here). First used by outsiders, perhaps mockingly, it became a name to wear with honour.

> *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*
>
> **1 Peter 4:17-18**

God's purifying discipline begins with His own people (Ezekiel 9:6). If believers go through fiery trials, how terrible will be the final judgment of those who reject the gospel (Proverbs 11:31)? "Scarcely" means "with difficulty": not that salvation is uncertain, but that the path to glory leads through hardship. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (4:19).

Section IV: Our Shepherds and Our Stand (Chapter 5)

Chapter 5:1-4 — Elders Feeding the Flock

> *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed*
>
> **1 Peter 5:1**

Peter addresses the elders not as a supreme ruler over them but as "also an elder," a fellow elder. He claims no authority over other churches beyond that of an apostle and witness.

> *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*
>
> **1 Peter 5:2-4**

Peter passes on the charge Jesus gave him: "Feed my sheep" (John 21:16). Elders (pastors) must shepherd ("feed") and oversee the flock, which belongs to God, not to them. Three contrasts describe the right spirit: willingly, not by compulsion; eagerly, not for money; by example, not by domineering. Their reward will come from "the chief Shepherd," Christ: "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Chapter 5:5-7 — Humility and Trust

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (5:5; Proverbs 3:34). "Be clothed" uses a word for tying on a servant's apron, perhaps recalling Jesus girding Himself with a towel to wash the disciples' feet (John 13:4-5).

> *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*
>
> **1 Peter 5:6-7**

Humility before God includes trusting Him with our anxieties. "Casting" means throwing them onto Him once and for all (Psalm 55:22). The reason is simple and profound: "he careth for you."

Chapter 5:8-11 — Resisting the Devil

> *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*
>
> **1 Peter 5:8-9**

Peter, who slept when Jesus asked him to watch and pray, now urges alertness. Satan is a real adversary, prowling like a hungry lion. He uses persecution to frighten believers into denying Christ, as he did Peter. Believers must resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that fellow believers everywhere face the same sufferings (James 4:7).

> *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
>
> **1 Peter 5:10-11**

Suffering is "a while"; glory is "eternal." The God of all grace will Himself restore ("make you perfect," mend), establish, strengthen and settle (place on a firm foundation) His people. "Strengthen" echoes Jesus' words to Peter: "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32).

Chapter 5:12-14 — Closing

"By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand" (5:12). Everything in the letter is the true grace of God; they must stand in it. "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son" (5:13). "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen" (5:14).

Part Three: Christ in 1 Peter

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:2	The One whose sprinkled blood cleanses the elect
1:3	The risen One, source of our living hope
1:7, 13	The One whose appearing believers await
1:8	The unseen One whom believers love
1:11	The Spirit of Christ in the prophets, foretelling His sufferings and glory
1:19	The Lamb without blemish and without spot
1:20	Foreordained before the foundation of the world
2:4	The living Stone, rejected by men, chosen by God
2:6-8	The chief cornerstone and the stone of stumbling
2:21	Our example in suffering
2:22	The sinless One, without guile
2:24	The Sin-bearer on the tree
2:25	The Shepherd and Bishop of our souls
3:18	The just for the unjust, who brings us to God
3:22	Ascended, at God's right hand, with angels and powers subject to Him
4:5	The Judge of the living and the dead
4:13	The One whose glory will be revealed
5:4	The chief Shepherd
5:10	The One through whom we are called to eternal glory

The Sufferings and the Glory

Peter says the prophets foretold "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1:11). This pattern runs through the whole letter: for Christ and for His people, suffering comes first, then glory.

Christ's Suffering	Christ's Glory	The Believer's Share
Rejected by men (2:4, 7)	Made the head of the corner (2:7)	Rejected by the world, built into God's house (2:5)
Suffered unjustly, reviled (2:21-23)	Committed Himself to the righteous Judge (2:23)	Suffer for well doing, committing their souls to God (4:19)
Bore our sins on the tree (2:24)	Raised and quickened by the Spirit (3:18)	Dead to sins, alive to righteousness (2:24)

Christ's Suffering	Christ's Glory	The Believer's Share
Put to death in the flesh (3:18)	Seated at God's right hand (3:22)	Partakers of His sufferings (4:13)
The Shepherd who laid down His life	The chief Shepherd who will appear (5:4)	Crowns of glory; called to eternal glory (5:4, 10)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	1 Peter	Fulfillment
The prophets foretelling the sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow	1:10-12	Fulfilled in His death, resurrection and ascension
A lamb without blemish	1:19	Exodus 12:5; fulfilled in Christ
The chief cornerstone laid in Sion	2:6	Isaiah 28:16; fulfilled in Christ
The rejected stone made the head of the corner	2:7	Psalm 118:22; fulfilled in His rejection and exaltation (Acts 4:11)
A stone of stumbling	2:8	Isaiah 8:14; fulfilled in Israel's unbelief
"Not my people... my people"	2:10	Hosea 1:10; 2:23; fulfilled as Gentiles become God's people
The suffering Servant: no guile, by whose stripes we are healed, sheep gone astray	2:22-25	Isaiah 53:5-9; fulfilled at the cross
Christ seated at God's right hand, all powers subject	3:22	Psalm 110:1; fulfilled at the ascension
Judgment beginning at the house of God	4:17	Ezekiel 9:6; fulfilled in the persecutions of believers
The end of all things at hand	4:7	Still future
The revelation of Christ's glory	1:7, 13; 4:13; 5:1	Still future
The chief Shepherd appearing with crowns of glory	5:4	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 Peter 1:3-9 — The Living Hope

Believers are born again to a living hope through Christ's resurrection, with an imperishable inheritance kept in heaven and themselves kept by God's power. Trials prove the genuineness of faith, more precious than gold, and believers rejoice in a Christ they have not seen.

1 Peter 1:13-25 — Called to Holiness

Prepared minds, self-control and hope on Christ's return lead to holy living, because God is holy. We were redeemed not with silver or gold but with Christ's precious blood, and born again by God's eternal Word.

1 Peter 2:1-10 — God's Spiritual House

Believers grow by craving the pure milk of the Word. They are living stones built on Christ, the cornerstone, into a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and God's own people, called to declare His praises.

1 Peter 2:11-17 — Good Citizens and Pilgrims

As strangers and pilgrims, believers resist fleshly lusts, live honourably so that critics glorify God, submit to rulers for the Lord's sake, and honour all, love the brotherhood, fear God and honour the king.

1 Peter 2:21-25 — Christ Our Example and Substitute

Christ suffered unjustly without sin, retaliation or threats, leaving an example to follow. And He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

1 Peter 3:1-7 — The Christian Marriage

Wives win unbelieving husbands by godly conduct and the inner beauty of a meek and quiet spirit. Husbands live with their wives with understanding and honour, as fellow heirs of grace.

1 Peter 3:15 — Ready to Answer

With Christ honoured as Lord in their hearts, believers must always be ready to explain their hope to anyone who asks, gently and respectfully.

1 Peter 3:18-22 — Christ's Victory

Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He was raised, triumphed over every power, and reigns. Baptism pictures our salvation through His resurrection, as the ark carried Noah through the flood.

1 Peter 4:7-11 — Living in the Last Days

Because the end is near: pray, love fervently, show hospitality, and use every gift to serve others for God's glory.

1 Peter 4:12-19 — The Fiery Trial

Persecution is not strange. Rejoice in sharing Christ's sufferings, never be ashamed to suffer as a Christian, and commit your soul to the faithful Creator.

1 Peter 5:1-4 — Shepherding God's Flock

Elders must feed and oversee God's flock willingly, eagerly and by example, looking for the chief Shepherd and the crown of glory.

1 Peter 5:5-11 — Humble, Trusting, Vigilant

Be clothed with humility, cast all your care on God who cares for you, be alert against the devil, resist him steadfast in the faith, and trust the God of all grace to restore and establish you.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 Peter

1. Election and the Trinity in Salvation

The Father foreknows, the Spirit sanctifies, the Son's blood cleanses (1:2).

2. The New Birth

Born again to a living hope, by the incorruptible Word (1:3, 23).

3. The Security of the Believer

An inheritance kept in heaven; believers kept by God's power (1:4-5).

4. The Purpose of Trials

Trials prove and purify faith (1:6-7; 4:12-13).

5. The Inspiration of Scripture

The Spirit of Christ spoke through the prophets; God's Word endures for ever (1:10-12, 23-25).

6. Holiness

"Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1:15-16).

7. Redemption by Blood

Not with silver and gold, but with Christ's precious blood (1:18-19).

8. The Priesthood of All Believers

Every believer is a priest offering spiritual sacrifices (2:5, 9).

9. The Church as God's People

A chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation (2:9-10).

10. Submission to Authority

To rulers, masters and husbands, for the Lord's sake (2:13-3:6).

11. Substitutionary Atonement

Christ bore our sins on the tree, the just for the unjust (2:24; 3:18).

12. Christ's Example in Suffering

Believers follow His steps in enduring injustice (2:21-23).

13. Christian Apologetics

Always ready to give an answer for the hope within (3:15).

14. Baptism as a Figure

Baptism pictures salvation through Christ's resurrection; it does not wash away sin (3:21).

15. Spiritual Gifts and Stewardship

Every believer serves with the gift received (4:10-11).

16. Suffering as a Christian

A privilege, not a shame (4:14-16).

17. Church Leadership

Elders shepherd the flock willingly and by example (5:1-4).

18. Spiritual Warfare

Resist the devil, steadfast in the faith (5:8-9).

19. The Second Coming

The revelation of Christ's glory, the appearing of the chief Shepherd (1:7; 4:13; 5:4).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 Peter Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 Peter and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The flood and the eight saved in the ark (6-8; 1 Peter 3:20); Sarah calling Abraham lord (18:12; 1 Peter 3:6)
Exodus	The Passover lamb without blemish (12:5; 1 Peter 1:19); a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a peculiar treasure (19:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9)
Leviticus	"Be ye holy; for I am holy" (11:44; 19:2; 1 Peter 1:16)
Psalms	"O taste and see that the LORD is good" (34:8; 1 Peter 2:3); "He that will love life" (34:12-16; 1 Peter 3:10-12); cast thy burden on the LORD (55:22; 1 Peter 5:7); the rejected stone (118:22; 1 Peter 2:7); the right hand of God (110:1; 1 Peter 3:22)
Proverbs	Love covers sins (10:12; 1 Peter 4:8); the righteous scarcely saved (11:31; 1 Peter 4:18); God resists the proud (3:34; 1 Peter 5:5)
Isaiah	Fear not their fear; sanctify the LORD (8:12-13; 1 Peter 3:14-15); the stone of stumbling (8:14; 1 Peter 2:8); the cornerstone in Sion (28:16; 1 Peter 2:6); all flesh is grass (40:6-8; 1 Peter 1:24-25); a chosen people to show forth His praise (43:20-21; 1 Peter 2:9); the suffering Servant (53:5-9; 1 Peter 2:22-25)
Ezekiel	Shepherds who feed themselves rather than the flock (34; 1 Peter 5:2-3); judgment beginning at the sanctuary (9:6; 1 Peter 4:17)
Hosea	"Ye are not my people... Ye are the sons of the living God" (1:10; 2:23; 1 Peter 2:10)

1 Peter and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	"Thou art Peter" (16:18); blessed are the persecuted (5:10-12); let your light shine that men may glorify God (5:16; 1 Peter 2:12); love your enemies (5:44; 1 Peter 3:9)
Mark	Mark, Peter's "son" and, by tradition, the recorder of his preaching (1 Peter 5:13)
Luke	Satan sifting Peter; "strengthen thy brethren" (22:31-32; 1 Peter 5:8-10)
John	Blessed are they that have not seen (20:29; 1 Peter 1:8); Jesus washing the disciples' feet (13; 1 Peter 5:5); "Feed my sheep" and Peter's death foretold (21:15-19; 1 Peter 5:2); the good Shepherd (10; 1 Peter 2:25)
Acts	Peter's sermons: the rejected stone (4:11); the Gentiles' inclusion (10); the name "Christian" (11:26); obey God rather than men (5:29)
Romans	Submission to rulers (13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14); living sacrifices (12:1; 1 Peter 2:5); buried with Christ in baptism (6:3-5)
Ephesians	Christ the cornerstone of God's temple (2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:4-6); wives and husbands (5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7)
1 Timothy	Women's adornment (2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:3-4)

Book	Link
2 Timothy	All who live godly shall suffer persecution (3:12; 1 Peter 4:12)
Hebrews	Obey your leaders (13:17); God's discipline (12:5-11); a better resurrection hope
James	Trials producing endurance (1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-7); God resists the proud; resist the devil (4:6-10; 1 Peter 5:5-9); love covering sins (5:20)
2 Peter	Peter's second letter, written shortly before his death (1:13-15)
1 John	We shall be like Him when He appears (3:2)
Revelation	Kings and priests unto God (1:6; 5:10; 1 Peter 2:9); the fall of Babylon (17-18; 1 Peter 5:13)

Themes That Run from 1 Peter Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 1 Peter	Developed in the New Testament
The suffering and glory of Christ	Psalm 22; Isaiah 53	1:11; 2:21-25; 3:18	Luke 24:26; Hebrews 2:9-10
The stone	Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14; 28:16	2:4-8	Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20
A royal priesthood	Exodus 19:5-6	2:5, 9	Revelation 1:6; 5:10
Holiness	Leviticus 11:44	1:15-16	Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 7:1
Suffering as a pilgrim	Genesis 23:4; Psalm 39:12	1:1, 17; 2:11	Hebrews 11:13-16
The shepherd	Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34	2:25; 5:2-4	John 10; Hebrews 13:20

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Praise God for your living hope** (1:3).
- **Rest in being kept by God's power** (1:5).
- **See trials as the refining of precious faith** (1:6-7).
- **Love and rejoice in the Christ you have not yet seen** (1:8).
- **Prepare your mind; be sober; fix your hope on Christ's return** (1:13).
- **Be holy in all your conduct** (1:15).
- **Remember the price of your redemption** (1:18-19).
- **Love one another fervently from a pure heart** (1:22).
- **Desire the Word like a newborn craves milk** (2:2).
- **Offer spiritual sacrifices as a priest of God** (2:5).
- **Show forth the praises of Him who called you** (2:9).
- **Abstain from fleshly lusts** (2:11).
- **Live so well that critics glorify God** (2:12).
- **Submit to rulers and honour them** (2:13, 17).
- **Endure unjust treatment patiently** (2:19-20).
- **Follow Christ's steps; don't retaliate** (2:21-23).
- **Live to righteousness, since Christ bore your sins** (2:24).
- **Wives: win husbands by godly lives and inner beauty** (3:1-4).
- **Husbands: live with understanding and honour your wives** (3:7).
- **Return blessing for insult** (3:9).
- **Guard your tongue** (3:10).
- **Honour Christ as Lord in your heart** (3:15).
- **Be ready to give a reason for your hope, gently** (3:15).
- **Keep a good conscience** (3:16).
- **Arm yourself to suffer rather than sin** (4:1).
- **Don't return to your old ways** (4:3).
- **Pray with a clear mind; the end is near** (4:7).
- **Love deeply; love covers sins** (4:8).
- **Practise hospitality without complaining** (4:9).
- **Use your gift to serve others** (4:10).
- **Speak God's words; serve in God's strength** (4:11).
- **Don't be surprised by fiery trials** (4:12).
- **Never be ashamed to suffer as a Christian** (4:16).
- **Commit your soul to the faithful Creator** (4:19).

- **Elders: feed the flock willingly and by example** (5:2-3).
- **Clothe yourself with humility** (5:5).
- **Cast all your care on Him** (5:7).
- **Be alert; resist the devil** (5:8-9).
- **Trust the God of all grace to restore you** (5:10).
- **Stand fast in the true grace of God** (5:12).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead
1:7	That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth
1:8	Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory
1:15-16	Be ye holy; for I am holy.
1:18-19	Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot
1:23	Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.
2:2	As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby
2:9	But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people
2:21	Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps
2:24	Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree... by whose stripes ye were healed.
3:15	Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear
3:18	For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God
4:8	Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.
4:12-13	Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you... But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings
5:6-7	Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God... Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
5:8	Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour
5:10	The God of all grace... after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Conclusion

1 Peter is a letter of hope written by the apostle who once denied his Lord and was restored, to believers scattered as strangers in a hostile world on the eve of persecution. Peter reminded them that God had caused them to be born again to a living hope through Christ's resurrection, with an inheritance kept in heaven, while they themselves are kept by God's power. Their trials, like fire refining gold, would prove their faith precious at Christ's appearing. Redeemed by the precious blood of the spotless Lamb, they must be holy as God is holy, crave the Word, and live as living stones built on Christ the cornerstone, a royal priesthood declaring God's praises. As pilgrims they must live so honourably that even slanderers glorify God, submitting to rulers, masters and husbands for the Lord's sake, and following the steps of Christ, who suffered without sin or retaliation and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. When they suffer for righteousness, they should not fear but be ready to explain their hope, armed with Christ's mind, loving one another fervently because the end is near, and never ashamed to suffer as Christians. Elders must feed God's flock as under-shepherds of the chief Shepherd, and all must clothe themselves with humility, cast their cares on the God who cares for them, and resist the roaring lion, steadfast in the faith. After they have suffered a while, the God of all grace will Himself restore, establish, strengthen and settle them in His eternal glory.

> *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*
>
> **1 Peter 5:10**

2 Peter

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Peter • Date: c. AD 66-67 • Chapters: 3

> *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 Peter 1:21**

Part One: Introduction to 2 Peter

The Author

"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). The writer identifies himself as Peter, an eyewitness of Christ's transfiguration on the holy mount (1:16-18), the author of an earlier letter to the same readers ("This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you," 3:1), and a friend of "our beloved brother Paul" (3:15). He knew that his death was near, "even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me" (1:14; John 21:18-19).

2 Peter was accepted into the New Testament more slowly than most books, and some have questioned whether Peter wrote it, pointing to its different style from 1 Peter. But 1 Peter was written with the help of Silvanus (1 Peter 5:12), which may explain the difference; the letter claims Peter's authorship plainly, contains personal details that fit Peter's life, and was recognised by the church as inspired Scripture. Its message carries the marks of an apostle facing death.

Date and Setting

Peter wrote shortly before his martyrdom in Rome, around AD 66-68: "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle" (1:14). This is Peter's last will and testament, as 2 Timothy is Paul's. Both, written from Rome near the end, warn of false teaching and point believers to the Scriptures.

The Recipients

The letter is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us" (1:1), apparently the same believers in Asia Minor who received 1 Peter (3:1).

The Situation

In 1 Peter, the danger was persecution from outside the church. In 2 Peter, the danger is corruption from inside: false teachers within the churches, who denied the Lord, lived immoral lives, exploited believers for money and promised a false liberty (2:1-3, 10-19). With them came scoffers who mocked the promise of Christ's return (3:3-4).

Purpose and Theme

Peter wrote to remind believers of the truth they already knew (1:12-13, 15; 3:1-2), to urge them to grow in the true knowledge of Christ, and to warn them against false teachers and scoffers. Words for "knowledge" appear about sixteen times. True knowledge of Christ is the safeguard against error, and the Word of God, both the prophets and the apostles, is the sure foundation.

> *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue*
>
> **2 Peter 1:3**

> *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:18**

1 Peter and 2 Peter

Feature	1 Peter	2 Peter
The danger	Persecution from without	False teaching from within
The emphasis	Hope	Knowledge
The response	Endure suffering, following Christ	Grow in grace and knowledge; guard the truth
Christ's return	The revelation of His glory, a comfort in suffering	The day of the Lord, a certainty mocked by scoffers
Key word	Suffering; grace; hope	Knowledge; remember; diligence

2 Peter and Jude

Chapter 2 of 2 Peter closely parallels the letter of Jude. Both warn against the same kind of false teachers with many of the same examples and images. One writer may have drawn on the other, or both may have used common material:

Description	2 Peter	Jude
False teachers denying the Lord	2:1	4
Angels who sinned, kept in chains of darkness	2:4	6
Sodom and Gomorrha as an example	2:6	7
Despising authority, speaking evil of dignities	2:10	8
Angels not bringing railing accusation	2:11	9
Like natural brute beasts	2:12	10
Spots in your feasts	2:13	12
The way of Balaam	2:15	11
Wells without water, clouds driven by storms	2:17	12-13
Great swelling words	2:18	16
Mockers in the last time, walking after their own lusts	3:2-3	17-18

Outline of 2 Peter

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Grow in the True Knowledge	1	Cultivating Christian character
God's provision	1:1-4	"Partakers of the divine nature"

Section	Chapters	Theme
Christian virtues	1:5-11	"Add to your faith"
Peter's reminder before his death	1:12-15	"Put off this my tabernacle"
The sure foundation: eyewitness and Scripture	1:16-21	"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"
II. Beware of False Teachers	2	Condemning apostasy
Their arrival and doom	2:1-3	"Damnable heresies"
Examples of God's judgment and deliverance	2:4-9	"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly"
Their character	2:10-19	"Wells without water"
Their end	2:20-22	"The dog is turned to his own vomit"
III. Look for the Day of the Lord	3	Hope and holiness
Scoffers in the last days	3:1-7	"Where is the promise of his coming?"
God's patience	3:8-9	"Not willing that any should perish"
The day of the Lord and new heavens	3:10-13	"Wherein dwelleth righteousness"
Final exhortations	3:14-18	"Grow in grace"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Grow in the True Knowledge (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-4 — God's Provision

> *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*
>
> **2 Peter 1:1**

Believers' faith is "like precious," equal in value to the apostles' faith. It comes "through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," a phrase that, in the Greek, calls Jesus Christ both "God" and "Saviour" (compare Titus 2:13). "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord" (1:2).

> *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:3-4**

God's power has already given believers everything they need for spiritual life and godly living, through knowing Christ. The false teachers claimed special knowledge; Peter says that knowing Christ is enough. Through God's promises, believers become "partakers of the divine nature." This does not mean that people become God, but that through the new birth they share in God's moral character, receiving a new nature that loves holiness, having escaped the world's corruption.

Chapter 1:5-11 — Add to Your Faith

> *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:5-7**

God has provided everything; believers must respond with "all diligence." "Add" (supply generously) was used of a wealthy patron who paid lavishly for a chorus in a public festival. Faith is the foundation; on it believers build seven qualities:

Grace	Meaning
Faith	The foundation: trust in Christ
Virtue	Moral excellence, courage to do right
Knowledge	Growing understanding of God and His will

Grace	Meaning
Temperance	Self-control
Patience	Endurance under pressure
Godliness	Reverent devotion to God
Brotherly kindness	Affection for fellow believers
Charity	Self-giving love for all, the crown of the list

> *For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:8-9**

Growing in these qualities makes believers fruitful. Lacking them, a professing believer is spiritually short-sighted and has forgotten his cleansing from sin.

> *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:10-11**

God's calling and choosing are certain in themselves; believers make them "sure" to their own hearts, and evident to others, by growing in these qualities. This is assurance, not earning salvation. Those who grow will not "fall" (stumble into ruin), and will receive a rich, abundant welcome into Christ's eternal kingdom, like a victor welcomed home.

Chapter 1:12-15 — Peter's Reminder Before Death

Peter would always remind them of these things, "though ye know them, and be established in the present truth" (1:12). Believers need reminders, not novelties.

> *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:13-14**

Peter called his body a "tabernacle," a tent, temporary and soon to be taken down. Jesus had foretold the kind of death by which he would glorify God (John 21:18-19). Peter would make sure that after his "decease" (the Greek word is "exodus," the same word used of Christ's departure at the transfiguration, Luke 9:31), they would always be able to remember these things (1:15), through his letters and perhaps the Gospel of Mark, which tradition links with Peter's preaching.

Chapter 1:16-21 — The Sure Foundation

The eyewitness (1:16-18).

> *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*
>
> **2 Peter 1:16-18**

The false teachers may have called the second coming a myth. Peter insists that the apostles' message was not clever fiction. On the mount of transfiguration, Peter, James and John saw Christ's glory and heard the Father's voice (Matthew 17:1-8). The transfiguration was a preview of His power and coming in glory.

The Scripture (1:19-21).

> *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*
>
> **2 Peter 1:19**

Even more certain than Peter's eyewitness experience is the written Word of prophecy. (The phrase may also mean that the transfiguration made the prophetic Word "more sure," confirmed.) Scripture is like a lamp shining in a dark, gloomy place, guiding believers until the day dawns at Christ's return, when "the day star," Christ Himself (Numbers 24:17; Revelation 22:16), rises.

> *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 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 Peter 1:20-21**

"Private interpretation" refers to the origin of prophecy: no prophecy of Scripture arose from the prophet's own understanding or interpretation of events. Scripture did not originate in human will. Holy men spoke from God as they were "moved," carried along, by the Holy Spirit, as a ship is carried along by the wind (the same word is used in Acts 27:15, 17). The human writers were real authors using their own minds and styles, yet the Spirit guided them so that what they wrote was exactly what God intended. This, with 2 Timothy 3:16, is the clearest statement of the inspiration of Scripture.

Section II: Beware of False Teachers (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2:1-3 — Their Arrival and Doom

> *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*
>
> **2 Peter 2:1**

Just as false prophets troubled Israel alongside the true prophets (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Jeremiah 23), false teachers would arise in the church. They would work secretly, introducing destructive heresies, even denying the Lord ("Master") who bought them. (Baptists differ on how to understand "the Lord that bought them." Some see it as showing that Christ's death provided redemption sufficient for all, even for those who reject it; others understand it as describing what these teachers claimed, or Christ's rights as Master over all. On either view, these false teachers were never truly saved, and their destruction is certain.)

"And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2:2). Their immorality would bring the gospel into disrepute. "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (2:3): they would exploit believers for money with fabricated stories. But their judgment "lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

Chapter 2:4-9 — God Judges the Wicked and Delivers the Godly

Peter gives three examples of God's judgment, with two examples of His deliverance:

- **The angels who sinned (2:4):** God "spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Greek tartarus, a place of confinement], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (Jude 6).
- **The ancient world (2:5):** God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."
- **Sodom and Gomorrha (2:6-8):** God turned them to ashes as "an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked... in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" (Genesis 19). Despite his compromises, Lot was a righteous man, distressed by the wickedness around him.

> *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished*
>
> **2 Peter 2:9**

The conclusion is twofold: God knows how to rescue His people, however great the wickedness around them, and how to hold the wicked for judgment.

Chapter 2:10-19 — The Character of False Teachers

Peter paints a vivid portrait of these teachers:

False Teacher Trait	2 Peter
They walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness	2:10
They despise authority; they are presumptuous, self-willed, and speak evil of dignities	2:10
Even angels, greater in power, do not bring railing accusations	2:11
They are like natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed	2:12
They speak evil of things they do not understand	2:12
They riot in the daytime; they are spots and blemishes at the believers' feasts	2:13
They have eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin	2:14
They beguile unstable souls	2:14
They are trained in covetous practices; cursed children	2:14
They follow the way of Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness	2:15-16
They are wells without water, clouds driven by a storm	2:17
They speak great swelling words of vanity	2:18
They allure recent converts through fleshly lusts	2:18
They promise liberty, but are themselves slaves of corruption	2:19

Balaam, the prophet hired to curse Israel, was so blinded by greed that his donkey had to rebuke him: "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet" (2:16; Numbers 22). False teachers are "wells without water": they promise refreshment but give nothing (2:17).

> *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*
>
> **2 Peter 2:19**

They offered freedom from moral restraint, but they were slaves to their own corruption. True freedom is found only in Christ (John 8:34-36).

Chapter 2:20-22 — Their Terrible End

> *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*
>
> **2 Peter 2:20-21**

These people had gained knowledge of Christ and outwardly escaped the world's pollution for a time, but then returned to it. Their final state is worse than before, because they sinned against greater light

(Luke 12:47-48).

> *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*
>
> **2 Peter 2:22**

The proverb (Proverbs 26:11) reveals what they really were. A dog returning to its vomit and a washed pig returning to the mud never changed their natures; they were cleaned on the outside only. These false teachers had experienced outward reformation, not inward regeneration. They were never "partakers of the divine nature" (1:4). This passage does not describe true believers losing salvation, but false professors returning to what they always were.

Section III: Look for the Day of the Lord (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3:1-7 — The Scoffers

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (3:1-2). The apostles' teaching stands alongside the prophets' as authoritative.

> *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:3-4**

Scoffers would mock the promise of Christ's return, arguing that nothing ever changes; the world simply continues by natural processes as it always has. Their real motive was moral: they walked "after their own lusts" and did not want to face a coming judgment. Peter answered that they deliberately ignore two great facts of history:

- **Creation (3:5):** "by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water" (Genesis 1:2, 6-9). The world did not always exist; God made it by His word.
- **The flood (3:6):** "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (Genesis 6-8). God has already intervened in worldwide judgment once.

> *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:7**

The same word that created the world and judged it by water now holds it in reserve for judgment by fire.

Chapter 3:8-9 — God's Patience

> *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:8**

God does not experience time as we do (Psalm 90:4). What seems a long delay to us is nothing to Him. (This verse teaches God's perspective on time, not a formula for calculating prophetic dates.)

> *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:9**

The apparent delay of Christ's return is not slowness or failure; it is mercy. God is patient, giving people time to repent, because He does not desire anyone to perish (Ezekiel 33:11; 1 Timothy 2:4).

Chapter 3:10-13 — The Day of the Lord and the New Heavens

> *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:10**

The day of the Lord will come unexpectedly (Matthew 24:43; 1 Thessalonians 5:2). It will climax in the dissolution of the present universe by fire: the heavens passing away with a roar, the "elements" (the basic components of matter) dissolving in intense heat, and the earth and its works laid bare and burned up (Isaiah 34:4; Revelation 20:11).

> *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God*
>
> **2 Peter 3:11-12**

Prophecy is given not to satisfy curiosity but to change lives. If everything material will be destroyed, believers should live holy and godly lives, investing in what lasts. They are to be "looking for and hasting" the coming of that day, eagerly anticipating it and, through holy living, prayer and evangelism, being part of God's purposes to bring it about.

> *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:13**

The end is not destruction but renewal. God has promised new heavens and a new earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1), a home where righteousness dwells permanently.

Chapter 3:14-18 — Final Exhortations

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (3:14). Believers should "account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation" (3:15): every day of delay is another day for people to be saved.

> *Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:15-16**

Peter warmly commends "our beloved brother Paul," who had once publicly rebuked him (Galatians 2:11-14). He acknowledges that some things in Paul's letters are hard to understand, and that the ignorant and unstable twist them, as they do "the other scriptures." Peter thus places Paul's letters alongside the Old Testament as Scripture, early evidence that the apostles' writings were recognised as God's Word.

> *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:17-18**

Forewarned, believers must guard against being carried away by error. The best defence is growth: growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Peter's last recorded words are a doxology to Jesus Christ, giving Him the glory that belongs to God alone.

Part Three: Christ in 2 Peter

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ
1:2, 8	The One whose knowledge brings grace, peace and fruitfulness
1:3	The One whose divine power gives all things for life and godliness
1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18	Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, King of the everlasting kingdom
1:14	The Lord who revealed to Peter the time of his death
1:16	The One whose power and coming the apostles proclaimed
1:16-17	The majestic, transfigured beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased
1:19	The day star who will arise
2:1	The Lord (Master) whom false teachers deny
2:9	The Lord who delivers the godly
3:4, 10	The One whose coming is certain, though mocked
3:9, 15	The patient Lord, not willing that any should perish
3:18	The One to whom glory belongs, now and for ever

The Scoffers' Error and the Truth

The Scoffers Say	The Truth
"Where is the promise of his coming?" (3:4)	The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (3:9)
"All things continue as they were from the beginning" (3:4)	God created the world by His word and judged it by the flood (3:5-6)
Nothing will ever change	The heavens and earth are reserved for fire (3:7)
It has been too long	A thousand years are as one day with the Lord (3:8)
God is slow or unwilling	God is patient, giving time for repentance (3:9)
There is no judgment, so live as you please	The day of the Lord will come as a thief; live holy lives (3:10-11)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	2 Peter	Fulfillment
Peter's death foretold by Christ	1:14	John 21:18-19; fulfilled in his martyrdom (about AD 66-68)
The transfiguration as a preview of Christ's power and coming	1:16-18	Fulfilled on the holy mount (Matthew 17:1-8); completed at His return
The prophetic Word confirmed	1:19	Fulfilled in Christ
The day star arising	1:19	Numbers 24:17; Revelation 22:16; at His coming
False teachers arising in the church	2:1-3	Fulfilled from the apostolic age onward
Scoffers in the last days	3:3-4	Fulfilled and increasing
The day of the Lord as a thief	3:10	Still future
The heavens and earth dissolved by fire	3:7, 10-12	Still future
New heavens and a new earth	3:13	Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; still future (Revelation 21:1)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 Peter 1:3-4 — Everything Needed

God's divine power has given believers everything they need for life and godliness through knowing Christ, and through His promises they share in His nature and escape the world's corruption.

2 Peter 1:5-11 — Growing in Grace

On the foundation of faith, believers diligently add virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. This growth makes them fruitful, confirms their calling and election, and leads to an abundant entrance into Christ's kingdom.

2 Peter 1:16-21 — The Sure Word

The apostles were eyewitnesses of Christ's majesty, not tellers of fables. Even more sure is the Word of Scripture, which did not originate in human will, but came as holy men of God spoke, carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 2:1-3 — False Teachers

False teachers will arise within the church, secretly introducing destructive heresies, denying the Lord, living immorally and exploiting believers for money. Their judgment is certain.

2 Peter 2:9 — Deliverance and Judgment

The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and how to hold the wicked for judgment, as He did with Noah and Lot.

2 Peter 2:19-22 — False Freedom and False Profession

False teachers promise liberty but are slaves of corruption. Those who outwardly escape the world but return to it show that their natures were never changed.

2 Peter 3:3-9 — The Scoffers and God's Patience

Scoffers mock Christ's return, ignoring creation and the flood. But God's timing is not ours, and His delay is mercy: He is not willing that any should perish.

2 Peter 3:10-14 — The Day of the Lord

The present heavens and earth will be dissolved by fire, and God will create new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. Knowing this, believers should live holy lives, looking for that day and being found blameless.

2 Peter 3:18 — Grow in Grace

The final command and best defence against error is to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 Peter

1. The Deity of Christ

Jesus Christ is called "God and our Saviour" and receives eternal glory (1:1; 3:18).

2. The Sufficiency of God's Provision

All things for life and godliness through knowing Christ (1:3).

3. The New Nature

Believers are partakers of the divine nature (1:4).

4. Spiritual Growth

Diligently adding Christian virtues to faith (1:5-8; 3:18).

5. Assurance of Salvation

Calling and election made sure by growth in grace (1:10-11).

6. The Inspiration of Scripture

Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (1:20-21).

7. The Authority of the Apostles

Their teaching stands with the prophets; Paul's letters are Scripture (3:2, 15-16).

8. False Teachers

Their doctrines, motives, character and judgment (2).

9. God's Judgment and Deliverance

God judged angels, the ancient world and Sodom, and delivered Noah and Lot (2:4-9).

10. True and False Profession

Outward reformation without a new nature leads back to sin (2:20-22).

11. The Second Coming

Certain, though mocked (3:3-4, 10).

12. God's Patience and Desire for Salvation

Not willing that any should perish (3:9, 15).

13. The Day of the Lord and New Creation

The dissolution of the present universe and new heavens and earth (3:10-13).

14. Holy Living in Light of the End

What manner of persons ought ye to be (3:11, 14).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 Peter Links to the Rest of the Bible

2 Peter and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	The earth standing out of the water (1:2, 6-9; 2 Peter 3:5); the sons of God and the angels who sinned (6:1-4; 2 Peter 2:4); Noah and the flood (6-8; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6); Sodom, Gomorrha and Lot (19; 2 Peter 2:6-8)
Numbers	Balaam rebuked by his donkey (22:21-35; 2 Peter 2:15-16); a Star out of Jacob (24:17; 2 Peter 1:19)
Deuteronomy	False prophets among the people (13:1-5; 18:20-22; 2 Peter 2:1)
Psalms	The Son declared (2:7; 2 Peter 1:17); a thousand years as yesterday (90:4; 2 Peter 3:8)
Proverbs	The dog returning to his vomit (26:11; 2 Peter 2:22)
Isaiah	"Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth" (42:1; 2 Peter 1:17); the heavens rolled together as a scroll (34:4; 2 Peter 3:10); new heavens and a new earth (65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13)
Jeremiah	False prophets who speak a vision of their own heart (23:16, 21; 2 Peter 1:21; 2:1)
Ezekiel	No pleasure in the death of the wicked (33:11; 2 Peter 3:9)
Malachi	The day that shall burn as an oven (4:1; 2 Peter 3:7, 10)

2 Peter and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The transfiguration (17:1-8; 2 Peter 1:16-18); false prophets and false christs (24:11, 24); the thief in the night (24:43); by their fruits ye shall know them (7:15-20)
Luke	Moses and Elijah speak of His "decease" (exodus) (9:31; 2 Peter 1:15)
John	Peter's death foretold (21:18-19; 2 Peter 1:14); the servant of sin (8:34-36; 2 Peter 2:19)
Acts	Paul's warning of grievous wolves (20:29-30)
Romans	The goodness of God leading to repentance (2:4; 2 Peter 3:9, 15)
Galatians	Paul's rebuke of Peter, and their reconciliation (2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:15)
1 Thessalonians	The day of the Lord as a thief (5:2; 2 Peter 3:10)
1 Timothy	God will have all men to be saved (2:4; 2 Peter 3:9)
2 Timothy	All scripture by inspiration of God (3:16; 2 Peter 1:21); itching ears and fables (4:3-4); Paul's departure (4:6; 2 Peter 1:14)
Titus	Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (2:13; 2 Peter 1:1)
1 Peter	The first letter to the same readers (2 Peter 3:1)
1 John	Many antichrists (2:18-19); test the spirits (4:1)
Jude	The parallel warning against false teachers (see table)

Book	Link
Revelation	The bright and morning star (22:16; 2 Peter 1:19); the new heaven and new earth (21:1; 2 Peter 3:13)

Themes That Run from 2 Peter Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 2 Peter	Developed in the New Testament
The inspiration of Scripture	2 Samuel 23:2; Jeremiah 1:9	1:20-21	2 Timothy 3:16
False prophets and teachers	Deuteronomy 13; Jeremiah 23	2	Matthew 7:15; 1 John 4:1; Jude
The flood as a pattern of judgment	Genesis 6-8	2:5; 3:5-7	Matthew 24:37-39
Deliverance of the righteous	Genesis 7; 19	2:5-9	1 Corinthians 10:13
God's patience	Exodus 34:6; Jonah 4:2	3:9, 15	Romans 2:4; 1 Timothy 1:16
New heavens and new earth	Isaiah 65:17; 66:22	3:13	Revelation 21-22

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Value the precious faith you share with the apostles** (1:1).
- **Rest in God's full provision for godly living** (1:3).
- **Claim God's exceeding great and precious promises** (1:4).
- **Add to your faith with all diligence** (1:5-7).
- **Be fruitful in the knowledge of Christ** (1:8).
- **Never forget you were cleansed from your old sins** (1:9).
- **Make your calling and election sure by growing** (1:10).
- **Welcome reminders of truths you already know** (1:12).
- **Remember that your body is a tent** (1:13-14).
- **Trust the eyewitness testimony of the apostles** (1:16).
- **Take heed to the Scriptures as a light in a dark place** (1:19).
- **Believe that Scripture came from God, not man** (1:21).
- **Watch for false teachers inside the church** (2:1).
- **Beware of those who exploit you for money** (2:3).
- **Trust God to deliver you in an evil world** (2:9).
- **Be vexed by sin, like Lot, not comfortable with it** (2:7-8).
- **Don't be fooled by promises of liberty that lead to bondage** (2:19).
- **Seek a changed nature, not just outward reform** (2:22).
- **Expect scoffers, and don't be shaken by them** (3:3).
- **Remember creation and the flood** (3:5-6).
- **Trust God's timing** (3:8).
- **See God's patience as an opportunity for salvation** (3:9, 15).
- **Live in holiness, knowing everything will be dissolved** (3:11).
- **Look for the new heavens and new earth** (3:13).
- **Be found in peace, without spot, and blameless** (3:14).
- **Handle Scripture carefully; don't twist it** (3:16).
- **Guard your steadfastness** (3:17).
- **Grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ** (3:18).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness
1:4	Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature
1:5-7	Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.
1:10	Give diligence to make your calling and election sure
1:16	For we have not followed cunningly devised fables... but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
1:19	We have also a more sure word of prophecy... as unto a light that shineth in a dark place
1:20-21	No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation... holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
2:9	The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations
3:8	One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
3:9	The Lord is not slack concerning his promise... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
3:10	But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night
3:11	What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness
3:13	We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.
3:18	But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

2 Peter is the apostle's farewell, written as he prepared to put off his earthly tent. Facing death, Peter reminded believers of what they already knew. God's divine power has given them everything for life and godliness through knowing Christ, and His great promises make them partakers of the divine nature. They must therefore add to their faith, with all diligence, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love, making their calling and election sure and looking forward to an abundant entrance into Christ's eternal kingdom. Their faith does not rest on fables: Peter saw Christ's majesty on the holy mount and heard the Father's voice, and they have the even more sure word of Scripture, given as holy men spoke, carried along by the Holy Ghost. Peter warned that false teachers would arise within the church, denying the Lord, living immorally, exploiting believers, promising liberty while enslaved to corruption, and returning like a dog to its vomit; but God, who judged the angels, the ancient world and Sodom, knows how to deliver the godly and judge the wicked. Scoffers would mock the promise of Christ's coming, forgetting creation and the flood; but the Lord is not slow, only patient, not willing that any should perish. The day of the Lord will come as a thief, the heavens and earth will be dissolved by fire, and God will make new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. So believers must live holy lives, be found blameless, guard against error, and above all grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever.

> *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:18**

1 John

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John • Date: c. AD 85-95 • Chapters: 5

> *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life*
>
> **1 John 5:13**

Part One: Introduction to 1 John

The Author

1 John does not name its author, but from the earliest times the church has received it as the work of the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:20, 24). Early writers such as Irenaeus, who learned from Polycarp, a disciple of John, attributed it to him. The writer speaks as an eyewitness of Jesus:

> *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life*
>
> **1 John 1:1**

The letter's vocabulary and themes are strikingly similar to the Gospel of John: light and darkness, truth and lies, love, abiding, being born of God, the world, eternal life, the Word, and "the only begotten Son." The writer addresses his readers tenderly as "little children," the words of an aged spiritual father.

Date and Setting

Early tradition says John spent his last years at Ephesus, ministering to the churches of the province of Asia, and lived until the reign of Trajan (AD 98). 1 John was probably written from Ephesus around AD 85-95, after the Gospel of John and before Revelation. It has no greeting or closing, and reads more like a pastoral sermon sent to the churches in John's care.

The Situation

A group of false teachers had left the churches: "They went out from us, but they were not of us" (2:19). Their teaching seems to have been an early form of Gnosticism, which taught that matter is evil and spirit is good, and that salvation comes through special knowledge. From John's answers we can see that they:

The Error	John's Answer
Denied that Jesus is the Christ (2:22)	"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" (2:22)
Denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, teaching that He only seemed human (4:2-3)	"That which... our hands have handled" (1:1); "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (4:2)
Taught that the divine Christ came on Jesus at His baptism and left before His death (5:6)	"Not by water only, but by water and blood" (5:6)

The Error	John's Answer
Claimed to have fellowship with God while walking in darkness (1:6)	"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1:5)
Claimed to be without sin (1:8, 10)	"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1:8)
Claimed to know God without obeying Him (2:4)	"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar" (2:4)
Claimed special knowledge for an elite few (2:20, 27)	"Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (2:20)
Showed no love for the brethren (3:10-18; 4:20)	"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (3:14)

Irenaeus records that one such teacher at Ephesus, Cerinthus, taught that the divine Christ descended on the man Jesus at His baptism and departed before the crucifixion. John's emphasis on Christ coming "by water and blood" answers exactly this error.

Purpose

John states his purposes plainly:

Purpose	1 John
"That your joy may be full"	1:4
"That ye sin not"	2:1
To warn "concerning them that seduce you"	2:26
"That ye may know that ye have eternal life"	5:13

The great purpose is assurance. John's Gospel was written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). His first letter was written to those who already believe, "that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (5:13). The word "know" appears more than thirty times.

The Tests of Eternal Life

Against false teachers who claimed to know God, John gives three tests by which genuine believers can be recognised, and by which they can be assured. He returns to them again and again, in a spiral:

Test of Life	The Question	Key Verses
The doctrinal test	Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, come in the flesh?	2:22-23; 4:2-3, 15; 5:1, 5, 10-12
The moral test	Do you obey God's commandments and practise righteousness?	2:3-6, 29; 3:6-10; 5:2-3

Test of Life	The Question	Key Verses
The social test	Do you love the brethren?	2:9-11; 3:10-18; 4:7-8, 20-21

Theme

The theme of 1 John is fellowship with God and the assurance of eternal life. John presents three great statements about God's nature: "God is light" (1:5), "God is love" (4:8, 16), and the Son as "the true God, and eternal life" (5:20). Those who truly know Him will walk in the light, love one another, and believe in His Son.

> *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*
>
> **1 John 1:5**

> *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
>
> **1 John 4:8**

> *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life*
>
> **1 John 5:13**

The "If We Say" Claims

John exposes false claims by contrasting what people say with how they live:

The Claim	1 John	The Reality
"We have fellowship with him" while walking in darkness	1:6	"We lie, and do not the truth"
"We have no sin"	1:8	"We deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"
"We have not sinned"	1:10	"We make him a liar"
"I know him," but do not keep His commandments	2:4	"Is a liar, and the truth is not in him"
"I abide in him"	2:6	"Ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked"
"I am in the light," but hate my brother	2:9	"Is in darkness even until now"
"I love God," but hate my brother	4:20	"He is a liar"

Outline of 1 John

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. Prologue: The Word of Life	1:1-4	Eyewitness testimony; fellowship and joy
II. God Is Light: Walking in the Light	1:5-2:29	Fellowship, confession and obedience
Sin and confession	1:5-2:2	"If we confess our sins"
Obedience and love	2:3-11	Keeping His commandments
Stages of growth; love not the world	2:12-17	"The world passeth away"
Antichrists and the anointing	2:18-29	"They went out from us"
III. Children of God: Righteousness and Love	3:1-4:6	Born of God
The Father's love and our hope	3:1-3	"We shall be like him"
Practising righteousness	3:4-10	"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin"
Loving the brethren	3:11-24	"In deed and in truth"
Testing the spirits	4:1-6	"Greater is he that is in you"
IV. God Is Love: Love and Faith	4:7-5:21	Assurance
God's love and ours	4:7-21	"We love him, because he first loved us"
Faith that overcomes	5:1-12	"He that hath the Son hath life"
Assurance and confidence	5:13-21	"That ye may know"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: Prologue — The Word of Life (1:1-4)

> *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)*
>
> **1 John 1:1-2**

Like John's Gospel ("In the beginning was the Word," John 1:1), the letter begins with the eternal Christ. He existed "from the beginning," "with the Father." Yet He "was manifested": He became a real man whom the apostles heard, saw, studied and physically touched (Luke 24:39; John 20:27). This answers the false teaching that Christ only seemed to have a body. The eternal Son of God truly came in the flesh.

> *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*
>
> **1 John 1:3-4**

The apostles proclaimed what they had witnessed so that their readers could share their fellowship (a common life and partnership), which is fellowship with the Father and the Son. The result is full joy.

Section II: God Is Light — Walking in the Light (1:5-2:29)

Chapter 1:5-2:2 — Sin, Confession and Our Advocate

> *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*
>
> **1 John 1:5**

Light stands for God's absolute holiness and truth. There is no trace of evil or falsehood in Him. Fellowship with Him therefore requires walking in the light. John answers three false claims about sin:

Claim 1: We can have fellowship with God while living in sin (1:6-7). "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1:6).

> *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*
>
> **1 John 1:7**

Walking in the light means living openly before God, honest about sin, not hiding from Him. Those who do so enjoy fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus keeps on cleansing them from all sin.

Claim 2: We have no sinful nature (1:8-9).

> *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
>
> **1 John 1:8-9**

Believers still have a sinful nature and still sin. Pretending otherwise is self-deception. The remedy is confession: agreeing with God about our sins, naming them as He sees them (Psalm 32:5; Proverbs 28:13). God is "faithful," keeping His promise, and "just," because Christ's blood has fully paid for sin, so forgiving is right. This confession is not to a priest but to God. For the believer, already justified once for all (Romans 5:1), confession restores fellowship in God's family, as a child confesses to a father.

Claim 3: We have not committed sin (1:10). "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Denying sin contradicts God's own verdict on humanity (Romans 3:23).

> *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*
>
> **1 John 2:1-2**

John's goal is that believers not sin. But when they do, they have an Advocate (the Greek word parakl■tos, one called alongside to help, a defence lawyer) in heaven: "Jesus Christ the righteous." He pleads for us, not by excusing our sin, but on the basis of His own sacrifice. He is "the propitiation for our sins": the sacrifice that satisfies God's righteous wrath against sin (the word is related to the "mercy seat," where the atoning blood was sprinkled, Leviticus 16). And His sacrifice is sufficient for "the whole world," not only for Jewish believers or a privileged few. (Baptists differ on how this relates to the extent of the atonement, but all agree that Christ's death is sufficient for all, and that the gospel is to be offered to all.)

Chapter 2:3-11 — Obedience and Love

The test of obedience (2:3-6).

> *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*
>
> **1 John 2:3-4**

The false teachers claimed special knowledge of God. John says that real knowledge of God shows itself in obedience. Whoever keeps His Word has God's love perfected in him. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (2:6).

The test of love (2:7-11). The command to love is "old" (taught from the beginning, Leviticus 19:18) and "new" (seen in a new way in Christ and His people, John 13:34) (2:7-8). "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (2:9-10). Hatred blinds a person (2:11).

Chapter 2:12-17 — Stages of Growth; Love Not the World

John addresses believers at three stages of spiritual growth (2:12-14):

Group	What John Says to Them
Little children	Your sins are forgiven for His name's sake; you have known the Father
Fathers	You have known Him that is from the beginning (mature, deep knowledge of God)
Young men	You have overcome the wicked one; you are strong; the word of God abides in you

> *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*
>
> **1 John 2:15-17**

"The world" here is not the created world or the people God loves (John 3:16), but the system of values and desires organised against God. Its three appeals are:

- **The lust of the flesh:** cravings for physical pleasure.
- **The lust of the eyes:** desire for what we see and want to possess.
- **The pride of life:** boastful self-sufficiency and status.

These same three appeared in Eve's temptation ("good for food... pleasant to the eyes... desired to make one wise," Genesis 3:6) and in Christ's temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). The world is passing away; only those who do God's will last for ever.

Chapter 2:18-29 — Antichrists and the Anointing

> *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*
>
> **1 John 2:18**

John's readers had been taught that a final Antichrist would come (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). But already "many antichrists," people who oppose and deny Christ, had appeared.

> *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*
>
> **1 John 2:19**

These false teachers had once been part of the church outwardly, but their departure showed that they had never truly belonged. Genuine believers continue; those who permanently abandon Christ reveal that they were never His (Matthew 7:21-23).

"But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (2:20). The "unction" (anointing) is the Holy Spirit, given to every believer (2 Corinthians 1:21-22). The false teachers claimed special

knowledge for an elite; John says all believers have the Spirit and know the truth.

> *Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*
>
> **1 John 2:22-23**

To deny the Son is to lose the Father; there is no way to God that bypasses Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Believers must let what they heard "from the beginning" abide in them, and so continue in the Son and the Father (2:24); God's promise is eternal life (2:25). "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you" (2:27). This does not mean believers need no teachers (Ephesians 4:11), but that they do not need the false teachers' supposed new revelations; the Spirit teaches them through the Word they have already received.

> *And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*
>
> **1 John 2:28**

"Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (2:29).

Section III: Children of God — Righteousness and Love (3:1-4:6)

Chapter 3:1-3 — The Father's Love and Our Hope

> *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*
>
> **1 John 3:1-3**

John marvels at the Father's love: sinners are called, and truly are, the children of God. The world does not recognise them, just as it did not recognise Christ. Their future is not yet fully revealed, but this is certain: when Christ appears, they will be like Him, with glorified bodies and perfected character (Philippians 3:21), because they will see Him as He is. This hope is purifying: those who expect to see Christ prepare by pursuing purity now.

Chapter 3:4-10 — Practising Righteousness

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (3:4). Sin is lawlessness, rebellion against God. Christ "was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (3:5).

> *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

> **1 John 3:6**

John has already said that believers do sin (1:8-10; 2:1). In this chapter the verbs are in the Greek present tense, describing continuous, habitual practice. John means that the one who abides in Christ does not keep on living in sin as a way of life. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous" (3:7).

> *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*
>
> **1 John 3:8**

A life of practised sin reflects the devil's character. Christ came to undo the devil's works (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:14).

> *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*
>
> **1 John 3:9**

The new birth implants a new nature, God's "seed," which remains in the believer. That new nature cannot sin, and the person born of God cannot continue comfortably in sin as his settled way of life. When believers sin, it is contrary to their new nature, and they are troubled by it. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (3:10).

Chapter 3:11-24 — Loving the Brethren

"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (3:11). Cain is the opposite example: he "was of that wicked one, and slew his brother... Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (3:12; Genesis 4:8). "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (3:13).

> *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*
>
> **1 John 3:14-15**

Love for fellow believers is evidence of new life. Hatred is murder in the heart (Matthew 5:21-22).

> *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*
>
> **1 John 3:16-18**

Notice that this is 3:16, matching John 3:16. Christ's self-sacrifice defines love. Most believers will not be called to die for others, but all are called to give practical help to a brother in need (James 2:15-16).

Love is shown in deeds, not just words.

Assurance before God (3:19-24). By loving in deed and truth, "we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (3:19-20). When an oversensitive conscience accuses, believers can rest in God, who knows everything, including their genuine love for Him (John 21:17). "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments" (3:21-22).

> *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*
>
> **1 John 3:23**

Faith and love sum up God's commands. "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (3:24).

Chapter 4:1-6 — Testing the Spirits

> *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*
>
> **1 John 4:1**

Behind every teacher is a spirit, either the Spirit of God or a spirit of error. Believers must not accept every claim to spiritual insight but must test it.

> *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist*
>
> **1 John 4:2-3**

The test is the person of Christ: does the teaching confess that Jesus is the Christ, who truly came in human flesh?

> *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*
>
> **1 John 4:4**

The Spirit who indwells believers is greater than Satan, "he that is in the world." False teachers are of the world and the world listens to them; "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (4:5-6). The second test is agreement with apostolic teaching, now preserved in Scripture.

Section IV: God Is Love — Love and Faith (4:7-5:21)

Chapter 4:7-21 — God's Love and Ours

> *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
>
> **1 John 4:7-8**

Love originates in God. "God is love" does not mean that love is God, but that love is essential to God's very nature, as light and holiness are (1:5). Those born of God share His loving nature.

> *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
>
> **1 John 4:9-10**

God's love is defined not by our love for Him but by His love for us, shown in sending His only Son to be the sacrifice for our sins. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (4:11). "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (4:12): the invisible God becomes visible through His people's love.

"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (4:14). "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (4:15).

> *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*
>
> **1 John 4:16**

Love perfected gives "boldness in the day of judgment" (4:17).

> *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.*
>
> **1 John 4:18-19**

Those who know God's love need not dread His judgment. Our love is always a response to His.

> *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*
>
> **1 John 4:20**

Love for God and love for His children cannot be separated (4:21).

Chapter 5:1-12 — Faith That Overcomes; the Witness of God

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (5:1). Faith in Christ is the evidence of new birth, and those who love the Father love His children. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (5:3).

> *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*
>
> **1 John 5:4-5**

The new birth gives power to overcome the world's pressures and temptations. The means of victory is faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

> *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*
>
> **1 John 5:6**

"Water" most likely refers to Christ's baptism, where the Father declared Him His Son, and "blood" to His death on the cross. The false teacher Cerinthus taught that the divine Christ came on Jesus at His baptism ("water") but departed before His death ("blood"). John insists that the same Jesus Christ came through both: the Son of God Himself died for our sins.

> *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*
>
> **1 John 5:7-8**

Verse 7 is a clear statement of the Trinity. It is present in the Received Text and the King James Version, but absent from most Greek manuscripts, which is why many modern translations omit it; defenders of the King James text argue for it from early Latin witnesses and from the grammar of the passage. The doctrine of the Trinity does not depend on this verse, being taught throughout Scripture (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 1:1; Acts 5:3-4). Verse 8 gives the earthly witness: the Spirit, the water (Christ's baptism) and the blood (His death) agree in testifying who Jesus is. The law required two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15), and God has given them.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater" (5:9). "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar" (5:10).

> *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*
>
> **1 John 5:11-12**

Eternal life is not earned or achieved; it is a gift found only in Christ. It is as simple, and as absolute, as having the Son or not.

Chapter 5:13-21 — Assurance and Confidence

> *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*
>
> **1 John 5:13**

John wrote so that believers may know, not merely hope, that they have eternal life. Assurance rests on God's testimony in His Word, confirmed by the evidences of new life John has described.

> *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*
>
> **1 John 5:14-15**

Confidence in prayer rests on asking according to God's will, revealed in His Word.

> *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*
>
> **1 John 5:16**

Believers should pray for a sinning brother. "A sin unto death" has been understood in two main ways: as sin by a believer that God judges with physical death as discipline (as with Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11, and some at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 11:30), a view common among Baptists; or as the deliberate, final rejection of Christ by apostates like the false teachers, for whom there is no forgiveness. "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death" (5:17).

John closes with three certainties, each introduced by "we know":

- **"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not"** (5:18). The believer does not continue in sin, and Christ (or the new nature) keeps him so that Satan cannot take hold of him.
- **"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness"** (5:19). The world lies in the grip of the evil one.
- **"We know that the Son of God is come":**

> *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*
>
> **1 John 5:20**

Jesus Christ is "the true God, and eternal life," a clear declaration of His deity. And the final word:

> *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*
>
> **1 John 5:21**

In Ephesus, city of the goddess Diana, idols were everywhere. But any substitute for the true God, including a false Christ of human invention, is an idol. Believers must guard themselves.

Part Three: Christ in 1 John

Portraits of Christ

Text	Christ Revealed
1:1	The Word of life, from the beginning, seen and touched
1:2	The eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested
1:3	The Son, with whom believers have fellowship
1:7	The One whose blood cleanses from all sin
2:1	Our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous
2:2	The propitiation for our sins and those of the whole world
2:6	The pattern for our walk
2:20	The Holy One, who gives the anointing
2:22	The Christ, whom antichrists deny
2:28; 3:2	The One who will appear, whom we shall be like
3:3	The pure One
3:5	Manifested to take away our sins; in Him is no sin
3:8	Manifested to destroy the works of the devil
3:16	The One who laid down His life for us
4:2	Jesus Christ come in the flesh
4:9	God's only begotten Son, sent that we might live through Him
4:14	The Saviour of the world
5:6	He that came by water and blood
5:11-12	The Son in whom eternal life is found
5:20	The true God, and eternal life

How We Know: The Assurances of 1 John

We Know...	Because...	1 John
That we know Him	We keep His commandments	2:3
That we are in Him	We keep His word	2:5
That it is the last time	Many antichrists have come	2:18
That we shall be like Him	We shall see Him as He is	3:2
That we have passed from death to life	We love the brethren	3:14
That we are of the truth	We love in deed and in truth	3:18-19

We Know...	Because...	1 John
That He abides in us	By the Spirit He has given us	3:24; 4:13
The spirit of truth and the spirit of error	By who listens to the apostolic word	4:6
That we love the children of God	We love God and keep His commandments	5:2
That we have eternal life	We believe on the name of the Son of God	5:13
That He hears us	We ask according to His will	5:14-15
That the Son of God is come	He has given us understanding	5:20

The Gospel of John and 1 John

Johannine Theme	Gospel of John	1 John
Purpose	"That ye might believe" (20:31)	"That ye may know that ye have eternal life" (5:13)
The beginning	"In the beginning was the Word" (1:1)	"That which was from the beginning... the Word of life" (1:1)
Incarnation	"The Word was made flesh" (1:14)	"Our hands have handled" (1:1); "come in the flesh" (4:2)
Light	"I am the light of the world" (8:12)	"God is light" (1:5)
Love	"God so loved the world" (3:16)	"Herein is love... he loved us, and sent his Son" (4:10)
The new commandment	"That ye love one another" (13:34)	"An old commandment... a new commandment" (2:7-8)
Born of God	"Ye must be born again" (3:7)	"Whosoever is born of God" (3:9; 5:1, 4, 18)
Abiding	"Abide in me" (15:4)	"Abide in him" (2:28)
The Comforter / Advocate	The Spirit as another Comforter (14:16)	Christ our Advocate (2:1)
Overcoming the world	"I have overcome the world" (16:33)	"This is the victory that overcometh the world" (5:4)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	1 John	Fulfillment
The eternal life manifested	1:2	Fulfilled in the incarnation
Antichrist shall come	2:18	Many antichrists already; the final Antichrist still future (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8; Revelation 13)
Many false prophets gone out into the world	4:1	Fulfilled in John's day and continuing
The world passing away	2:17	In process; completed at the end (2 Peter 3:10)
Christ's appearing	2:28; 3:2	Still future
Believers made like Him	3:2	Still future (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; Philippians 3:21)
Boldness in the day of judgment	4:17	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

1 John 1:1-4 — The Word of Life

The apostles heard, saw and touched the eternal Son made flesh, and proclaimed Him so that others might share their fellowship with the Father and the Son, and full joy.

1 John 1:5-2:2 — Walking in the Light

God is light. Fellowship with Him means living openly before Him. Believers still sin, but when they confess, God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse, and Christ, our righteous Advocate and propitiation, pleads for us.

1 John 2:15-17 — Love Not the World

The world's desires (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life) are not from the Father and are passing away. Only those who do God's will abide for ever.

1 John 2:18-27 — Antichrists and the Anointing

Many antichrists, who deny that Jesus is the Christ, have gone out from the church, showing they never belonged. Believers have the Spirit's anointing and must abide in the truth they received from the beginning.

1 John 3:1-3 — Children of God

By the Father's amazing love, believers are God's children now, and will be like Christ when He appears. This hope purifies them.

1 John 3:4-10 — Practising Righteousness

Those born of God do not practise sin as a way of life, because God's seed remains in them. Righteousness and love distinguish God's children from the devil's.

1 John 3:16-18 — Love in Deed

Christ laid down His life for us; we should lay down our lives for the brethren, and help those in need in deed and truth.

1 John 4:1-6 — Testing the Spirits

Believers must test every teaching by its confession of Jesus Christ come in the flesh and by its agreement with the apostles. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

1 John 4:7-21 — God Is Love

Love comes from God, who is love, and was shown in sending His Son as the propitiation for our sins. We love because He first loved us. Perfect love casts out fear. Whoever loves God must love his brother.

1 John 5:4-5 — Faith That Overcomes

Everyone born of God overcomes the world through faith that Jesus is the Son of God.

1 John 5:11-13 — Assurance of Eternal Life

God's testimony is that eternal life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life. John wrote so that believers may know they have eternal life.

1 John 5:20-21 — The True God

Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life. Keep yourselves from idols.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 1 John

1. The Incarnation

The eternal Son truly came in the flesh (1:1-3; 4:2-3).

2. The Deity of Christ

He is the eternal life, the Son of God, the true God (1:2; 5:20).

3. The Nature of God

God is light (1:5) and God is love (4:8, 16).

4. Sin and Confession

Believers still sin; confession brings forgiveness and cleansing (1:8-2:1).

5. Christ's Advocacy and Propitiation

He pleads for us on the basis of His sacrifice, sufficient for the whole world (2:1-2; 4:10).

6. Obedience

Knowing God is shown by keeping His commandments (2:3-6; 5:2-3).

7. Love for the Brethren

The evidence of new life; shown in deed and truth (3:14-18; 4:7-21).

8. Separation from the World

Love not the world (2:15-17).

9. Antichrist and False Teachers

Many antichrists deny the Father and the Son; spirits must be tested (2:18-23; 4:1-6).

10. The Anointing of the Spirit

Every believer has the Spirit and knows the truth (2:20, 27; 3:24; 4:13).

11. The New Birth

Those born of God practise righteousness, love, believe and overcome (2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4).

12. Sonship and Future Glory

We are God's children now and will be like Christ (3:1-3).

13. The Trinity

The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost bear witness (5:7; compare 3:23-24; 4:13-15).

14. Assurance of Salvation

Believers can know they have eternal life (5:13).

15. Prayer

Confidence that God hears prayers according to His will (3:22; 5:14-16).

Part Seven: Connections — How 1 John Links to the Rest of the Bible

1 John and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Light shining from God's word (1:3; 1 John 1:5); the three temptations in Eden (3:6; 1 John 2:16); the serpent's defeat (3:15; 1 John 3:8); Cain slaying Abel (4:8; 1 John 3:12)
Exodus	The mercy seat (25:17-22; 1 John 2:2)
Leviticus	The Day of Atonement and propitiation (16; 1 John 2:2; 4:10); love thy neighbour; hate not thy brother in thine heart (19:17-18; 1 John 2:9-11)
Deuteronomy	Love the LORD with all thy heart (6:5; 1 John 4:19-21); two or three witnesses (19:15; 1 John 5:8); false prophets (13:1-5; 1 John 4:1)
Psalms	"I acknowledged my sin unto thee" (32:5; 1 John 1:9); "The LORD is my light" (27:1); as far as the east is from the west (103:12)
Proverbs	Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy (28:13; 1 John 1:9)
Isaiah	Your iniquities have separated between you and your God (59:2; 1 John 1:6)
Jeremiah	"I will remember their sin no more" (31:34; 1 John 2:12)
Micah	God casting sins into the depths of the sea (7:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

1 John and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The temptations of Christ (4:1-11; 1 John 2:16); hatred as murder in the heart (5:21-22; 1 John 3:15); the pure in heart shall see God (5:8; 1 John 3:2-3); "I never knew you" (7:21-23; 1 John 2:19)
John	The Word made flesh (1:1-14); God so loved the world (3:16); the new commandment (13:34-35); keeping His commandments (14:15, 21); abiding (15); the Spirit guiding into all truth (16:13); eternal life is knowing God (17:3); the purpose of the Gospel (20:31)
Acts	Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11; 1 John 5:16)
Romans	Christ the propitiation (3:25); the Spirit bearing witness that we are God's children (8:16; 1 John 3:24)
1 Corinthians	Love (13); the sick and those who sleep at Corinth (11:30; 1 John 5:16); the resurrection body (15:51-53; 1 John 3:2)
Philippians	Our body fashioned like His glorious body (3:21; 1 John 3:2)
Colossians	Christ our life, appearing in glory (3:4)
2 Thessalonians	The man of sin (2:3-8; 1 John 2:18)
Hebrews	Christ appearing for us before God (9:24); our merciful High Priest and propitiation (2:17; 1 John 2:1-2)
James	Faith without works; helping the brother in need (2:15-16; 1 John 3:17)

Book	Link
2 Peter	False teachers among you (2:1; 1 John 4:1)
2 and 3 John	John's shorter letters: walking in truth and love; deceivers who deny Christ come in the flesh (2 John 7)
Jude	Contending for the faith against ungodly men (3-4)
Revelation	The beast and the false prophet (13; 1 John 2:18; 4:3)

Themes That Run from 1 John Through Scripture

Theme	Old Testament Roots	In 1 John	Developed in the New Testament
God is light	Psalm 27:1; Isaiah 60:19	1:5-7	John 8:12; Revelation 21:23
God is love	Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 7:7-8	4:7-19	John 3:16; Romans 5:8
Propitiation	Leviticus 16	2:2; 4:10	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17
Confession and forgiveness	Psalm 32; 51	1:9	James 5:16
Love for one another	Leviticus 19:18	3:11-18; 4:7-21	John 13:34-35; Romans 13:8-10
The new birth	Ezekiel 36:26-27	2:29; 3:9; 5:1	John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23
Assurance	Job 19:25	5:13	Romans 8:16, 38-39; 2 Timothy 1:12

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son** (1:3).
- **Walk in the light, open and honest before God** (1:7).
- **Don't claim to be without sin** (1:8).
- **Confess your sins, and trust God to forgive** (1:9).
- **Aim not to sin** (2:1).
- **Rest in Christ your Advocate** (2:1).
- **Prove your knowledge of God by obedience** (2:3).
- **Walk as Jesus walked** (2:6).
- **Don't hate your brother** (2:9).
- **Love not the world** (2:15).
- **Do God's will, which lasts for ever** (2:17).
- **Don't be shaken when people leave the faith** (2:19).
- **Rely on the Spirit's anointing and the truth you received** (2:20, 27).
- **Confess the Son; there is no Father without Him** (2:23).
- **Abide in Christ, ready for His coming** (2:28).
- **Marvel at the Father's love in making you His child** (3:1).
- **Purify yourself as you wait to see Christ** (3:3).
- **Don't make sin your way of life** (3:6-9).
- **Expect the world's hatred** (3:13).
- **Love in deed and in truth, not only in words** (3:18).
- **When your heart condemns you, remember God is greater** (3:20).
- **Believe on Christ and love one another** (3:23).
- **Test every spirit and teaching** (4:1).
- **Remember that greater is He that is in you** (4:4).
- **Love one another, because God is love** (4:7-8).
- **Let God's love for you shape your love for others** (4:11).
- **Let perfect love cast out fear** (4:18).
- **Love, because He first loved you** (4:19).
- **Overcome the world by faith** (5:4).
- **Know that you have eternal life** (5:13).
- **Pray with confidence according to God's will** (5:14).
- **Pray for a sinning brother** (5:16).
- **Keep yourself from idols** (5:21).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.
1:5	God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
1:7	The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
1:9	If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
2:1	If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous
2:15	Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.
2:17	And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
3:1	Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God
3:2	When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
3:18	Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.
4:4	Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
4:8	He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.
4:10	Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
4:18	There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear
4:19	We love him, because he first loved us.
5:4	This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
5:12	He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.
5:13	That ye may know that ye have eternal life

Conclusion

1 John was written by the aged apostle, an eyewitness who had heard, seen and touched the Word of life, to churches unsettled by false teachers who had left them, denying that Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh, claiming to know God while living in sin, and showing no love. John wrote so that true believers might have fellowship with the Father and the Son, full joy, victory over sin and, above all, assurance that they have eternal life. God is light, so fellowship with Him means walking in the light; when believers sin, they confess, and God, faithful and just, forgives, because Jesus Christ the righteous is their Advocate and the propitiation for their sins. Those who truly know God keep His commandments, love their brethren, refuse to love the world, and abide in the truth they have heard from the beginning, anointed by the Spirit and unmoved by antichrists. By the Father's amazing love they are His children now and will be like Christ when He appears. They do not make sin their way of life, and they love in deed and truth. They test the spirits, knowing that greater is He that is in them than he that is in the world. Because God is love, shown in sending His Son, they love one another, and perfect love casts out their fear. Their faith overcomes the world, and God's record is plain: eternal life is in His Son; he that hath the Son hath life. Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life; therefore, little children, keep yourselves from idols.

> *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*
>
> **1 John 5:13**

2 John

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John ("the elder") • Date: c. AD 85-95 • Chapters: 1

> *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.*
>
> **2 John 1:9**

Part One: Introduction to 2 John

The Book

2 John is the second shortest book in the Bible: thirteen verses, short enough to fit on a single sheet of papyrus. It is a personal letter, yet it carries a vital message for every church: love must walk hand in hand with truth, and believers must not give support to those who deny Christ.

The Author

"The elder unto the elect lady and her children" (v1). The writer calls himself simply "the elder," a title that suggests both old age and recognised authority; he needed no other introduction. Early tradition identifies him as the apostle John, who in his old age oversaw the churches around Ephesus. (The early writer Papias mentions a "John the elder," and some have suggested a different John, but the language and themes of 2 John match 1 John and the Gospel of John so closely that the traditional view remains the most likely.) It was probably written from Ephesus around AD 85-95, about the same time as 1 John.

The Recipient: "The Elect Lady"

Two views are held about "the elect lady and her children":

Reading of "Lady"	Explanation	Support
A Christian woman and her family	A believing lady (possibly named Kyria, the Greek word for "lady") whose children John had met	The personal tone; "her children" walking in truth (v4); John's hope to visit her face to face (v12)
A local church personified	A congregation addressed as a "lady," with its members as her "children"	"The children of thy elect sister greet thee" (v13), naturally read as a sister church; the switch between singular and plural "you"; the church as Christ's bride

Either way, the message applies to every believer and every church.

The Situation

In the early church, travelling preachers moved from place to place, relying on believers for food and lodging. This hospitality helped the gospel spread, but false teachers used it too. The same deceivers who had left the churches in 1 John, denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, were travelling and seeking support. John wrote to warn the elect lady not to welcome them.

Purpose and Theme

2 John teaches that truth and love belong together. The word "truth" appears five times in the first four verses, and "love" four times in the letter. Love must be exercised within the bounds of truth: believers must love one another, but they must not show hospitality that supports false teachers.

> *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.*
>
> **2 John 4**

> *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*
>
> **2 John 9**

John's Three Letters Compared

Letter Feature	1 John	2 John	3 John
Recipients	Churches in general	The elect lady and her children	Gaius, a beloved friend
Main theme	Fellowship with God; assurance	Walking in truth and love	Supporting the truth and its workers
Hospitality	(Not addressed)	Do not receive false teachers	Do receive true teachers
Key danger	Antichrists who deny the Son	Deceivers who deny Christ come in the flesh	Diotrephes, a proud church leader
Key phrase	"That ye may know"	"Walking in truth"	"Fellowhelpers to the truth"

Outline of 2 John

Section	Verses	Theme
I. Greeting: Love in the Truth	1-3	Truth that dwells in us
II. Walk in Truth and Love	4-6	The commandment from the beginning
III. Beware of Deceivers	7-11	Abide in the doctrine of Christ; do not receive false teachers
IV. Closing	12-13	Face to face; joy full

Part Two: Verse-by-Verse Analysis

Section I: Greeting — Love in the Truth (Verses 1-3)

> *The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.*
>
> **2 John 1-2**

"Elect" means chosen by God. John loved her "in the truth": their love was grounded in their shared knowledge of the truth of the gospel, and it was shared by all who knew the truth. Truth is not merely a set of facts; it "dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever." Christ is the truth (John 14:6), and the Spirit of truth abides in believers for ever (John 14:16-17).

> *Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.*
>
> **2 John 3**

John's greeting is a confident statement, not just a wish: grace (God's undeserved favour), mercy (His compassion on our misery) and peace (wholeness with God) "shall be" with them. They come equally from the Father and from "the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father," affirming the full deity and unique Sonship that the false teachers denied. And they come "in truth and love," the two themes of the letter.

Section II: Walk in Truth and Love (Verses 4-6)

> *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.*
>
> **2 John 4**

John rejoiced to find some of her children walking in truth: living consistently with the gospel they believed. Walking in truth is not optional; it is "a commandment from the Father." (The words "of thy children" may imply that not all of them were.)

> *And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*
>
> **2 John 5-6**

The command to love one another is not new; it goes back to the beginning of the gospel (John 13:34; 1 John 2:7-8). And love is defined by obedience: "this is love, that we walk after his commandments." Love is not mere feeling; it is shown by living God's way. Truth and love form a circle: love obeys

God's commands, and one of His commands is to love.

Section III: Beware of Deceivers (Verses 7-11)

Verse 7 — The Deceivers

> *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*
>
> **2 John 7**

The reason for walking carefully in truth: many deceivers have gone out into the world. Their error concerns the person of Christ: they do not confess "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (literally "coming in the flesh," pointing to the incarnation as an abiding fact: He took human nature permanently). Such a person is "a deceiver and an antichrist," opposing the true Christ and seeking to replace Him (1 John 2:22; 4:2-3).

Verse 8 — Guard Your Reward

> *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*
>
> **2 John 8**

Believers must be on guard. If they were drawn into false teaching, the work the apostles had done among them would be undermined, and they would lose part of their reward. This refers to rewards for faithful service, not to salvation itself (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). John wants them to receive a "full reward."

Verse 9 — Abiding in the Doctrine of Christ

> *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*
>
> **2 John 9**

"Transgresseth" means going beyond the limits (some manuscripts use a word meaning "runs ahead"). The false teachers claimed to be advanced and progressive, going beyond the simple apostolic teaching about Christ. But going beyond the doctrine of Christ means leaving God behind. "The doctrine of Christ" is the teaching about Christ (His person and work) that the apostles taught and that Christ Himself taught. Whoever continues in it has both the Father and the Son; whoever abandons it "hath not God." There is no way to know the Father except through the Son as revealed in Scripture (John 14:6; 1 John 2:23).

Verses 10-11 — Do Not Support False Teachers

> *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*
>
> **2 John 10-11**

This instruction is about travelling teachers who came seeking lodging and support for their ministry. If such a person did not bring the true doctrine of Christ, believers must not take him into their home (or their house church) or "bid him God speed" (give him a greeting of approval and blessing, wishing him success). To do so would be to share in his evil work, helping him spread soul-destroying error.

This does not forbid ordinary kindness to unbelievers or evangelising people who are confused about Christ; believers are to love even their enemies (Matthew 5:44) and do good to all (Galatians 6:10). It forbids giving support, endorsement and a platform to those who actively teach false doctrine about Christ (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10). Love never requires believers to help spread lies about the Saviour.

Section IV: Closing (Verses 12-13)

> *Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.*
>
> **2 John 12**

John preferred to speak in person rather than write at length. Face-to-face fellowship brings joy to completion (1 John 1:4).

> *The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.*
>
> **2 John 13**

Greetings come from the children of her "elect sister," either the believing nieces and nephews of the elect lady, or the members of John's own church sending greetings to a sister church.

Part Three: Christ in 2 John

Text	Christ Revealed
3	The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, the source of grace, mercy and peace together with the Father
7	Jesus Christ come in the flesh, truly God and truly man
9	The subject of the doctrine of Christ; the One through whom we have the Father
2 (compare John 14:6)	The truth that dwells in us and shall be with us for ever

2 John guards the truth about Christ: He is the eternal Son of the Father, who truly became man. Any teaching that denies either His deity or His real humanity is the spirit of antichrist. To have the Son is to have the Father; to abandon the Son is to lose God.

Truth and Love in Balance

Truth Without Love	Love Without Truth	Truth and Love Together (2 John)
Harsh, proud, unkind	Sentimental, compromising, undiscerning	Loving "in the truth" (v1)
Knows the right doctrine but does not obey	Welcomes anyone, whatever they teach	Walking in truth and walking in love (v4-6)
Correct but cold	Warm but deceived	Refusing to support deceivers because of love for Christ and His people (v10-11)

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled

Prophecy	2 John	Fulfillment
Many deceivers entering the world	7	Foretold by Christ (Matthew 24:11, 24); fulfilled in John's day and continuing
The spirit of antichrist	7	Already at work (1 John 2:18; 4:3); the final Antichrist still future
The truth with us for ever	2	Christ's promise of the abiding Spirit of truth (John 14:16-17)
The full reward	8	At the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

2 John 1-3 — Love in the Truth

Christian love is grounded in shared truth, the truth that lives in believers and stays with them for ever. Grace, mercy and peace come from the Father and the Son in truth and love.

2 John 4-6 — Walking in Truth and Love

God commands believers to walk in truth, and love is defined as walking according to His commandments.

2 John 7-9 — Abiding in the Doctrine of Christ

Deceivers deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Believers must guard themselves to receive a full reward, and must continue in the apostolic teaching about Christ, without which no one has God.

2 John 10-11 — No Support for False Teachers

Believers must not welcome, house or bless those who bring false doctrine about Christ, lest they share in their evil deeds.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 2 John

1. The Unity of Truth and Love

Love is exercised in the truth; truth is lived out in love (1, 3-6).

2. The Permanence of the Truth

The truth dwells in believers and will be with them for ever (2).

3. The Deity and Humanity of Christ

Jesus Christ is the Son of the Father, come in the flesh (3, 7).

4. Love as Obedience

Love is walking after God's commandments (6).

5. The Danger of Deceivers

Many deceivers and antichrists deny Christ (7).

6. Rewards

Believers can lose or receive a full reward (8).

7. Abiding in Sound Doctrine

Going beyond the doctrine of Christ means losing God (9).

8. Biblical Separation

Believers must not support or endorse false teachers (10-11).

9. Christian Fellowship

Face-to-face fellowship makes joy full (12).

Part Seven: Connections — How 2 John Links to the Rest of the Bible

Book	Link
Deuteronomy	Testing prophets who lead away from God (13:1-5; 2 John 7-10)
Psalms	"I have walked in thy truth" (26:3; 2 John 4); who shall abide in God's tabernacle (15; 2 John 9)
Proverbs	"Buy the truth, and sell it not" (23:23)
Matthew	False prophets and false christs (7:15; 24:11, 24; 2 John 7)
John	The new commandment (13:34; 2 John 5); "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6); the Spirit of truth abiding for ever (14:16-17; 2 John 2); keeping commandments as love (14:15, 21; 2 John 6)
Romans	Mark and avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine (16:17-18; 2 John 10)
1 Corinthians	Rewards tested by fire (3:12-15; 2 John 8)
2 Corinthians	Another Jesus, another gospel (11:4; 2 John 7, 9)
Galatians	Any other gospel accursed (1:8-9; 2 John 9-10)
Titus	Reject a heretic after admonition (3:10; 2 John 10)
1 John	Antichrists who deny Christ come in the flesh (2:18-23; 4:1-3); the old commandment (2:7-8)
3 John	Supporting true teachers (5-8); John's hope to speak face to face (13-14)
Revelation	Testing false apostles at Ephesus (2:2)

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let your love be grounded in the truth** (1).
- **Rejoice that the truth lives in you for ever** (2).
- **Rejoice when you see others walking in truth** (4).
- **Walk in the truth, not just believe it** (4).
- **Love one another; it is the original command** (5).
- **Show love by obeying God's commandments** (6).
- **Be alert to deceivers who deny the true Christ** (7).
- **Guard your spiritual work and reward** (8).
- **Don't "go beyond" the doctrine of Christ in the name of progress** (9).
- **Never give support or a platform to false teachers** (10-11).
- **Remain kind to all, while refusing to endorse error** (10-11).
- **Value face-to-face fellowship** (12).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2	For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.
4	I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth
6	And this is love, that we walk after his commandments.
7	For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.
8	Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.
9	He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.
10	If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed

Conclusion

2 John is a short letter from the aged apostle to an elect lady and her children, whether a Christian family or a local church. John loved them in the truth, the truth that lives in every believer and will remain for ever, and he rejoiced to find some of them walking in it. He reminded them of the command they had from the beginning, to love one another, and defined love as walking according to God's commandments. But love must be exercised within the truth. Many deceivers had gone out, denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, the spirit of antichrist. Believers must guard themselves, lest they lose their full reward, and must abide in the doctrine of Christ, because whoever goes beyond it has not God, while whoever abides in it has both the Father and the Son. Therefore they must not receive false teachers into their homes or bid them God speed, lest they share in their evil deeds. Truth without love becomes harsh; love without truth becomes deceived; 2 John calls believers to walk in both.

> *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*
>
> **2 John 9**

3 John

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John ("the elder") • Date: c. AD 85-95 • Chapters: 1

> *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*
>
> **3 John 1:4**

Part One: Introduction to 3 John

The Book

3 John is the shortest book in the Bible by word count in the original Greek. Like 2 John, it is a personal letter from "the elder," the aged apostle John, probably written from Ephesus around AD 85-95. But where 2 John warned against welcoming false teachers, 3 John commends a believer for welcoming true ones, and rebukes a church leader who refused them.

The Recipient

"The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth" (v1). Gaius was a common name in the Roman world, and several men called Gaius appear in the New Testament (Acts 19:29; 20:4; Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14). This Gaius was probably a different man, a respected member of a church in Asia Minor, perhaps converted through John, who calls him one of "my children" (v4). He was known for his faithfulness to the truth and his generous hospitality.

The Situation

Travelling preachers and missionaries were going from church to church, some sent out by John himself, depending on believers for food and lodging. Gaius had welcomed them warmly. But Diotrephes, a leader in the church, refused to receive them, rejected John's authority, slandered him, and even expelled those who wanted to help the missionaries. John wrote to commend Gaius, to warn about Diotrephes, and to recommend Demetrius, probably the bearer of the letter.

Three Men

The letter centres on three men:

Person in 3 John	Description	Verses
Gaius	Beloved; spiritually prosperous; walking in truth; faithful in hospitality to brethren and strangers	1-8
Diotrephes	Loves to have the preeminence; rejects apostolic authority; slanders; refuses the brethren; expels those who receive them	9-10
Demetrius	Has a good report of all men and of the truth itself; commended by John	12

Purpose and Theme

John wrote to encourage Gaius to keep supporting faithful Christian workers, so that believers become "fellowhelpers to the truth" (v8). The word "truth" appears six times. The theme is walking in the truth and supporting the truth, in contrast with the self-seeking pride that hinders it.

> *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*
>
> **3 John 4**

> *We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.*
>
> **3 John 8**

2 John and 3 John

Feature	2 John	3 John
Addressed to	The elect lady and her children	Gaius
The danger	Being too open: welcoming false teachers	Being too closed: refusing true teachers
The command	"Receive him not into your house" (v10)	"We therefore ought to receive such" (v8)
The test	The doctrine of Christ (v9)	Going forth "for his name's sake" (v7)
The result	Avoid sharing in evil deeds (v11)	Become fellowhelpers to the truth (v8)
Together	Hospitality guided by truth: closed to deceivers	Open to the faithful

Outline of 3 John

Section	Verses	Theme
I. Gaius Commended	1-8	Prosperity of soul; walking in truth; hospitality
II. Diotrephes Condemned	9-11	Pride and its fruits; follow the good
III. Demetrius Recommended	12	A good report
IV. Closing	13-14	Face to face; peace; friends

Part Two: Verse-by-Verse Analysis

Section I: Gaius Commended (Verses 1-8)

Verses 1-2 — Prosperity of Soul

> *The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*
>
> **3 John 1-2**

John's love for Gaius, as for the elect lady, was "in the truth." His prayer, a common form of greeting in ancient letters, wished Gaius physical health and general well-being equal to his spiritual health. Gaius' soul was flourishing; John prayed that his body and circumstances would do as well. This verse is a loving prayer for a friend, not a promise that every believer will enjoy wealth and health. Its striking point is that Gaius' spiritual condition was the standard: how many could be wished to prosper physically as much as they prosper spiritually?

Verses 3-4 — Walking in Truth

> *For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*
>
> **3 John 3-4**

Travelling brethren had reported that Gaius held the truth and lived it. For a spiritual father, there is no greater joy than knowing that his spiritual children walk in the truth, not merely knowing it, but living it day by day.

Verses 5-8 — Faithful Hospitality

> *Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well*
>
> **3 John 5-6**

Gaius showed hospitality to fellow believers, even those he had never met before ("strangers"). The travellers testified publicly to his love. John urged him to continue to "bring forward on their journey" these workers, sending them on their way supplied with what they needed, "after a godly sort," in a manner worthy of God (Titus 3:13; Acts 15:3; Romans 15:24).

> *Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.*
>
> **3 John 7-8**

These missionaries went out "for his name's sake," for the honour of Christ's name (Acts 5:41; Romans 1:5). They accepted no support from "the Gentiles" (pagans and unbelievers), so that no one could accuse them of preaching for profit, unlike the travelling religious teachers of the day. Therefore believers have a duty to support them. By doing so, those who stay at home become "fellowhelpers," co-workers in the spread of the truth. Every believer can share in missionary work through prayer, hospitality and giving (Philippians 4:15-18; 1 Corinthians 9:14).

Section II: Diotrephes Condemned (Verses 9-11)

Verses 9-10 — The Sins of Diotrephes

> *I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.*
>
> **3 John 9**

John had written a letter to the church (now lost, or perhaps 2 John), but Diotrephes would not accept it or John's authority. His root sin was pride: he "loveth to have the preeminence," to be first, in control. In Scripture, preeminence belongs to Christ alone: "that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). Diotrephes wanted the place that belongs to Christ.

> *Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.*
>
> **3 John 10**

Pride produced a list of sins:

Sin of Diotrephes	Description
Love of preeminence	He wanted to be first and in control (v9)
Rejection of authority	He would not receive the apostle or his letter (v9)
Slander	"Prating against us with malicious words": empty, evil talk about John (v10)
Inhospitality	He refused to receive the travelling brethren himself (v10)
Domination	He forbade others from receiving them (v10)
Abuse of discipline	He expelled from the church those who disobeyed him (v10)

John does not accuse Diotrephes of false doctrine, but of a proud, controlling character. A church can be orthodox in belief and still be damaged by a leader who wants to dominate. John promised to deal with him personally when he came. Biblical leaders are not to be "lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3); the greatest is to be the servant of all (Matthew 20:25-28).

Verse 11 — Follow the Good

> *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.*
>
> **3 John 11**

Gaius must not imitate Diotrephes' bad example, but good examples like Demetrius. Conduct reveals relationship: those who practise good show they belong to God; those who practise evil show they have never truly known Him (1 John 3:6-10).

Section III: Demetrius Recommended (Verse 12)

> *Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.*
>
> **3 John 12**

Demetrius, probably the carrier of the letter and perhaps one of the travelling preachers, came with a threefold testimony: from everyone who knew him, from "the truth itself" (his life matched the truth), and from John personally. This triple witness (Deuteronomy 19:15) assured Gaius he could safely receive him. He stands in contrast with Diotrephes: a man whose character commends him.

Section IV: Closing (Verses 13-14)

> *I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.*
>
> **3 John 13-14**

As in 2 John, John preferred a personal visit. He used the warm word "friends," recalling Jesus' words, "I have called you friends" (John 15:14-15). "Greet the friends by name": Christian fellowship is personal; each believer is known and valued individually.

Part Three: Christ in 3 John

Although Christ's name does not appear in the King James text of 3 John, He is present throughout:

Text	Christ Revealed
1, 3-4, 8, 12	The truth: Christ Himself is the truth (John 14:6), in whom believers walk
7	"His name's sake": the name of Jesus, for which missionaries go forth (Acts 5:41; Philippians 2:9-10)
9	The only One worthy of preeminence (Colossians 1:18), whose place Diotrephes coveted
11	The One through whom we see God (John 1:18; 14:9)
14	The Friend who calls His followers friends (John 15:14-15)

Diotrephes and Christ's Pattern of Leadership

Diotrephes	Christ's Pattern for Leaders
Loved to have the preeminence (v9)	"Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matthew 20:27)
Rejected authority (v9)	Submitted to the Father's will (John 6:38); "Obey them that have the rule over you" (Hebrews 13:17)
Spoke malicious words (v10)	"Speak evil of no man" (Titus 3:2)
Refused hospitality (v10)	"Given to hospitality" (1 Timothy 3:2)
Controlled others (v10)	"Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3)
Misused discipline (v10)	Discipline aims at restoration (Galatians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8)

Part Four: Promises and Expectations

Promise or Expectation	3 John	Fulfillment
John's coming to deal with Diotrephes	10	Unrecorded; John's apostolic authority would confront him
John's hope to see Gaius face to face	13-14	Unrecorded
Fellowhelpers sharing in the truth's work and reward	8	Promised reward for those who receive God's servants (Matthew 10:40-42)

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

3 John 2-4 — A Prospering Soul

Gaius' spiritual health was so strong it could be the standard for his physical health. The greatest joy for those who lead others to Christ is to see them walk in truth.

3 John 5-8 — Fellowhelpers to the Truth

Believers who support faithful Christian workers, sending them on their way in a manner worthy of God, become partners in the spread of the truth.

3 John 9-10 — The Danger of Pride in Leadership

Love of preeminence leads to rejecting authority, slander, inhospitality and abuse of power. Preeminence belongs to Christ alone.

3 John 11-12 — Following Good Examples

Believers should imitate what is good, not what is evil, and recognise trustworthy servants by their testimony.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of 3 John

1. Walking in Truth

Truth must be lived, not just believed (3-4).

2. Spiritual Prosperity

The health of the soul matters most (2).

3. Christian Hospitality

Believers should welcome and support faithful Christian workers (5-8).

4. Missionary Support

Those who go out for Christ's name should be supported by believers, not by unbelievers (7-8).

5. Partnership in the Gospel

Supporters become fellowhelpers to the truth (8).

6. The Danger of Pride

Loving preeminence destroys fellowship and leadership (9-10).

7. Conduct Reveals Relationship

Doing good shows we are of God (11).

8. Good Reputation

A good testimony from all, from the truth, and from leaders commends a servant of God (12).

9. Personal Fellowship

Believers are friends, known by name (14).

Part Seven: Connections — How 3 John Links to the Rest of the Bible

Book	Link
Genesis	Abraham's hospitality to strangers (18:1-8; 3 John 5)
Numbers	Korah's proud rebellion against God's appointed leaders (16; 3 John 9-10)
Deuteronomy	Two or three witnesses (19:15; 3 John 12)
1 Kings	The widow of Zarephath feeding Elijah (17:8-16; 3 John 5-8)
2 Kings	The Shunammite woman's room for the prophet (4:8-10; 3 John 5-8)
Psalms	Depart from evil, and do good (34:14; 3 John 11)
Proverbs	Pride goeth before destruction (16:18; 3 John 9)
Matthew	Whoever receives a prophet receives a prophet's reward (10:40-42; 3 John 8); "I was a stranger, and ye took me in" (25:35); the greatest is the servant (20:25-28; 23:6-12)
John	"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6); "I have called you friends" (15:14-15; 3 John 14)
Acts	Rejoicing to suffer for His name (5:41; 3 John 7); being brought on the way by the church (15:3)
Romans	Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality (12:13); Gaius, host of the church (16:23)
1 Corinthians	They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel (9:14; 3 John 7-8)
Philippians	The Philippians' partnership in giving (4:15-18; 3 John 8)
Colossians	Christ's preeminence in all things (1:18; 3 John 9)
1 Timothy	A bishop given to hospitality, not a brawler (3:2-3)
Titus	Bringing Zenas and Apollos on their journey diligently (3:13; 3 John 6)
Hebrews	Be not forgetful to entertain strangers (13:2)
1 Peter	Use hospitality without grudging (4:9); not lords over God's heritage (5:3)
1 John	He that doeth righteousness is of God (3:7-10; 3 John 11)
2 John	Do not receive false teachers (10; compare 3 John 8)

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Let your soul prosper above all** (2).
- **Pray for the physical and spiritual well-being of fellow believers** (2).
- **Walk in the truth, not only believe it** (3).
- **Find your greatest joy in seeing others walk in truth** (4).
- **Be faithful in hospitality, even to strangers** (5).
- **Send Christian workers on their way in a manner worthy of God** (6).
- **Support missionaries who go out for Christ's name** (7).
- **Become a fellowhelper to the truth** (8).
- **Beware of loving preeminence** (9).
- **Don't slander God's servants** (10).
- **Never use church authority to control or exclude the faithful** (10).
- **Imitate what is good, not what is evil** (11).
- **Let your life earn a good report** (12).
- **Value personal fellowship; know believers by name** (13-14).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
2	Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.
4	I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.
7	Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.
8	We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.
9	Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.
11	Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God

Conclusion

3 John is a brief but searching letter about three men. Gaius, beloved by John, prospered in his soul, walked in the truth, and faithfully welcomed travelling Christian workers, even strangers, sending them on their way in a manner worthy of God. Because those workers went out for Christ's name and took nothing from unbelievers, believers ought to support them and so become fellowhelpers to the truth. Diotrephes, by contrast, loved to have the preeminence that belongs to Christ alone; his pride led him to reject John's authority, slander him, refuse the brethren, and cast out those who welcomed them. Demetrius, commended by all, by the truth itself and by John, showed what a trustworthy servant looks like. Together with 2 John, this letter teaches that Christian hospitality must be guided by truth: closed to those who deny Christ, open to those who serve Him. And it calls every believer to follow the good, to walk in the truth, and to give the preeminence to Christ.

> *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*
>
> **3 John 4**

Jude

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: Jude, brother of James and the Lord • Date: c. AD 66-80 • Chapters: 1

> *Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*
>
> **Jude 1:3**

Part One: Introduction to Jude

The Author

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (v1). Jude (the English form of Judas) was one of the half-brothers of Jesus, listed with James, Joses and Simon (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). His brother James was the well-known leader of the Jerusalem church and author of the letter of James. Like James, Jude did not believe in Jesus during His earthly ministry (John 7:5), but after the resurrection he was among the believers praying in the upper room (Acts 1:14). Paul mentions that "the brethren of the Lord" travelled in ministry with their wives (1 Corinthians 9:5). The early historian Hegesippus records that Jude's grandsons, humble farmers, were brought before the emperor Domitian as descendants of David, and released as harmless.

Like James, Jude humbly calls himself not "the brother of the Lord," but "the servant of Jesus Christ." The One he had once doubted, he now served as Lord.

Date and Setting

Jude was probably written between AD 65 and 80. It is closely related to 2 Peter 2-3 (see the parallels in the study of 2 Peter). Jude quotes the apostles' prediction that "there should be mockers in the last time" (v17-18), almost exactly the words of 2 Peter 3:3, which suggests that Jude wrote after 2 Peter, when the false teachers Peter had predicted had actually arrived.

The Recipients

Jude writes to "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" (v1). The letter does not name a location, but it was clearly written to believers familiar with the Old Testament and with Jewish tradition, threatened by false teachers who had slipped into their fellowship.

The Occasion

Jude had planned to write a letter about "the common salvation," but an urgent danger forced him to change his subject:

> *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*
>
> **Jude 3-4**

False teachers had slipped secretly into the church. They twisted God's grace into a licence for immorality, arguing that since believers are saved by grace, sin does not matter (Romans 6:1-2). By their lives and teaching, they denied the lordship of Christ.

Purpose and Theme

Jude's purpose is to call believers to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." "Contend" is an athletic word for an intense struggle. "The faith" is the body of truth revealed through Christ and His apostles, "once delivered" (once for all, never to be added to or replaced). The theme is the certain judgment of apostates and the secure keeping of believers. Jude has been called the "vestibule" to Revelation, its warnings about apostasy preparing for the final book's picture of judgment and triumph.

Jude's Threes

Jude loves to group things in threes:

Triad	Jude
Believers are sanctified, preserved and called	1
Mercy, peace and love be multiplied	2
Examples of judgment: unbelieving Israel, the angels who sinned, Sodom and Gomorrha	5-7
The apostates defile the flesh, despise dominion, speak evil of dignities	8
Three Old Testament rebels: Cain, Balaam, Core (Korah)	11
They are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts	16
They separate themselves, are sensual, and have not the Spirit	19
Believers: build yourselves up, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in God's love	20-21
The Trinity: the Holy Ghost, the love of God, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ	20-21
Have compassion on some, save others with fear, hate the spotted garment	22-23

Jude's Use of Jewish Writings

Jude refers to two events not recorded in the Old Testament: Michael the archangel disputing with the devil over the body of Moses (v9), and a prophecy of Enoch (v14-15). Early Christian writers said the first came from a writing called The Assumption of Moses; the second appears in the book known as 1 Enoch. Jude was guided by the Holy Spirit to cite these true statements without endorsing everything in those books, just as Paul quoted true statements from pagan poets (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). Quoting a source does not make the whole source Scripture; but what Jude wrote is Scripture, and therefore true.

Outline of Jude

Section	Verses	Theme
I. Greeting	1-2	Called, sanctified, preserved
II. The Purpose: Contend for the Faith	3-4	Ungodly men crept in
III. The Doom of the Apostates	5-16	Examples, character and judgment
Three examples of judgment	5-7	Israel, angels, Sodom
Their arrogance	8-10	Despising authority; Michael's example

Section	Verses	Theme
Three rebels and five pictures	11-13	Cain, Balaam, Korah; clouds, trees, waves, stars
Enoch's prophecy	14-16	"The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints"
IV. The Duty of Believers	17-23	Remember, build, pray, keep, look, rescue
V. Doxology	24-25	"Him that is able to keep you from falling"

Part Two: Verse-by-Verse Analysis

Section I: Greeting (Verses 1-2)

> *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.*
>
> **Jude 1-2**

Before warning about apostasy, Jude reassures true believers of their security. They are:

- **"Sanctified by God the Father":** set apart and loved by Him (some manuscripts read "beloved in God the Father").
- **"Preserved in Jesus Christ":** kept, guarded, watched over, for Christ.
- **"Called":** effectually summoned by God to salvation.

The letter begins and ends (v24) with God's keeping power. In between, believers are commanded to "keep" themselves (v21). Jude prays that mercy, peace and love will be multiplied to them.

Section II: The Purpose — Contend for the Faith (Verses 3-4)

Jude wanted to write about the salvation all believers share, but the need was urgent: "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (v3).

- **"Earnestly contend":** fight hard, like an athlete straining in a contest, defending the truth against those who would corrupt it.
- **"The faith":** not personal trust, but the body of Christian doctrine.
- **"Once delivered":** given once for all, complete and final, through Christ and the apostles. No new revelation will add to or change it (Galatians 1:8-9; Hebrews 1:1-2).
- **"Unto the saints":** entrusted to all believers, not to a priestly class or an elite.

"For there are certain men crept in unawares" (v4). The false teachers had slipped in secretly, pretending to be believers. They:

- **"Were before of old ordained to this condemnation":** their judgment had long ago been written about in Scripture (as the following examples show).
- **Were "ungodly men":** the key word of the letter, used six times.
- **Were "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness":** twisting grace into permission for immorality.
- **Were "denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ":** rejecting Christ's authority as Master and Lord, by their lifestyle as well as their teaching (Titus 1:16).

Section III: The Doom of the Apostates (Verses 5-16)

Verses 5-7 — Three Examples of Judgment

Jude reminds his readers of three examples showing that God judges those who rebel against Him:

Judgment Example	Jude	Sin	Judgment
Israel in the wilderness	5	Unbelief, after being saved out of Egypt	Destroyed in the wilderness (Numbers 14:29-35)
The angels who sinned	6	"Kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation"	"Reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day"
Sodom and Gomorrha	7	"Giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh"	"Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"

Israel (v5). "The Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." Privilege is no protection. Many who were outwardly delivered from Egypt perished in unbelief (1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Hebrews 3:16-19).

The angels (v6). These angels abandoned their proper position and dwelling. Some understand this as the original rebellion of Satan's angels; many connect it with Genesis 6:1-4, where "the sons of God" took human wives, a sin of crossing God's created boundaries, which would fit the comparison with Sodom in verse 7 ("in like manner"). Either way, these angels are imprisoned awaiting final judgment (2 Peter 2:4).

Sodom and Gomorrha (v7). "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Their sexual immorality included homosexual practice, "going after strange flesh" (Genesis 19:4-5). Their fiery destruction is a picture of eternal judgment.

Verses 8-10 — Their Arrogance

> *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*
>
> **Jude 8**

The false teachers were "dreamers," perhaps claiming visions to justify their behaviour, or living in a deluded fantasy. They defiled their bodies with immorality, despised authority (including Christ's lordship), and slandered angelic beings ("dignities"), mocking spiritual realities they did not understand.

> *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*
>
> **Jude 9**

Even Michael, the mighty archangel (Daniel 10:13; 12:1; Revelation 12:7), when disputing with Satan over Moses' body (God buried Moses secretly, Deuteronomy 34:5-6), did not presume to pronounce

judgment on the devil himself. He left judgment to the Lord, using the very words of Zechariah 3:2. If Michael would not speak abusively of a fallen angel, how arrogant were these men who mocked what they did not understand! "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (v10). Ignorant of spiritual things, they lived like animals driven by instinct, and destroyed themselves.

Verse 11 — Three Rebels

> *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*
>
> **Jude 11**

Rebel	Old Testament	His Sin	Its Likeness in the Apostates
Cain	Genesis 4:1-16	Self-willed religion that rejected God's way of sacrifice; envy and hatred leading to murder	Rejecting God's way of salvation; hatred of the righteous (1 John 3:12)
Balaam	Numbers 22-25; 31:16	A prophet for hire, who loved money and led Israel into immorality and idolatry	Teaching for profit; leading believers into immorality (2 Peter 2:15; Revelation 2:14)
Core (Korah)	Numbers 16	Rebellion against God's appointed leaders, Moses and Aaron	Despising authority; the ground opened and swallowed him

The three verbs show progression: they "went" in Cain's way, "ran greedily" after Balaam's error, and "perished" in Korah's rebellion. Their destruction is so certain that Jude speaks of it as already done.

Verses 12-13 — Five Pictures from Nature

> *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*
>
> **Jude 12-13**

Jude uses vivid images drawn from every part of creation:

- **Spots (hidden reefs) in the love feasts:** the "feasts of charity" were fellowship meals connected with the Lord's Supper. These men were like hidden rocks that wreck ships, dangerous though unseen, shamelessly "feeding themselves," like false shepherds (Ezekiel 34:2, 8).
- **Clouds without water:** promising refreshing rain but blown past, giving nothing (Proverbs 25:14).
- **Fruitless trees, twice dead, uprooted:** at harvest time they have no fruit; dead in themselves and doomed to final death; torn up by the roots (Matthew 7:17-20; 15:13).
- **Raging waves:** wild and restless, churning up the foam of their own shameful deeds, like the sea that "casts up mire and dirt" (Isaiah 57:20).
- **Wandering stars:** shooting stars that blaze briefly and then vanish into darkness, useless for navigation, headed for "the blackness of darkness for ever."

Verses 14-16 — Enoch's Prophecy

> *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*
>
> **Jude 14-15**

Enoch, who "walked with God" and was taken without dying (Genesis 5:21-24), prophesied long before the flood of the Lord's coming in judgment. The Lord will come "with ten thousands of his saints" (holy ones, angels and believers; Deuteronomy 33:2; Zechariah 14:5; Revelation 19:14) to judge the ungodly. The word "ungodly" appears four times in one sentence, emphasising the reason for judgment: their deeds and their harsh words against the Lord.

"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (v16). They grumbled against God, lived for their desires, boasted, and flattered people for personal gain.

Section IV: The Duty of Believers (Verses 17-23)

Verses 17-19 — Remember the Apostles' Words

> *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*
>
> **Jude 17-19**

The appearance of such men should not shake believers' faith; it confirms it, since the apostles predicted exactly this (2 Peter 3:3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). These men cause divisions, live by natural instinct ("sensual," literally "soulish," governed only by natural life), and do not have the Holy Spirit. They are not true believers at all (Romans 8:9).

Verses 20-21 — Keep Yourselves

> *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*
>
> **Jude 20-21**

In contrast with the apostates, believers are to:

- **Build themselves up** on their most holy faith, growing through the Word of God (Acts 20:32; Colossians 2:7).
- **Pray in the Holy Ghost:** praying guided and empowered by the Spirit, in line with God's will (Romans 8:26-27; Ephesians 6:18).

- **Keep themselves in the love of God:** remaining where God's love can be enjoyed, through obedience (John 15:9-10). God keeps them (v1, 24); they must keep themselves in the sphere of His love.
- **Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ** at His return, which will bring eternal life in its fullness.

Notice all three Persons of the Trinity: the Holy Ghost, the love of God (the Father), and the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 22-23 — Rescue Others

> *And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*
>
> **Jude 22-23**

Believers must not only protect themselves but reach out to those affected by the false teachers, with discernment:

- **Some need compassion:** those who are doubting and wavering should be treated with mercy and patience.
- **Others need urgent rescue:** those close to destruction must be snatched from the fire (Zechariah 3:2; Amos 4:11).
- **All require caution:** believers must show mercy "with fear," "hating even the garment spotted by the flesh," taking care not to be contaminated by the sin they seek to rescue others from (Galatians 6:1; Zechariah 3:3-4).

Section V: Doxology (Verses 24-25)

> *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*
>
> **Jude 24-25**

After all the warnings, Jude ends with one of the most glorious doxologies in Scripture. Apostates fall; but God is able:

- **To keep you from falling:** from stumbling into apostasy and ruin (John 10:28-29; 1 Peter 1:5).
- **To present you faultless:** without blemish, clothed in Christ's righteousness, before His glorious presence.
- **With exceeding joy:** the joy of God and of His people on that day.

To the only wise God our Saviour belong glory (His radiant excellence), majesty (His greatness), dominion (His sovereign rule) and power (His authority), before all time, now and for ever.

Part Three: Christ in Jude

Text	Christ Revealed
1	Jesus Christ, the Master of His servant Jude
1	The One in whom believers are preserved
4	Our only Lord (Master) and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the apostates deny
5	The Lord who saved Israel out of Egypt and judged unbelievers (some manuscripts read "Jesus")
14	The Lord who comes with ten thousands of His saints to judge
17	The Lord whose apostles foretold the mockers
21	The One whose mercy believers look for unto eternal life
24-25	The One able to keep and to present His people faultless (with God our Saviour)

God's Keeping and Our Keeping

God Keeps	Believers Keep	Apostates Did Not Keep
"Preserved in Jesus Christ" (v1)	"Keep yourselves in the love of God" (v21)	Angels "kept not their first estate" (v6)
"Him that is able to keep you from falling" (v24)	Building up, praying, looking (v20-21)	They are "reserved" (kept) for darkness (v13)

The believer's security rests on God's keeping power, and it is expressed in the believer's continuing in God's love.

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Jude	Fulfillment
Apostates ordained of old to condemnation	4	Foretold in the Old Testament examples and by the apostles; fulfilled in the false teachers
Mockers in the last time	17-18	Foretold by the apostles (2 Peter 3:3); fulfilled in Jude's day and continuing
Angels reserved unto the judgment of the great day	6	Still future
Eternal fire, blackness of darkness for ever	7, 13	Still future (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10-15)
The Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints	14-15	Enoch's prophecy; still future (Zechariah 14:5; Revelation 19:11-16)
The mercy of Christ unto eternal life	21	At His return
Believers presented faultless before His glory	24	Still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Jude 3 — Contend for the Faith

Believers must vigorously defend the complete, final body of truth given once for all through Christ and His apostles.

Jude 4 — The Danger Within

False teachers creep in unnoticed, turning grace into a licence for sin and denying Christ's lordship.

Jude 5-7 — God Judges Rebellion

Unbelieving Israel, the angels who sinned and Sodom and Gomorrha prove that God judges those who rebel against Him, whatever their privileges.

Jude 9 — Michael's Restraint

Even the archangel left judgment to the Lord. Believers must contend for the faith without arrogance or reviling.

Jude 11-13 — Portraits of Apostasy

Like Cain, Balaam and Korah, apostates follow self-willed religion, greed and rebellion. They are hidden reefs, waterless clouds, dead trees, wild waves and wandering stars.

Jude 20-23 — Keeping Ourselves and Rescuing Others

Believers grow in the faith, pray in the Spirit, keep themselves in God's love, look for Christ's mercy, and rescue others with discernment, compassion and holy caution.

Jude 24-25 — The God Who Keeps

God is able to keep His people from falling and present them faultless before His glory with exceeding joy.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Jude

1. The Security of Believers

Believers are called, sanctified, preserved, and kept by God's power (1, 24).

2. The Faith Once Delivered

The Christian faith is a complete and final body of truth (3).

3. Contending for the Faith

Believers must defend the truth (3).

4. Apostasy

False teachers creep in, abuse grace and deny Christ (4, 8-19).

5. Grace Is Not a Licence to Sin

Turning grace into lasciviousness is a mark of apostasy (4).

6. The Certainty of Judgment

God judged Israel, fallen angels and Sodom, and will judge the ungodly (5-7, 14-15).

7. Angels and Demons

Angels who sinned are imprisoned; Michael the archangel contends with the devil (6, 9).

8. Eternal Punishment

Eternal fire and the blackness of darkness for ever (7, 13).

9. The Second Coming

The Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints (14-15).

10. Spiritual Growth and Prayer

Build yourselves up, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in God's love (20-21).

11. Rescuing the Straying

Show compassion, snatch from the fire, hate defilement (22-23).

12. The Glory of God

To the only wise God our Saviour be glory for ever (25).

Part Seven: Connections — How Jude Links to the Rest of the Bible

Jude and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Cain (4; Jude 11); Enoch, the seventh from Adam (5:18-24; Jude 14); the sons of God (6:1-4; Jude 6); Sodom and Gomorrha (19; Jude 7)
Exodus	Israel saved out of Egypt (12-14; Jude 5)
Numbers	Unbelief in the wilderness (14; Jude 5); Korah's rebellion (16; Jude 11); Balaam (22-25; 31:16; Jude 11)
Deuteronomy	The LORD coming with ten thousands of saints (33:2; Jude 14); the burial of Moses (34:5-6; Jude 9)
Proverbs	Clouds and wind without rain (25:14; Jude 12)
Isaiah	The wicked like the troubled sea (57:20; Jude 13)
Ezekiel	Shepherds who feed themselves (34:2, 8; Jude 12)
Daniel	Michael the great prince (10:13; 12:1; Jude 9)
Amos	A firebrand plucked out of the burning (4:11; Jude 23)
Zechariah	"The LORD rebuke thee"; a brand plucked out of the fire; filthy garments (3:2-4; Jude 9, 23); the LORD coming with all the saints (14:5; Jude 14)

Jude and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	Jude among the brothers of Jesus (13:55); false prophets and their fruit (7:15-20); tares among the wheat (13:24-30); everlasting fire for the devil and his angels (25:41)
John	Jude's unbelief (7:5); Christ's keeping of His sheep (10:28-29; 17:12)
Acts	Jude in the upper room (1:14); grievous wolves entering in (20:29-30)
Romans	Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (6:1-2; Jude 4); the Spirit helping our prayers (8:26-27; Jude 20)
1 Corinthians	Israel's judgment as an example (10:1-11; Jude 5); the brethren of the Lord (9:5)
Galatians	Any other gospel accursed (1:8-9; Jude 3)
Ephesians	Praying always in the Spirit (6:18; Jude 20)
1 Timothy	Departing from the faith in the latter times (4:1; Jude 18)
2 Timothy	Perilous times; itching ears (3:1-5; 4:3-4; Jude 18-19)
Titus	Professing to know God but denying Him in works (1:16; Jude 4)
Hebrews	God's final word in His Son (1:1-2; Jude 3); unbelief in the wilderness (3:16-19; Jude 5)
1 Peter	Kept by the power of God (1:5; Jude 24)

Book	Link
2 Peter	The parallel description of false teachers and mockers (2-3)
1 John	They went out from us (2:19; Jude 19); test the spirits (4:1)
Revelation	The doctrine of Balaam (2:14; Jude 11); Michael fighting the dragon (12:7; Jude 9); Christ coming with the armies of heaven (19:11-16; Jude 14); the lake of fire (20:10; Jude 7)

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Rest in being called, sanctified and preserved** (1).
- **Earnestly contend for the faith** (3).
- **Accept no new revelation beyond the faith once delivered** (3).
- **Watch for those who creep in unnoticed** (4).
- **Never treat grace as permission to sin** (4).
- **Remember that privilege does not protect from judgment** (5).
- **Respect God's boundaries** (6-7).
- **Don't speak abusively, even about the devil; leave judgment to the Lord** (9).
- **Beware of self-willed religion, greed and rebellion** (11).
- **Recognise false teachers by their fruitlessness** (12-13).
- **Live in light of the Lord's coming in judgment** (14-15).
- **Don't be shaken by mockers; they were foretold** (17-18).
- **Build yourself up on your most holy faith** (20).
- **Pray in the Holy Ghost** (20).
- **Keep yourself in the love of God** (21).
- **Look for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life** (21).
- **Show compassion to the doubting** (22).
- **Rescue those near the fire** (23).
- **Hate even the garment spotted by the flesh** (23).
- **Trust God to keep you from falling** (24).
- **Give God all the glory** (25).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
3	Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.
4	Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.
9	The Lord rebuke thee.
14	Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints
20-21	But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
22-23	And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire
24-25	Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Conclusion

Jude, the half-brother of Jesus who once doubted Him but became His servant, intended to write about the salvation all believers share, but was compelled instead to urge them to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Ungodly men had crept in, turning God's grace into a licence for immorality and denying the only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Jude reminded his readers that God judged unbelieving Israel after delivering them from Egypt, imprisoned the angels who left their proper place, and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha with fire. The apostates, like Cain, Balaam and Korah, followed self-willed religion, greed and rebellion. They were hidden reefs at the love feasts, waterless clouds, dead trees, raging waves and wandering stars, and Enoch long ago foretold that the Lord would come with ten thousands of His saints to judge such ungodly men. But believers need not fear. Remembering that the apostles predicted these mockers, they must build themselves up in their most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep themselves in the love of God, and look for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life, while reaching out to rescue others with compassion and holy caution. Above all, they rest in the God who preserves them, and who alone is able to keep them from falling and present them faultless before His glory with exceeding joy.

> *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*
>
> **Jude 24-25**

Revelation

A Comprehensive Christian Study

Author: John the apostle (on Patmos) • Date: c. AD 95 • Chapters: 22

> *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*
>
> **Revelation 22:20**

Part One: Introduction to Revelation

The Title

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (1:1). The word "Revelation" (Greek apokalypsis) means an unveiling, a disclosure of what was hidden. The book is the revelation of Jesus Christ: it comes from Him, and it is about Him. It unveils Christ in His glory as the risen Lord of the church, the Lamb who alone is worthy, the coming King, the Judge of all, and the Bridegroom of His people.

The Author

The writer calls himself John four times (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8), a servant of God and "your brother, and companion in tribulation" (1:9). Early Christian writers such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus identified him as the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, author of the Gospel and the three letters. He was on "the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:9), a small rocky island in the Aegean Sea, about forty miles from the coast of Asia Minor, used by Rome as a place of exile.

Date

Irenaeus, who knew Polycarp, a disciple of John, wrote that the Revelation was seen "towards the end of Domitian's reign," around AD 95. Domitian demanded worship as "Lord and God," and Christians who refused faced persecution. Some interpreters date the book earlier, around AD 68 under Nero, but the testimony of the early church and the conditions of the seven churches favour the later date.

The Recipients

The book was sent to seven real churches in the Roman province of Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea (1:11). They lay on a circular road, in the order a messenger would travel. Through them, it speaks to "the churches," to every believer: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (2:7).

The Blessing

Revelation is the only book of the Bible that begins with a promised blessing for reading and obeying it:

> *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*
>
> **Revelation 1:3**

It contains seven beatitudes ("Blessed..."):

Beatitude	Revelation
Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear and keep this prophecy	1:3
Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord	14:13
Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments	16:15
Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb	19:9
Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection	20:6
Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book	22:7
Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life	22:14

The Key to the Book

Christ Himself gave John the outline of the book:

> *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*
>
> **Revelation 1:19**

Key Division	Chapters	Content
"The things which thou hast seen"	1	The vision of the glorified Christ
"The things which are"	2-3	The seven churches
"The things which shall be hereafter"	4-22	Future events, beginning "after this" (4:1)

How Revelation Has Been Interpreted

Revelation is full of symbols, many explained within the book itself or drawn from the Old Testament. Christians have followed four main approaches:

Approach	Main Idea	Strengths and Weaknesses
Preterist	Most of the prophecies were fulfilled in the first century, in the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70) or of pagan Rome	Takes the original readers seriously, but must treat Christ's return, the judgments and the new creation largely as symbolic or already past
Historicist	The book traces church history from the first century to the end; often identified the beast and Babylon with the papacy (common among Reformers and older Baptists)	Saw the book as relevant to every age, but its many proposed timelines disagree with one another
Idealist	The book pictures the timeless conflict between good and evil, not specific events	Draws out timeless lessons, but does not take the book's prophecies of specific future events literally
Futurist	Chapters 4-22 describe future events: the tribulation, Christ's return, the millennium and the eternal state	Takes the prophecies at face value and connects them with Daniel and Christ's Olivet discourse; held by most modern Baptists

This study follows the futurist approach, held by most Baptists today, understanding chapters 4-19 as describing a future seven-year tribulation (Daniel's seventieth week, Daniel 9:27), followed by Christ's glorious return, His thousand-year reign, the final judgment and the new heavens and new earth. Other views are noted where they matter. On any view, the central message is the same: Jesus Christ will triumph, evil will be judged, and God will dwell with His people for ever.

Symbols and Numbers

Revelation explains many of its own symbols (for example, 1:20; 5:6, 8; 12:9; 17:9, 12, 15, 18), and many come from the Old Testament, which the book echoes hundreds of times, especially Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Isaiah, Exodus and the Psalms, though it never quotes it formally. The number seven, the number of completeness, appears more than fifty times: seven churches, Spirits, candlesticks, stars, seals, trumpets, vials, thunders, horns and eyes. Christ is called "the Lamb" twenty-eight times.

Theme

The theme of Revelation is the triumph of Jesus Christ. The once-slain Lamb is worthy to take the scroll of history; He will judge the world in righteousness, defeat Satan and all his forces, reign as King of kings, and make all things new.

> *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him*
>
> **Revelation 1:7**

> *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 11:15**

Outline of Revelation

Section	Chapters	Theme
I. The Things Which Thou Hast Seen	1	The glorified Christ among the churches
II. The Things Which Are	2-3	Letters to the seven churches
III. The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter	4-22	The future
The throne in heaven and the Lamb	4-5	Worship of the Creator and the Redeemer
The seven seals	6-7	The tribulation begins; the sealed and the redeemed
The seven trumpets	8-11	Judgments intensify; the two witnesses; the kingdom proclaimed
The great conflict	12-14	The woman, the dragon, the beasts, the Lamb and His followers
The seven vials	15-16	The final outpouring of wrath; Armageddon gathered
The fall of Babylon	17-18	Religious and commercial Babylon destroyed

Section	Chapters	Theme
The return of Christ	19	The marriage of the Lamb; the King of kings
The millennium and the final judgment	20	Satan bound; the thousand-year reign; the great white throne
The new heavens and new earth	21-22:5	The new Jerusalem
IV. Epilogue	22:6-21	"Surely I come quickly"

Part Two: Chapter-by-Chapter Analysis

Section I: The Things Which Thou Hast Seen (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1:1-8 — Prologue and Greeting

The revelation came from God, through Christ, by an angel, to John, for God's servants (1:1). It concerns "things which must shortly come to pass": events that would begin soon, and that would unfold swiftly once begun.

> *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.*
>
> **Revelation 1:4-5**

The greeting comes from the Trinity: the eternal Father ("which is, and which was, and which is to come"); the Holy Spirit, called "the seven Spirits" to express His perfect fullness (Isaiah 11:2; Zechariah 4:2-6); and Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness (His life on earth), the first begotten of the dead (His resurrection) and the prince of the kings of the earth (His coming reign).

> *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
>
> **Revelation 1:5-6**

Christ loves us (continually), has washed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us kings and priests to God (Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9).

> *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*
>
> **Revelation 1:7**

This is the theme verse of the book. Christ's return will be visible, public and worldwide (Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 24:30). Israel, who pierced Him, will look upon Him, and the nations will mourn.

> *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*
>
> **Revelation 1:8**

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet: the Lord is the beginning and end of all things. The same title is later used by Christ (22:13).

Chapter 1:9-20 — The Vision of the Glorified Christ

John was on Patmos, suffering for his testimony. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (1:10), the first day of the week, the day of Christ's resurrection, when believers gathered for worship. He heard a voice like a trumpet, telling him to write what he saw and send it to the seven churches (1:10-11). Turning, he saw seven golden candlesticks, and among them "one like unto the Son of man" (1:12-13):

Feature of Christ	Revelation 1	Meaning
A garment down to the foot, girt with a golden girdle	13	His dignity as Priest and King
Head and hair white like wool, as white as snow	14	His eternity and wisdom; He is the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:9)
Eyes as a flame of fire	14	His penetrating knowledge and judgment
Feet like fine brass, burning in a furnace	15	His strength to judge and tread down evil
Voice as the sound of many waters	15	His overwhelming authority
Seven stars in His right hand	16	He holds and controls the messengers of the churches
A sharp twoedged sword out of His mouth	16	His Word, which judges (Hebrews 4:12; 19:15)
Countenance as the sun shining in his strength	16	His blazing glory, as at the transfiguration

> *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*
>
> **Revelation 1:17-18**

John, who once leaned on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, now fell down as dead before His glory. But the same loving hand touched him: "Fear not." Christ is the First and the Last (the LORD's title in Isaiah 44:6), the One who died and is alive for evermore, and He holds the keys of death and hell (Hades). The believer need not fear death, for Christ controls it.

Christ then gave John the outline of the book (1:19) and explained "the mystery": "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (1:20). The churches are lampstands, bearing the light of Christ in a dark world. The "angels" (messengers) are probably the pastors or leading messengers of each church, held securely in Christ's hand.

Section II: The Things Which Are (Chapters 2-3)

The Letters to the Seven Churches

Each letter follows a similar pattern: Christ's address to the church, a description of Himself drawn from the vision of chapter 1, commendation, rebuke, exhortation, the call "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," and a promise to "him that overcometh." These letters apply in three ways:

- **Historically:** they were written to real first-century churches with real conditions.
- **Practically:** every church and believer can find themselves in them.
- **Prophetically (a view held by many dispensational Baptists):** the seven churches preview the main stages of church history: Ephesus the apostolic church; Smyrna the persecuted church; Pergamos the church allied with the state; Thyatira the medieval church; Sardis the Reformation church; Philadelphia the missionary church; Laodicea the lukewarm church of the last days.

Church	Christ Revealed As	Commended	Rebuked	Promise to the Overcomer
Ephesus (2:1-7)	Holding the seven stars, walking among the candlesticks	Works, labour, patience; tested false apostles; hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans	"Thou hast left thy first love"	To eat of the tree of life in paradise
Smyrna (2:8-11)	The first and the last, which was dead and is alive	Faithful in tribulation and poverty, yet rich	(None)	A crown of life; not hurt of the second death
Pergamos (2:12-17)	Him which hath the sharp sword with two edges	Held fast His name where Satan's seat is; Antipas the faithful martyr	Tolerated the doctrine of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans	Hidden manna; a white stone with a new name
Thyatira (2:18-29)	The Son of God, eyes like fire, feet like brass	Works, charity, service, faith, patience; the last more than the first	Tolerated "that woman Jezebel," leading into immorality and idolatry	Power over the nations; the morning star
Sardis (3:1-6)	He that hath the seven Spirits and the seven stars	A few names that have not defiled their garments	"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead"	White raiment; name never blotted out of the book of life; confessed before the Father
Philadelphia (3:7-13)	He that is holy, true, with the key of David	Little strength, yet kept His word and did not deny His name	(None)	Kept from the hour of temptation; a pillar in God's temple; God's name written on him
Laodicea (3:14-22)	The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God	(Nothing)	Lukewarm; self-satisfied; wretched, poor, blind and naked	To sit with Christ in His throne

Chapter 2:1-7 — Ephesus: The Church That Left Its First Love

Ephesus, the great port and capital of Asia, home of the temple of Diana, had been served by Paul, Timothy and John. Christ commended its hard work, endurance and doctrinal discernment: it had tested false apostles and found them liars, and hated "the deeds of the Nicolaitans" (a sect, perhaps teaching moral licence) (2:2-6). "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (2:4). Orthodoxy and activity had replaced devotion to Christ. The cure: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place" (2:5). A church that loses its love for Christ will eventually lose its witness. The overcomer will "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (2:7; 22:2).

Chapter 2:8-11 — Smyrna: The Suffering Church

Smyrna (modern Izmir) was a proud, beautiful city, a centre of emperor worship with a hostile Jewish community. Christ, "the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive," knew their tribulation and poverty: "but thou art rich" (2:9). He knew the blasphemy of those who claimed to be Jews but were "the synagogue of Satan." He had no rebuke for this church.

> *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*
>
> **Revelation 2:10**

Their suffering would be limited ("ten days"). The overcomer "shall not be hurt of the second death" (2:11). Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna and disciple of John, was martyred there around AD 155, declaring, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong."

Chapter 2:12-17 — Pergamos: The Compromising Church

Pergamos was the capital of the province, with a great altar of Zeus and the first temple of emperor worship in Asia: "where Satan's seat is" (2:13). The believers held fast Christ's name even when Antipas, "my faithful martyr," was killed. But some held "the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (2:14; Numbers 25; 31:16), and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. They tolerated compromise with pagan culture. "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (2:16). The overcomer receives "the hidden manna" (Christ, the true bread), and "a white stone, and in the stone a new name written" (2:17), perhaps a token of acquittal or of admission to a feast.

Chapter 2:18-29 — Thyatira: The Corrupt Church

Thyatira was a commercial town full of trade guilds, each with its patron god and feasts. Christ appears as "the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass" (2:18). He commended their love, service, faith and patience, and growth: "the last to be more than the first" (2:19). But they tolerated "that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (2:20). Like Ahab's wife Jezebel (1 Kings 16:31), she promoted idolatry and immorality, probably encouraging participation

in the guild feasts. Christ gave her time to repent, but she refused; judgment would fall, "and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts" (2:23). To the faithful remnant: "that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (2:25). The overcomer receives "power over the nations" to rule with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9), and "the morning star" (2:26-28), Christ Himself (22:16).

Chapter 3:1-6 — Sardis: The Dead Church

Sardis was a wealthy city with a famous citadel thought impregnable, yet twice captured because its defenders were not watching. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (3:1). It had a reputation for life but was spiritually dead. "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain... Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief" (3:2-3). Yet "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" (3:4).

> *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*
>
> **Revelation 3:5**

This promise gives assurance: Christ will never blot out the true believer's name.

Chapter 3:7-13 — Philadelphia: The Faithful Church

Philadelphia ("brotherly love") was a small city on the frontier, founded to spread Greek culture, and often shaken by earthquakes. Christ is "he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (3:7; Isaiah 22:22).

> *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*
>
> **Revelation 3:8**

Though weak, they were faithful to the Word and the name of Christ, and He gave them an open door for the gospel. Their opponents would one day bow before them and know that Christ loved them (3:9).

> *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*
>
> **Revelation 3:10**

"The hour of temptation" (trial) that will come on the whole world is understood by futurists as the coming tribulation. Christ promises to keep His faithful people "from" that hour, not merely through it, a key text for the pre-tribulation rapture view held by many Baptists. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (3:11). The overcomer will be "a pillar in the temple of my God" (permanent, secure in a city of earthquakes), with God's name, the name of the new Jerusalem, and Christ's new name written on him (3:12).

Chapter 3:14-22 — Laodicea: The Lukewarm Church

Laodicea was a rich banking centre, famous for its black wool and a medical school that produced eye salve. It was so wealthy that it rebuilt itself after an earthquake in AD 60 without Roman aid. Its water came by aqueduct from hot springs and arrived lukewarm; nearby Hierapolis had hot healing springs and Colosse cold, refreshing water.

> *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*
>
> **Revelation 3:14-16**

Christ is "the beginning" (the source and ruler) of God's creation (Colossians 1:15-18). The Laodicean church was like its water: neither hot (healing) nor cold (refreshing), but lukewarm, useless and nauseating to Christ. There is no commendation.

> *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*
>
> **Revelation 3:17-18**

Proud of its wealth, its clothing and its medicine, the church was spiritually poor, naked and blind. Christ offers true riches, white garments of righteousness and spiritual sight.

> *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*
>
> **Revelation 3:19-20**

Remarkably, Christ stands outside His own church, knocking. His rebuke is an act of love (Hebrews 12:6). His appeal goes to individuals, "if any man," and offers intimate fellowship. This verse, addressed to a church, is also rightly used as an invitation to every sinner to open the heart to Christ. The overcomer will sit with Christ on His throne (3:21).

Section III: The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter (Chapters 4-22)

Chapter 4 — The Throne in Heaven

> *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*
>
> **Revelation 4:1**

"After this" marks the beginning of "the things which shall be hereafter" (1:19). John is caught up to heaven. Many futurists see this as a picture of the rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), noting that the word "church," used nineteen times in chapters 1-3, does not appear again on earth until chapter 22:16.

Before the judgments begin, John sees the throne of God, the centre of the universe. One sat on it, "to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald" (4:3). The rainbow, God's covenant sign after the flood (Genesis 9:13), reminds us that He remembers mercy even in judgment.

- **Twenty-four elders** sat on thrones around the throne, clothed in white with crowns of gold (4:4). Many understand them as representing the redeemed church in heaven, already robed, crowned and enthroned (compare 2:10; 3:5, 21); others see them as an exalted order of angels. Twenty-four may combine the twelve tribes and twelve apostles (21:12-14), or reflect the twenty-four courses of priests (1 Chronicles 24).
- **Lightnings, thunderings and voices** proceeded from the throne, signs of coming judgment (4:5; Exodus 19:16).
- **Seven lamps of fire**, "which are the seven Spirits of God" (4:5).
- **A sea of glass like crystal** before the throne (4:6), perhaps recalling the laver of the tabernacle; there is no more need of cleansing in heaven.
- **Four beasts (living creatures)** full of eyes, like a lion, a calf, a man and a flying eagle, each with six wings (4:6-8; compare Ezekiel 1:10; Isaiah 6:2). They represent the highest order of created beings, and perhaps the whole of creation: wild animals, domestic animals, humans and birds.

> *And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*
>
> **Revelation 4:8**

When the living creatures give glory, the elders fall down and cast their crowns before the throne:

> *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*
>
> **Revelation 4:11**

God is worshipped as Creator. All things exist for His pleasure and glory.

Chapter 5 — The Lamb and the Scroll

In the right hand of Him who sat on the throne was "a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals" (5:1). The scroll is best understood as the title deed to the earth and the record of God's plan to reclaim it from the usurper and judge the world. "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (5:2). No one in heaven, on earth or under the earth was found worthy, and John "wept much" (5:3-4).

> *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*
>
> **Revelation 5:5**

Christ is the Lion of Judah, the promised King from Judah's tribe (Genesis 49:9-10), and the Root of David, both David's source and his descendant (Isaiah 11:1, 10; Revelation 22:16).

> *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*
>
> **Revelation 5:6**

John turned to see a Lion and saw a Lamb, still bearing the marks of slaughter, yet standing alive. Christ conquered by being slain. His seven horns picture perfect power; His seven eyes, perfect knowledge through the Spirit. The Lamb took the scroll (5:7), and heaven burst into worship:

> *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*
>
> **Revelation 5:9-10**

The Lamb is worthy because He was slain and redeemed people from every nation by His blood. The redeemed will reign on the earth. Then countless angels, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," joined in: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (5:11-12). Finally every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth and in the sea joined:

> *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 5:13**

The Lamb receives the same worship as God on the throne, for He is God. Chapter 4 worships God as Creator; chapter 5 worships the Lamb as Redeemer.

Chapter 6 — The Seals Opened

As the Lamb opens the seals, the judgments of the tribulation begin. Christ described the same sequence in His Olivet discourse: false christs, wars, famines, pestilences, martyrdom and heavenly signs (Matthew 24:4-29).

Seal	Revelation 6	Description	Meaning
First	1-2	A white horse; the rider has a bow and a crown, and goes forth conquering	A false peacemaker and conqueror, the coming Antichrist (not Christ, who rides a white horse only in 19:11)
Second	3-4	A red horse; power to take peace from the earth; a great sword	War and bloodshed
Third	5-6	A black horse; a pair of balances; "A measure of wheat for a penny"	Famine: a day's wage for a day's food, while luxuries ("the oil and the wine") remain for the rich
Fourth	7-8	A pale horse; its rider is Death, and Hell follows	A fourth part of the earth killed with sword, hunger, death and wild beasts
Fifth	9-11	Souls under the altar, slain for the word of God, crying, "How long, O Lord?"	Tribulation martyrs, given white robes and told to rest a little longer
Sixth	12-17	A great earthquake; the sun black, the moon as blood, stars falling, the heaven departing as a scroll	Cosmic upheaval; terror on the earth

At the sixth seal, kings, great men, the rich, the mighty, slaves and free alike hid in caves and cried to the mountains and rocks:

> *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*
>
> **Revelation 6:16-17**

"The wrath of the Lamb": the gentle Lamb who was slain is also the righteous Judge. Those who refused His mercy will face His wrath.

Chapter 7 — The Sealed Servants and the Great Multitude

Before the seventh seal, there is a pause. Four angels hold back the winds of judgment until God's servants are sealed (7:1-3).

The 144,000 (7:4-8). John heard the number of the sealed: 144,000, "of all the tribes of the children of Israel," twelve thousand from each of twelve tribes. Futurists understand these as Jewish believers, saved and sealed for protection and service during the tribulation (compare 14:1-5). (The tribe of Dan is omitted, perhaps because of its early idolatry, Judges 18; Joseph and Levi are included.) Others understand the number symbolically, as the complete people of God.

The great multitude (7:9-17).

> *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*
>
> **Revelation 7:9-10**

Even in the darkest days, multitudes from every nation will be saved. One of the elders identified them:

> *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*
>
> **Revelation 7:14**

These are believers saved and martyred during the tribulation. Their blessedness is described in some of the most comforting words in Scripture: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (7:16-17).

Chapter 8 — The Seventh Seal and the First Four Trumpets

"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (8:1), an awed hush before the storm. The seventh seal contains the seven trumpets. An angel offered incense with "the prayers of all saints" on the golden altar, then filled the censer with fire from the altar and cast it to the earth (8:3-5). The prayers of God's people, including the martyrs' cry (6:10), are answered in judgment.

The first four trumpets strike the natural world, many recalling the plagues of Egypt:

Trumpet	Revelation 8	Judgment	Compare
First	7	Hail and fire mingled with blood; a third of the trees and all green grass burned	The seventh plague of hail (Exodus 9:23-25)
Second	8-9	A great burning mountain cast into the sea; a third of the sea became blood; a third of sea creatures and ships destroyed	The first plague of blood (Exodus 7:20-21)
Third	10-11	A great star, Wormwood, fell on the rivers and fountains; a third of the waters became bitter; many died	Bitter waters (Jeremiah 9:15)
Fourth	12	A third of the sun, moon and stars darkened	The ninth plague of darkness (Exodus 10:21-23)

An angel (or eagle) flying through heaven cried, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth" because of the three remaining trumpets (8:13). The last three trumpets are called the three woes.

Chapter 9 — The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

The fifth trumpet: the first woe (9:1-12). A star fallen from heaven (a fallen angel) was given the key of the bottomless pit (the abyss). Smoke rose like a great furnace, darkening the sun, and out of it came locusts with power like scorpions (9:1-3). They were not to harm vegetation, but only "those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads," tormenting them for five months. "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (9:6). Their bizarre appearance (like war horses, with crowns, human faces, women's hair, lions' teeth, iron breastplates and scorpion tails, 9:7-10) shows that these are demonic forces released from the abyss. Their king is "the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon" (9:11), both meaning "Destroyer."

The sixth trumpet: the second woe (9:13-21). Four angels bound at the river Euphrates were released to slay a third of mankind (9:14-15). "And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand" (9:16), two hundred million, a vast demonic or human army. Fire, smoke and brimstone from their mouths killed a third of men (9:17-18). Yet the most sobering verses are these:

> *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*
>
> **Revelation 9:20-21**

Judgment alone does not change the human heart. "Sorceries" translates the Greek pharmakeia, which included drugs used in occult practices.

Chapter 10 — The Mighty Angel and the Little Book

Between the sixth and seventh trumpets comes another pause. A mighty angel came down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, a rainbow on his head, his face like the sun, his feet like pillars of fire, holding a little book open, with his right foot on the sea and his left on the earth, claiming the whole world (10:1-2). Seven thunders spoke, but John was told, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not" (10:4); not everything about the future has been revealed. The angel swore by the Creator "that there should be time no longer" (no more delay), and that at the seventh trumpet "the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (10:6-7).

John was told to eat the little book: "it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter" (10:10; Ezekiel 3:1-3). God's Word is sweet to receive, but its message of judgment is bitter to digest and proclaim. "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (10:11).

Chapter 11 — The Two Witnesses and the Seventh Trumpet

The temple measured (11:1-2). John measured "the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein," but not the outer court, given to the Gentiles, who "shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (three and a half years). Futurists understand this as a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem during the tribulation (compare Daniel 9:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:4).

The two witnesses (11:3-14). God will give power to two witnesses to prophesy 1,260 days (three and a half years), clothed in sackcloth (11:3). They are "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth" (11:4; Zechariah 4:3, 11-14). They have power to destroy enemies with fire, to shut heaven so that it does not rain (like Elijah, 1 Kings 17:1), and to turn waters to blood and smite the earth with plagues (like Moses, Exodus 7-11) (11:5-6). Many identify them as Moses and Elijah, who appeared with Christ at the transfiguration (Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:3); others as Enoch and Elijah, who never died.

When their testimony is finished, "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit" will kill them, and their bodies will lie in the street of "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (Jerusalem) (11:7-8). People from every nation will see their bodies for three and a half days and rejoice, sending gifts (11:9-10), something modern worldwide communications make easy to imagine. Then "the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them" (11:11). They ascended to heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched, and a great earthquake killed seven thousand; "the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven" (11:12-13).

The seventh trumpet (11:15-19).

> *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 11:15**

The seventh trumpet announces the climax: Christ's kingdom. The elders worshipped God, who had taken His great power and reigned; the nations were angry, but the time had come for judgment, for rewarding His servants, "and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth" (11:16-18). The temple in heaven was opened, revealing "the ark of his testament" (11:19), the sign of God's faithfulness to His covenant. The seventh trumpet contains the seven vials (chapters 15-16).

Chapter 12 — The Woman, the Child and the Dragon

Chapters 12-14 step back to show the spiritual conflict behind the events on earth.

The woman and the child (12:1-6). "A great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (12:1). The imagery recalls Joseph's dream of his father, mother and brothers (Genesis 37:9); the woman is Israel, the nation through whom the Messiah came. "A great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns" stood ready to devour her child (12:3-4); his tail drew a third of the stars of heaven, the angels who fell with him. "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne" (12:5). This is Christ (Psalm 2:9), born of Israel, whom Satan tried to destroy (Matthew 2:16), and who ascended to God's throne. The woman fled into the wilderness, where God would nourish her for 1,260 days (12:6), God's protection of Israel during the second half of the tribulation.

War in heaven (12:7-12).

> *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*
>
> **Revelation 12:7-9**

Satan, who still has access to accuse believers before God (Job 1-2), will be cast out of heaven to the earth, probably at the midpoint of the tribulation. His names reveal his nature: the dragon (fierce), the old serpent (deceiver since Eden), the Devil (slanderer), Satan (adversary).

> *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*
>
> **Revelation 12:10-11**

Believers overcome Satan's accusations by three things: the blood of the Lamb (the full payment for their sins), the word of their testimony (their confession of Christ), and their willingness to die for Him. "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (12:12).

The persecution of the woman (12:13-17). The dragon persecuted the woman (Israel), but she was given "two wings of a great eagle" to flee into the wilderness, where she was nourished "for a time, and times, and half a time" (three and a half years; Daniel 7:25) (12:13-14). When the dragon sent a flood after her, the earth swallowed it (12:15-16). Enraged, he went "to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (12:17).

Chapter 13 — The Two Beasts

The beast out of the sea (13:1-10). John saw "a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (13:1). The sea represents the nations (17:15). The beast combines features of Daniel's four beasts: like a leopard, with the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion (13:2; Daniel 7:3-7). It is both the final world empire and its ruler, the Antichrist. "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (13:2).

- **A counterfeit resurrection:** one of his heads was "as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast" (13:3).
- **Worship:** "they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (13:4).
- **Blasphemy:** he has "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies," and power to continue forty-two months (13:5-6).
- **Persecution:** "it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (13:7).

- **Universal worship:** "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (13:8).

"If any man have an ear, let him hear... Here is the patience and the faith of the saints" (13:9-10).

The beast out of the earth (13:11-18). "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (13:11). He looks gentle but speaks Satan's words. Later called "the false prophet" (16:13; 19:20), he is a religious leader who promotes the worship of the first beast. He performs great wonders, even calling fire from heaven, deceives the world, and makes an image of the beast which he gives breath to speak, ordering that all who refuse to worship it be killed (13:12-15).

> *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*
>
> **Revelation 13:16-17**

The mark of the beast will be a sign of allegiance to the Antichrist, required for all economic life.

> *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*
>
> **Revelation 13:18**

In Greek and Hebrew, letters also served as numbers, so a name could be "counted." The number 666 may also symbolise man falling short of God's perfect seven, three times over. Many identifications have been proposed (for example, "Nero Caesar" in Hebrew letters totals 666), but its full meaning will be clear to those who live when the beast appears. Believers should not engage in speculation or name-guessing, but be warned never to give their allegiance to anyone but Christ.

The unholy trinity. Satan imitates God: the dragon is a counterfeit of the Father, the beast of the Son (with a counterfeit death and resurrection), and the false prophet of the Holy Spirit (directing worship to the beast, as the Spirit glorifies Christ).

Chapter 14 — The Lamb, the Angels and the Harvest

The Lamb on Mount Sion (14:1-5). In contrast with the beast's followers, John saw the Lamb standing on Mount Sion with the 144,000, having His Father's name written in their foreheads (14:1). They sang a new song that only they could learn. They were pure ("virgins," spiritually undefiled by the world's idolatry), followed the Lamb wherever He went, were redeemed as "firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb," and had no guile (14:3-5).

Three angelic messages (14:6-13).

- **The everlasting gospel (14:6-7):** an angel flew "having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Even in the tribulation, God sends a final worldwide gospel call.

- **The fall of Babylon (14:8):** "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city," announced in advance (chapters 17-18).
- **Warning against the beast (14:9-11):** "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God... and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night." This is one of the clearest statements of eternal, conscious punishment in Scripture.

"Here is the patience of the saints" (14:12). Then a voice from heaven:

> *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*
>
> **Revelation 14:13**

The harvest and the vintage (14:14-20). One like the Son of man, seated on a white cloud with a golden crown and a sharp sickle, reaped the earth, "for the harvest of the earth is ripe" (14:14-16). Another angel gathered "the vine of the earth" and cast it "into the great winepress of the wrath of God," and blood flowed "even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs" (about 180 miles) (14:17-20; Joel 3:13). This previews the final battle of Armageddon (16:16; 19:15).

Chapter 15 — Preparation for the Final Plagues

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God" (15:1). Those who had overcome the beast stood on a sea of glass mingled with fire, holding harps of God:

> *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*
>
> **Revelation 15:3-4**

As Israel sang the song of Moses after crossing the Red Sea and seeing Pharaoh's army destroyed (Exodus 15), so the victors over the beast praise God's righteous judgments. The temple in heaven was opened; seven angels came out and received seven golden vials full of God's wrath; and "the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled" (15:5-8).

Chapter 16 — The Seven Vials of Wrath

The vials (bowls) are poured out rapidly, the final and most severe judgments, affecting the whole earth:

Vial	Revelation 16	Judgment
First	2	A noisome and grievous sore on those with the mark of the beast (compare the plague of boils, Exodus 9:9-11)
Second	3	The sea became as the blood of a dead man; every living soul in the sea died

Vial	Revelation 16	Judgment
Third	4-7	Rivers and fountains became blood: "they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink"
Fourth	8-9	The sun scorched men with fire; they blasphemed God and repented not
Fifth	10-11	Darkness on the throne and kingdom of the beast; men gnawed their tongues in pain, blasphemed and repented not
Sixth	12-16	The Euphrates dried up for the kings of the east; demonic spirits gather the kings of the world to Armageddon
Seventh	17-21	"It is done": the greatest earthquake in history; Babylon remembered; great hail

At the third vial, the angel of the waters declared God righteous: "Thou art righteous, O Lord... because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy" (16:5-6). God's judgments are perfectly just. Yet, as with the trumpets, men "blasphemed the name of God... and they repented not to give him glory" (16:9, 11).

The sixth vial: Armageddon gathered (16:12-16). The Euphrates was dried up, "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (16:12). Three unclean spirits like frogs came out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet: "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (16:13-14). Then a parenthetical warning from Christ:

> *Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*
>
> **Revelation 16:15**

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (16:16). Armageddon means "the hill (or mountain) of Megiddo," overlooking the great plain of Esdraelon (Jezreel) in northern Israel, the site of many famous battles (Judges 5:19; 2 Kings 23:29). Here the armies of the world will gather against God and His Christ (Psalm 2:1-3; Joel 3:9-14; Zechariah 14:2).

The seventh vial: "It is done" (16:17-21). "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done" (16:17). As Christ cried, "It is finished," on the cross, God now declares the end of His wrath on the earth. The greatest earthquake in history struck; the great city was divided into three parts; the cities of the nations fell; "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath"; islands fled and mountains disappeared; and hailstones "about the weight of a talent" (perhaps around 75-100 pounds) fell. Still "men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail" (16:18-21).

Chapter 17 — The Great Whore: Religious Babylon

One of the vial angels showed John "the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication" (17:1-2). In Scripture, spiritual unfaithfulness to God is called fornication (Hosea 2; Ezekiel 16). This woman represents a corrupt, idolatrous religious system that seduces rulers and peoples.

John saw her "sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" (17:3), the beast of chapter 13. She was "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (17:4).

> *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*
>
> **Revelation 17:5-6**

Babylon, from the tower of Babel (Genesis 11) onwards, represents man's organised rebellion against God, and the source of false religion. This harlot is "the mother" of all false religious systems, and she has persecuted God's people.

The angel explained the mystery (17:7-18):

- **The seven heads** are "seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth" (17:9). Rome was famous as the city on seven hills. They are also seven kings (or kingdoms): "five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come"; the beast himself is "the eighth" (17:10-11).
- **The ten horns** are ten kings who will receive authority for "one hour" with the beast, a final confederation of nations (Daniel 2:41-44; 7:24) (17:12-13).

> *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*
>
> **Revelation 17:14**

- **The waters** where she sits are "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (17:15): her influence is worldwide.
- **The ten horns and the beast will turn against the whore**, "and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire" (17:16). The political power that used the false religious system will finally destroy it, perhaps so that the beast alone can be worshipped (13:8). God's purposes are fulfilled even through His enemies (17:17).
- **The woman** is "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (17:18).

Many Reformers and older Baptists identified this harlot with the Roman papal system, pointing to the seven hills, the purple and scarlet, the riches, and its history of persecuting dissenters. Many futurists understand it as a final, worldwide apostate religious system, possibly centred in Rome, that will unite false religions in the last days. Either way, it is a warning against every religion that claims God's name while betraying His truth.

Chapter 18 — The Fall of Commercial Babylon

Another angel, with great power, lit the earth with his glory and cried:

> *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*
>
> **Revelation 18:2-3**

Chapter 18 focuses on Babylon as the centre of the world's economic and political system, luxury and greed.

> *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*
>
> **Revelation 18:4**

As Israel was called out of ancient Babylon (Jeremiah 51:6, 45), God's people must separate from the world's corrupt system (2 Corinthians 6:17). Her judgment would come "in one day," with death, mourning, famine and fire, "for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her" (18:8).

Three groups lament her fall, each standing "afar off," crying "Alas, alas," and noting that it came "in one hour":

- **The kings of the earth** (18:9-10), who shared her power and luxury.
- **The merchants** (18:11-16), who mourn because "no man buyeth their merchandise any more." Their cargo list runs from gold, silver, jewels, fine fabrics, spices and food to horses, chariots, "and slaves, and souls of men" (18:13). The commercial system treated human beings as merchandise.
- **The shipmasters and sailors** (18:17-19), whose wealth depended on her trade.

But heaven rejoices: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her" (18:20). A mighty angel threw a great millstone into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (18:21). The sounds of music, craftsmen, millstones, lamps and weddings would cease for ever, "for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (18:22-24).

Chapter 19 — The Marriage of the Lamb and the Return of the King

Hallelujah in heaven (19:1-6). Heaven responds to Babylon's fall with the only "Alleluias" in the New Testament, four times:

> *Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments*
>
> **Revelation 19:1-2**

> *Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*
>
> **Revelation 19:6**

The marriage of the Lamb (19:7-10).

> *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*
>
> **Revelation 19:7-8**

In contrast with the harlot, the bride is pure. The church, the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27; 2 Corinthians 11:2), is united with her Bridegroom. Her wedding garment is granted to her (Christ's righteousness given by grace), and it is woven from "the righteousness of saints," the righteous acts of believers that grace has produced (Ephesians 2:10). "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (19:9).

John fell at the angel's feet to worship him, but the angel said, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (19:10). Only God may be worshipped, and the heart of all prophecy is the testimony about Jesus.

The return of the King (19:11-16).

> *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*
>
> **Revelation 19:11-13**

This is the second coming of Christ in glory, the climax of the book and of history. The One who came first on a donkey, meek and lowly, now comes on a white horse as conquering King. He is "Faithful and True"; His judgment is righteous; His eyes see everything; He wears "many crowns" as King over all; His robe is dipped in blood (the blood of His enemies, Isaiah 63:1-6); and His name is "The Word of God" (John 1:1).

> *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*
>
> **Revelation 19:14-16**

The armies of heaven, clothed in the same fine linen as the bride, accompany Him: the saints and angels (Jude 14; Zechariah 14:5). They do not fight; Christ wins by the sword of His mouth, His spoken word

(2 Thessalonians 2:8).

The battle of Armageddon (19:17-21). An angel called the birds to "the supper of the great God," to eat the flesh of kings and armies (19:17-18; Ezekiel 39:17-20), a grim contrast to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The beast and the kings of the earth gathered their armies against Christ (19:19).

> *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse*
>
> **Revelation 19:20-21**

The battle is over before it begins. The beast and the false prophet are the first to be cast into the lake of fire, where they are still found a thousand years later (20:10).

Chapter 20 — The Millennium and the Great White Throne

Satan bound (20:1-3).

> *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*
>
> **Revelation 20:1-3**

Satan, who deceives the whole world (12:9), will be bound and imprisoned in the abyss for a thousand years, unable to deceive the nations.

The reign of Christ and the first resurrection (20:4-6). John saw thrones, and those given authority to judge, and "the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (20:4).

> *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*
>
> **Revelation 20:5-6**

"A thousand years" is mentioned six times in these verses. Premillennialists (including most Baptists today) understand this as a literal thousand-year reign of Christ on earth after His return, fulfilling God's promises to Israel and the Old Testament prophecies of a kingdom of peace, righteousness and justice (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-10; Zechariah 14:9). "The first resurrection" is the resurrection of the righteous, which takes place in stages (Christ the firstfruits; the church at the rapture; Old Testament and tribulation saints at Christ's return), all before the millennium (1 Corinthians 15:23; Daniel 12:2). "The rest of the dead," the unsaved, are raised after the thousand years. Other views are summarised in Part

Three.

Satan's final rebellion (20:7-10). "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle" (20:7-8). Even after a thousand years of Christ's perfect rule, people born during the millennium who never truly trusted Him will follow Satan in rebellion. This proves that the problem of sin is not environment but the human heart. They will surround "the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city," and fire from God will devour them (20:9).

> *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 20:10**

Satan's career ends. The lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41), is a place of eternal, conscious torment.

The great white throne (20:11-15).

> *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*
>
> **Revelation 20:11-12**

This is the final judgment of the unsaved dead of all ages. The throne is "great" (in power) and "white" (in holiness and justice). The Judge is Christ (John 5:22, 27). There is nowhere to hide. Every person, "small and great," stands before Him. Two sets of books are opened: "the books," the record of every person's works, and "the book of life," the register of the redeemed. The lost are judged according to their works, which determines the degree of punishment (Luke 12:47-48); but their eternal destiny is determined by whether their names are written in the book of life.

> *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*
>
> **Revelation 20:13-15**

No one escapes, whatever became of the body. "Hell" (Hades), the temporary place of the unsaved dead, gives up its occupants and is itself cast into the lake of fire, "the second death," eternal separation from God. The only hope is to have one's name written in the Lamb's book of life (13:8; 21:27), through faith in Christ.

Chapter 21 — The New Heaven, the New Earth and the New Jerusalem

> *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*
>
> **Revelation 21:1-2**

After the final judgment, God creates a new heaven and a new earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13), cleansed of every trace of sin. "No more sea": the sea, which often symbolised chaos, restlessness and separation, will be gone. The holy city, the new Jerusalem, descends from God, beautiful as a bride.

> *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*
>
> **Revelation 21:3-4**

This is the goal of all redemption: God dwelling with His people. Everything that brings sorrow will be gone for ever: death, grief, crying and pain.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (21:5). "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (21:6-7).

> *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*
>
> **Revelation 21:8**

Even in this glorious chapter comes a solemn warning: those who persist in unbelief and sin will have no part in the new creation. ("The fearful" are those who, out of cowardice, refused to confess Christ.) Yet the invitation to drink freely is open to every thirsty soul.

The holy city (21:9-27). An angel showed John "the bride, the Lamb's wife," the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven, "Having the glory of God" (21:9-11):

City Feature	Revelation 21	Significance
Light like a jasper stone, clear as crystal	11	The radiance of God's glory
A great high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel	12-13	Security; access; Israel's place in God's people
Twelve foundations bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb	14	The church built on the apostles' teaching (Ephesians 2:20)

City Feature	Revelation 21	Significance
Foursquare: length, breadth and height equal, 12,000 furlongs (about 1,400 miles)	16	A perfect cube, like the holy of holies (1 Kings 6:20): the whole city is God's dwelling
The wall 144 cubits	17	Twelve times twelve: perfection and completeness
Walls of jasper; the city pure gold, like clear glass	18	Purity and splendour
Foundations garnished with twelve precious stones	19-20	Recalling the stones of the high priest's breastplate (Exodus 28:17-20)
Twelve gates, each a single pearl	21	Pearls formed through suffering; access through the costly work of Christ
The street of pure gold, as transparent glass	21	What is precious on earth is pavement in heaven
No temple: "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it"	22	God's immediate presence
No need of sun or moon: "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof"	23	Christ the eternal light (Isaiah 60:19-20)
Gates never shut; no night there	25	Perfect security and endless day
Nothing that defiles shall enter, "but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"	27	Perfect holiness

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it" (21:24).

Chapter 22:1-5 — Paradise Restored

> *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*
>
> **Revelation 22:1-2**

The river of life flows from the throne shared by God and the Lamb (Ezekiel 47:1-12; Psalm 46:4). The tree of life, from which humanity was barred after the fall (Genesis 3:22-24), is restored, bearing fruit continually; its leaves bring health and well-being.

> *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 22:3-5**

The curse of Genesis 3 is reversed. God's servants will serve Him, see His face (the highest blessing, once impossible, Exodus 33:20; Matthew 5:8; 1 John 3:2), bear His name, live in His light, and reign

with Him for ever.

Section IV: Epilogue (Chapter 22:6-21)

Chapter 22:6-15 — "Behold, I Come Quickly"

"These sayings are faithful and true" (22:6). Three times in this final chapter Christ says, "Behold, I come quickly" (22:7, 12, 20).

> *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*
>
> **Revelation 22:7**

Again John fell to worship the angel and was told, "See thou do it not... worship God" (22:8-9).

> *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*
>
> **Revelation 22:10**

Daniel was told to seal up his prophecy until the time of the end (Daniel 12:4); John is told not to seal his, because the time is near. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still... and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (22:11): at Christ's coming, character will be fixed for ever.

> *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*
>
> **Revelation 22:12-13**

Christ claims the title God claimed in 1:8: He is the eternal God.

> *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*
>
> **Revelation 22:14**

Those who obey Christ, out of the faith that unites them to Him, have the right to the tree of life. (Some manuscripts read, "Blessed are they that wash their robes," compare 7:14.) "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (22:15).

Chapter 22:16-21 — The Final Invitation and Prayer

> *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*
>
> **Revelation 22:16**

Jesus is both the source of David's line (as God) and his descendant (as man). He is "the bright and morning star," which appears just before dawn, heralding the new day (2 Peter 1:19).

> *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*
>
> **Revelation 22:17**

The Bible's last invitation is open to all. The Spirit and the church say to Christ, "Come"; everyone who hears should echo it; and every thirsty soul is invited to come and take the water of life freely, without price (Isaiah 55:1; John 7:37).

> *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*
>
> **Revelation 22:18-19**

A solemn warning protects the book from tampering (compare Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6). Coming at the close of the final book of the Bible, it also seals the canon of Scripture: God's written revelation is complete.

> *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*
>
> **Revelation 22:20-21**

The Bible ends with Christ's promise, "Surely I come quickly," the church's answering prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," and a final word of grace.

Part Three: Christ in Revelation

The Titles of Christ

Revelation is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," and it gives Him more titles than any other book:

Christ's Title	Revelation
The faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, the prince of the kings of the earth	1:5
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending	1:8; 22:13
The Son of man	1:13; 14:14
The first and the last	1:17; 2:8; 22:13
He that liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore, with the keys of hell and of death	1:18
He that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks	2:1
He which hath the sharp sword with two edges	2:12; 19:15
The Son of God	2:18
He that searcheth the reins and hearts	2:23
He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David	3:7
The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God	3:14
The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David	5:5
The Lamb (twenty-eight times)	5:6 and throughout
Lord of lords, and King of kings	17:14; 19:16
Faithful and True	19:11
The Word of God	19:13
The root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star	22:16

The Lamb

The Lamb is the central figure of Revelation. He was slain (5:6, 9, 12; 13:8); He is worthy to open the scroll (5:5-9); He is worshipped with the Father (5:13; 7:10); His blood washes robes white (7:14) and overcomes Satan (12:11); His wrath is terrible (6:16); He stands on Mount Sion with His redeemed (14:1); He overcomes the kings of the earth (17:14); He is the Bridegroom (19:7-9); His book of life holds the names of the saved (13:8; 21:27); He is the temple and the light of the new Jerusalem (21:22-23); and He shares the throne from which flows the river of life (22:1, 3). The Lamb who was slain is the Lord who reigns.

The Three Series of Judgments

Number	Seals (Revelation 6; 8:1)	Trumpets (Revelation 8-9; 11:15)	Vials (Revelation 16)
1	White horse: false peace, conquest	Hail and fire; a third of trees burned	Sores on the beast's worshippers
2	Red horse: war	Burning mountain; a third of the sea became blood	The sea became blood; all sea life died
3	Black horse: famine	Wormwood; a third of the fresh waters bitter	Rivers and fountains became blood
4	Pale horse: death of a quarter of mankind	A third of sun, moon and stars darkened	The sun scorched men with fire
5	Martyrs cry, "How long?"	Demonic locusts from the abyss (first woe)	Darkness on the beast's kingdom
6	Earthquake and cosmic signs; the wrath of the Lamb	Army of 200 million; a third of mankind killed (second woe)	Euphrates dried; armies gathered to Armageddon
7	Silence in heaven; opens to the trumpets	The kingdom proclaimed; opens to the vials (third woe)	"It is done"; greatest earthquake; great hail

The judgments grow in intensity: a quarter, then a third, then the whole.

The Unholy Trinity

Unholy Person	Revelation	Counterfeit Of
The dragon (Satan)	12:3, 9; 13:2, 4	God the Father: gives the beast his power, throne and authority, and receives worship
The beast out of the sea (Antichrist)	13:1-10; 17:8-14	God the Son: a counterfeit death and resurrection; receives worship; rules the world
The beast out of the earth (false prophet)	13:11-18; 16:13; 19:20	God the Holy Spirit: works miracles, directs worship to the beast, and gives a mark (compare the Spirit's seal)

Views of the Millennium

View	Christ's Return	The Thousand Years	Supporters
Premillennial	Before the millennium	A literal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years after His return, fulfilling God's promises to Israel	The early church fathers (such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus); most Baptists today
Amillennial	At the end of the present age	Symbolic of Christ's present reign in heaven and in the church; Satan bound by the gospel	Augustine; many Reformed and Catholic interpreters

View	Christ's Return	The Thousand Years	Supporters
Postmillennial	After the millennium	A golden age of gospel success on earth before Christ returns	Some Puritans and nineteenth-century evangelicals

Views of the Rapture

Among premillennialists, there are differing views on when Christ comes for His church in relation to the tribulation:

Rapture View	Timing of the Rapture	Key Arguments
Pre-tribulation	Before the seven-year tribulation	The church is promised deliverance from the hour of trial (3:10) and from wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9); the church is not mentioned on earth in chapters 4-19; held by most Baptists today
Mid-tribulation	At the middle of the tribulation	Connects the rapture with the seventh trumpet (11:15; 1 Corinthians 15:52)
Pre-wrath	Some time in the second half, before the final wrath	Distinguishes the wrath of God from the earlier persecution by the Antichrist
Post-tribulation	At the end, at Christ's glorious return	Believers endure the tribulation and meet Christ as He descends

All agree on the essential truths: Christ will return personally and visibly, believers will be with Him for ever, and they should live in readiness.

Part Four: Prophecies Fulfilled and Future

Prophecy	Revelation	Fulfillment
The Lion of Judah, the Root of David	5:5	Genesis 49:9-10; Isaiah 11:1, 10; fulfilled in Christ
The Lamb slain	5:6, 9	Isaiah 53:7; fulfilled at the cross
The man child caught up to God's throne	12:5	Psalm 2:9; fulfilled at the ascension
Persecution and martyrdom of the churches	2:10, 13	Fulfilled in the persecutions of the early church and since
The seven churches' conditions	2-3	Fulfilled in their history; Ephesus and others eventually lost their lampstands
The tribulation: seals, trumpets and vials	6-16	Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:21; still future (futurist view)
The beast and the false prophet	13; 17	Daniel 7:8, 24-25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10; still future
The two witnesses	11:3-12	Zechariah 4; Malachi 4:5; still future
The fall of Babylon	17-18	Isaiah 13; 21:9; Jeremiah 50-51; still future
The marriage of the Lamb	19:7-9	Still future
Christ's return in glory	1:7; 19:11-16	Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10; 14:3-5; Matthew 24:30; still future
Armageddon	16:16; 19:17-21	Joel 3:9-14; Zechariah 14:2-3; still future
Satan bound for a thousand years	20:1-3	Isaiah 24:21-22; still future
The millennial reign of Christ	20:4-6	Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-10; Zechariah 14:9; still future
The great white throne judgment	20:11-15	Daniel 7:9-10; still future
New heavens and a new earth	21:1	Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; still future
God dwelling with His people; no more tears or death	21:3-4	Isaiah 25:8; Ezekiel 37:27; still future
The river and tree of life	22:1-2	Genesis 2:9-10; Ezekiel 47:1-12; still future

Part Five: Key Passages in Depth

Revelation 1:5-8 — The Coming One

Christ, who loves us and washed us from our sins in His blood, will come with clouds, and every eye will see Him. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Almighty.

Revelation 1:12-18 — The Glorified Christ

Christ walks among His churches in priestly, kingly and divine glory. To the trembling believer He says, "Fear not," for He is the living One who holds the keys of death and hell.

Revelation 2-3 — The Letters to the Churches

Christ knows every church's works. He commends faithfulness, rebukes lost love, compromise, tolerance of sin, deadness and lukewarmness, calls to repentance, and promises great rewards to those who overcome.

Revelation 3:20 — Christ at the Door

Christ stands outside a self-satisfied church, knocking, offering intimate fellowship to any who will open.

Revelation 4-5 — Worthy Is the Lamb

Heaven worships God as Creator and the Lamb as Redeemer. Only the Lamb, who was slain and redeemed people from every nation, is worthy to take the scroll and unfold God's plan.

Revelation 6:15-17 — The Wrath of the Lamb

Those who reject the Lamb's mercy will face His wrath, and no one will be able to stand.

Revelation 7:9-17 — The Great Multitude

A countless multitude from every nation, washed in the Lamb's blood, will stand before the throne, where God will wipe away every tear.

Revelation 12:10-11 — Overcoming the Accuser

Believers overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and loyalty to Christ even to death.

Revelation 13 — The Beast and His Mark

The Antichrist will be empowered by Satan, worshipped by the world, and supported by the false prophet, who will require the mark of the beast for buying and selling. Only those in the Lamb's book of life will refuse.

Revelation 14:6-13 — The Everlasting Gospel and the Final Warning

God will proclaim the gospel to every nation even in the tribulation; those who worship the beast will suffer eternal torment; those who die in the Lord are blessed.

Revelation 19:11-16 — The King of Kings

Christ will return from heaven on a white horse, Faithful and True, the Word of God, with the armies of heaven, to judge and make war in righteousness, and to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 20 — The Millennium and the Final Judgment

Satan will be bound for a thousand years while Christ reigns with His saints. After a final rebellion, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, and the unsaved dead will be judged at the great white throne.

Revelation 21:1-8 — All Things New

God will create new heavens and a new earth, dwell with His people, and wipe away every tear. There will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain.

Revelation 22:17 — The Final Invitation

The Spirit and the bride say, Come. Whosoever will may take the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:20 — "Even So, Come, Lord Jesus"

Christ promises to come quickly, and the church answers with longing prayer.

Part Six: The Major Teachings of Revelation

1. The Deity of Christ

Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, worshipped with the Father (1:8, 17; 5:13; 22:13).

2. The Sovereignty of God

God reigns from His throne over all history; nothing happens outside His plan (4-5).

3. Christ's Lordship over the Church

He walks among the churches, knows their works, and disciplines them in love (1-3).

4. Redemption by the Blood of the Lamb

Christ redeemed people from every nation by His blood (1:5; 5:9; 7:14).

5. Worship

Heaven's worship centres on God as Creator and the Lamb as Redeemer (4-5; 7; 19).

6. The Tribulation and God's Wrath

A future time of judgment on a rebellious world (6-16).

7. Satan and His Defeat

Satan deceives and accuses, but is cast down, bound and finally cast into the lake of fire (12; 20).

8. The Antichrist and False Religion

The beast, the false prophet and Babylon will deceive the world before their destruction (13; 17-19).

9. The Second Coming of Christ

Christ will return visibly in power and glory (1:7; 19:11-16).

10. The Millennium

Christ will reign on earth with His saints for a thousand years (20:1-6).

11. The Resurrections and Final Judgment

The first resurrection of the blessed, and the great white throne judgment of the unsaved (20:4-15).

12. Eternal Punishment

The lake of fire, the second death, is eternal and conscious (14:10-11; 20:10, 14-15).

13. The New Creation

New heavens, new earth and the new Jerusalem, where God dwells with His people (21-22).

14. The Endurance of the Saints

Believers overcome by faith, faithfulness and the blood of the Lamb (2-3; 12:11; 13:10; 14:12).

15. The Authority and Completeness of Scripture

Nothing may be added to or taken from this prophecy (22:18-19).

Part Seven: Connections — How Revelation Links to the Rest of the Bible

Genesis and Revelation: Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained

The Bible begins and ends with creation, a garden, a tree of life and God dwelling with man. Revelation completes what Genesis began:

Genesis	Revelation
"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (1:1)	"I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1)
The sun and moon to rule day and night (1:16)	"No need of the sun, neither of the moon" (21:23)
The darkness He called night (1:5)	"There shall be no night there" (22:5)
The gathering of the waters called seas (1:10)	"There was no more sea" (21:1)
A river went out of Eden to water the garden (2:10)	A pure river of water of life (22:1)
The tree of life in the midst of the garden (2:9)	The tree of life on either side of the river (22:2)
The first marriage (2:18-24)	The marriage of the Lamb (19:7-9)
Gold and precious stones in the land (2:11-12)	A city of gold and precious stones (21:18-21)
The serpent deceives (3:1-6)	The old serpent bound and cast into the lake of fire (20:2, 10)
The curse pronounced (3:14-19)	"There shall be no more curse" (22:3)
Sorrow and pain begin (3:16-17)	"No more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither... pain" (21:4)
Death enters (3:19)	"There shall be no more death" (21:4)
Man driven from the tree of life (3:22-24)	The right to the tree of life restored (22:14)
Man hides from God's presence (3:8)	"They shall see his face" (22:4)
God walks in the garden (3:8)	"The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them" (21:3)

Revelation and the Old Testament

Book	Link
Genesis	Creation; the tree of life; the serpent; Babel; Joseph's dream of sun, moon and stars (37:9; Revelation 12:1)
Exodus	The plagues of Egypt (7-11; Revelation 8-9; 16); the Passover Lamb (12); the song of Moses (15; Revelation 15:3); a kingdom of priests (19:6; Revelation 1:6); the tabernacle and the ark (25-40; Revelation 11:19; 15:5)
Numbers	Balaam (22-25; Revelation 2:14)
Deuteronomy	Adding to or taking from God's word (4:2; Revelation 22:18-19)
1 Kings	Jezebel (16:31; Revelation 2:20); Elijah shutting heaven (17:1; Revelation 11:6)
Psalms	The LORD's anointed ruling with a rod of iron (2; Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15); "a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (46:4)
Isaiah	"Holy, holy, holy" and the seraphim (6:1-3; Revelation 4:8); the Root of Jesse (11:1, 10; Revelation 5:5; 22:16); the key of David (22:22; Revelation 3:7); "Babylon is fallen" (21:9; Revelation 14:8); God wiping away tears (25:8; Revelation 7:17; 21:4); "I am the first, and I am the last" (44:6; Revelation 1:17); new heavens and new earth (65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1); the LORD the everlasting light (60:19-20; Revelation 21:23)
Jeremiah	The fall of Babylon; "Go ye out of the midst of her" (50-51; Revelation 18)
Ezekiel	The living creatures and the throne (1; Revelation 4); eating the scroll (2:8-3:3; Revelation 10:9-10); Gog and Magog (38-39; Revelation 20:8); the measured temple and the river of life (40-48; Revelation 11:1; 22:1-2)
Daniel	The four beasts and the little horn (7; Revelation 13); the Ancient of Days and the books opened (7:9-10; Revelation 1:14; 20:12); the Son of man coming with clouds (7:13; Revelation 1:7, 13); the seventieth week (9:24-27); time, times and half a time (7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:14); Michael (12:1; Revelation 12:7)
Joel	The sun darkened and the moon to blood (2:31; Revelation 6:12); the harvest and the winepress (3:13; Revelation 14:14-20)
Zechariah	The four horsemen (1:8; 6:1-8; Revelation 6); the two olive trees (4; Revelation 11:4); "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced" (12:10; Revelation 1:7); the LORD coming with all His saints to the Mount of Olives (14:4-5)
Malachi	Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the LORD (4:5; Revelation 11:3-6)

Revelation and the New Testament

Book	Link
Matthew	The Olivet discourse: false christs, wars, famines, the great tribulation, the abomination of desolation, the Son of man coming in the clouds (24; Revelation 6-19); the marriage feast (22:1-14; Revelation 19:9); everlasting fire for the devil (25:41; Revelation 20:10)
Luke	Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles (21:24; Revelation 11:2)
John	The Word (1:1; Revelation 19:13); the Lamb of God (1:29); "I will come again" (14:1-3); the living water (4:14; 7:37; Revelation 22:17); "It is finished" (19:30; Revelation 16:17; 21:6)

Book	Link
Romans	Creation delivered from bondage (8:19-23; Revelation 21:1); all Israel saved (11:25-27; Revelation 7:4)
1 Corinthians	The resurrection at the last trump (15:51-53); the order of the resurrections (15:23-28; Revelation 20)
2 Corinthians	The church espoused to Christ (11:2; Revelation 19:7)
Ephesians	The church presented as a glorious bride (5:25-27; Revelation 21:2)
Philippians	Every knee bowing to Jesus (2:10-11; Revelation 5:13)
1 Thessalonians	The rapture (4:13-18; Revelation 4:1); the day of the Lord as a thief (5:2; Revelation 16:15); not appointed to wrath (5:9; Revelation 3:10)
2 Thessalonians	The man of sin; the Lord's coming in flaming fire (1:7-9; 2:3-10; Revelation 13; 19)
Hebrews	The heavenly Jerusalem and the city with foundations (11:10; 12:22-24; Revelation 21)
2 Peter	The day of the Lord; new heavens and earth (3:10-13; Revelation 21:1)
1 John	Antichrist (2:18; Revelation 13); we shall see Him as He is (3:2; Revelation 22:4)
Jude	The Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints (14; Revelation 19:14)

Part Eight: Practical Lessons

- **Read, hear and keep the words of this prophecy** (1:3).
- **Worship Christ, who loves you and washed you in His blood** (1:5-6).
- **Live expecting Christ's visible return** (1:7).
- **Remember the Lord's day** (1:10).
- **Don't fear death; Christ holds its keys** (1:17-18).
- **Guard your first love for Christ** (2:4-5).
- **Be faithful unto death** (2:10).
- **Refuse compromise with the world's idolatry and immorality** (2:14, 20).
- **Hold fast till He comes** (2:25; 3:11).
- **Don't settle for a reputation without reality** (3:1).
- **Walk through the open doors Christ gives** (3:8).
- **Beware of lukewarmness and self-satisfaction** (3:15-17).
- **Accept Christ's rebuke as love** (3:19).
- **Open the door to Christ** (3:20).
- **Worship God as Creator** (4:11).
- **Worship the Lamb as Redeemer** (5:9-12).
- **Rejoice that people from every nation are being redeemed** (5:9; 7:9).
- **Flee from the wrath of the Lamb to His mercy** (6:16-17).
- **Know that your prayers rise before God** (8:3-4).
- **Recognise that judgment alone does not change hearts** (9:20-21).
- **Receive God's Word, sweet and bitter alike** (10:9-10).
- **Overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony** (12:11).
- **Love Christ more than your own life** (12:11).
- **Give your allegiance to no one but Christ** (13:16-17).
- **Fear God and give Him glory** (14:7).
- **Rejoice that the dead in the Lord are blessed** (14:13).
- **Watch, and keep your garments** (16:15).
- **Come out of Babylon; don't share in the world's sins** (18:4).
- **Rejoice in the marriage of the Lamb** (19:7).
- **Worship God alone** (19:10; 22:9).
- **Live in light of Christ's coming as King of kings** (19:16).
- **Make sure your name is in the Lamb's book of life** (20:15; 21:27).
- **Comfort yourself with the promise of no more tears** (21:4).
- **Long to see His face** (22:4).

- **Never add to or take from God's Word** (22:18-19).
- **Invite every thirsty soul to come** (22:17).
- **Pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (22:20).

Part Nine: Key Verses to Memorize

Reference	Verse (KJV)
1:3	Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.
1:7	Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him
1:8	I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord
1:18	I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.
2:10	Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.
3:20	Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him
4:11	Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things
5:9	Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation
5:12	Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.
7:14	These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
11:15	The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.
12:11	And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
14:13	Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord
19:16	KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.
20:15	And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.
21:4	And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying
21:5	Behold, I make all things new.
22:17	And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
22:20	Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Conclusion

Revelation is the final book of the Bible and the unveiling of Jesus Christ in His full glory. Exiled on Patmos for his testimony, the aged apostle John saw the risen Christ walking among His churches, the One who was dead and is alive for evermore, holding the keys of death and hell. Christ sent letters to seven churches, commending their faithfulness and rebuking their lost love, compromise, deadness and lukewarmness, standing at the door and knocking. Then John was caught up to heaven, where God sits enthroned as Creator and the Lamb, slain and standing, alone is worthy to take the scroll of history. As the Lamb opened the seals, the trumpets sounded and the vials were poured out, God's righteous judgments fell on a rebellious world, yet multitudes from every nation were washed in His blood. Behind the events, the dragon waged war against the woman, her child and her seed; the beast and the false prophet deceived the world and demanded its worship; and Babylon, the harlot and the marketplace of the nations, rose and fell in a single hour. Then heaven opened, and the Faithful and True rode out, the Word of God, King of kings and Lord of lords, to destroy His enemies by the sword of His mouth. Satan was bound; Christ reigned with His saints a thousand years; the last rebellion was crushed; the devil was cast into the lake of fire; and the dead stood before the great white throne. Finally God made all things new: a new heaven and a new earth, the holy city descending as a bride, God dwelling with His people, every tear wiped away, no more death, sorrow, crying, pain, night or curse. The river of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, the tree of life is restored, and His servants see His face. The book that began with a blessing ends with an invitation, "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," a promise, "Surely I come quickly," and a prayer that the whole Bible has been leading toward: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

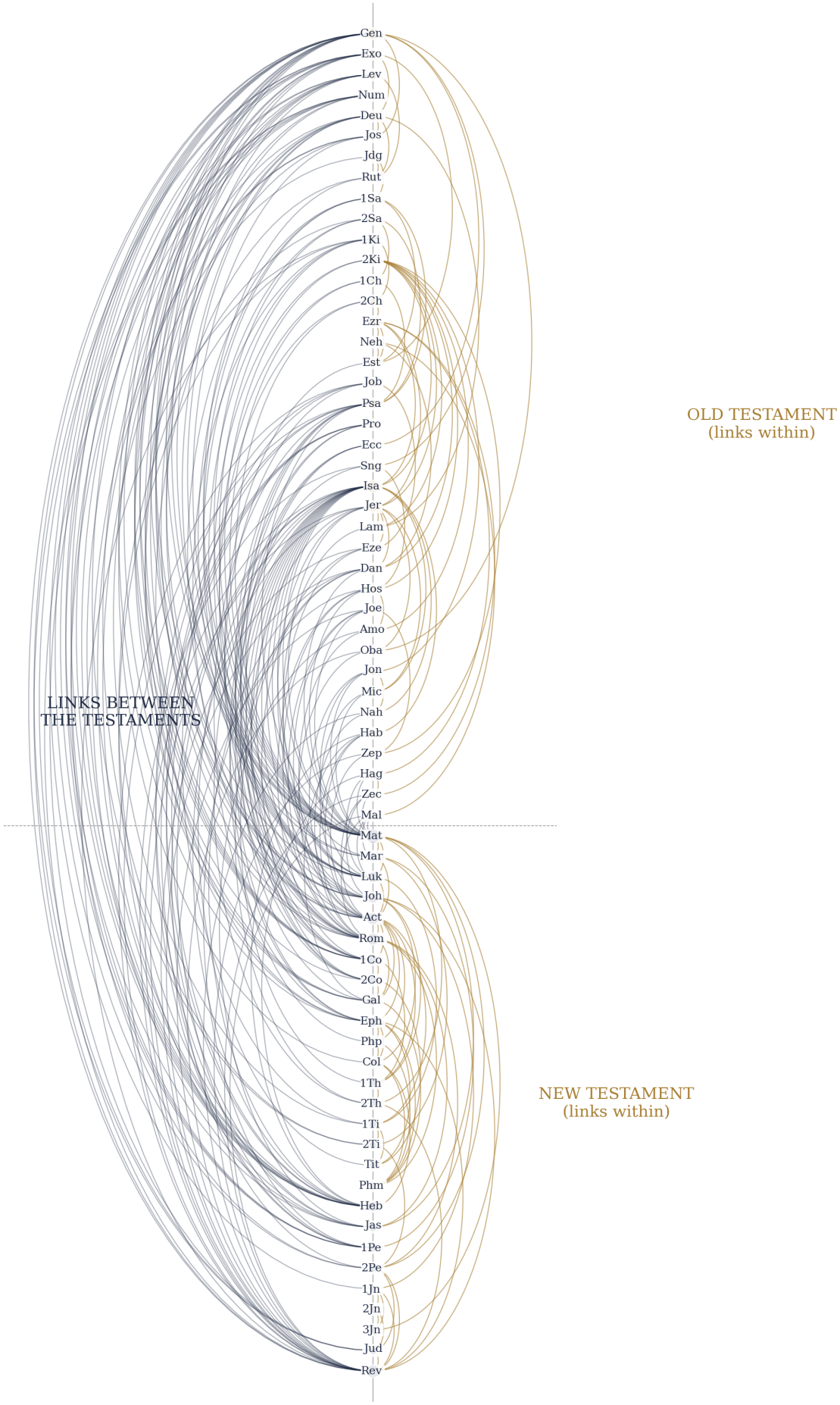
> *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*
>
> **Revelation 22:20-21**

Part Four: The Link Map — How the Books Connect

The Whole-Bible Link Diagram

The diagram below draws every link listed in this volume. The diagram is on the next page. The books run down the centre line from Genesis at the top to Revelation at the bottom. Each arc joins two books that quote, fulfil or explain each other. Gold arcs on the right connect two books in the same Testament. Navy arcs on the left cross between the Old and New Testaments. The dense web between the Testaments shows how completely the New Testament is built on the Old.

Larger dots on the centre line mark the most-connected books.


Gen
Exo
Lev
Num
Deu
Jos
Jdg
Rut
1Sa
2Sa
1Ki
2Ki
1Ch
2Ch
Ezr
Neh
Est
Job
Psa
Pro
Ecc
Sng
Isa
Jer
Lam
Eze
Dan
Hos
Joe
Amo
Oba
Jon
Mic
Nah
Hab
Zep
Hag
Zec
Mal
Mat
Mar
Luk
Joh
Act
Rom
1Co
2Co
Gal
Eph
Php
Col
1Th
2Th
1Ti
2Ti
Tit
Phm
Heb
Jas
1Pe
2Pe
1Jn
2Jn
3Jn
Jud
Rev
LINKS BETWEEN
THE TESTAMENTS
OLD TESTAMENT
(links within)
NEW TESTAMENT
(links within)

The Most-Connected Books

Genesis and Revelation: The Bookends

The first and last books mirror each other. What begins in Genesis is completed in Revelation.

Genesis	Revelation
Heaven and earth created (1:1)	New heaven and new earth (21:1)
Sun and moon to rule the day and night (1:16)	No need of the sun or moon (21:23)
Night established (1:5)	No night there (22:5)
Paradise and a river (2:8-10)	The river of the water of life (22:1)
Tree of life guarded (3:24)	Tree of life restored (22:2, 14)
The first marriage (2:22-24)	The marriage of the Lamb (19:7-9)
Satan enters and deceives (3:1)	Satan cast into the lake of fire (20:10)
The curse pronounced (3:17)	No more curse (22:3)
Death enters (3:19)	No more death (21:4)
Sorrow multiplied (3:16)	No more sorrow, tears wiped away (21:4)
Man driven from God's presence (3:24)	They shall see his face (22:4)
Babel, the city of rebellion (11)	Babylon the great falls (18)

Twelve Golden Threads Through Scripture

Each thread begins in the Old Testament, develops through it, and is fulfilled in Christ.

Thread	Beginning	Development	Fulfillment
The Seed	Genesis 3:15	Abraham (Genesis 22:18), Judah (49:10), David (2 Samuel 7)	Christ the Seed (Galatians 3:16); Satan crushed (Romans 16:20; Revelation 20:10)
The Lamb	Genesis 22:8 "God will provide himself a lamb"	Passover lamb (Exodus 12); lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7)	"Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29); the Lamb on the throne (Revelation 5)
Blood atonement	Coats of skins (Genesis 3:21); Abel's offering (4:4)	Sacrifices and the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16-17)	Once for all by His own blood (Hebrews 9:12-14)

Thread	Beginning	Development	Fulfillment
Covenant	Noah (Genesis 9); Abraham (15; 17)	Sinai (Exodus 19-24); David (2 Samuel 7); new covenant promised (Jeremiah 31)	New covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8)
The King	Shiloh from Judah (Genesis 49:10)	David's throne (2 Samuel 7); the coming King (Isaiah 9; Zechariah 9:9)	King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2); King of kings (Revelation 19:16)
The Prophet	"A Prophet like unto me" (Deuteronomy 18:15)	Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah	"This is of a truth that prophet" (John 6:14; Acts 3:22)
The Priest	Melchizedek (Genesis 14)	Aaronic priesthood (Leviticus 8); priest for ever (Psalm 110:4)	Our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-7:28)
God dwelling with man	Walking in Eden (Genesis 3:8)	Tabernacle (Exodus 40); temple (1 Kings 8)	The Word tabernacled among us (John 1:14); the church a temple (Ephesians 2:21); "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3)
The Spirit	Moving on the waters (Genesis 1:2)	On judges, kings and prophets; outpouring promised (Joel 2:28)	Pentecost (Acts 2); indwelling believers (Romans 8)
Faith	Abraham believed God (Genesis 15:6)	"The just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4)	Justification by faith (Romans 1:17; 4); the hall of faith (Hebrews 11)
Babylon	Babel's tower (Genesis 11)	Babylon destroys Jerusalem (2 Kings 25); its fall foretold (Isaiah 13; Jeremiah 50-51)	Mystery Babylon falls (Revelation 17-18)
Paradise	The garden (Genesis 2)	Promised restoration (Isaiah 11; 35; 65; Ezekiel 47)	Paradise to the thief (Luke 23:43); paradise of God (Revelation 2:7; 22)

Key Book-to-Book Pairings

Some books are best read together because one explains or completes the other.

Book	Read With	Why
Genesis	Revelation	The beginning and the end of the story
Genesis 15; 22	Romans 4; Galatians 3; Hebrews 11; James 2	Abraham's faith and justification
Exodus	John; Hebrews	Passover, manna, I AM, tabernacle fulfilled in Christ
Leviticus	Hebrews	The sacrificial system and its fulfillment
Numbers	1 Corinthians 10; Hebrews 3-4	Wilderness unbelief as a warning
Deuteronomy	Matthew 4	Jesus defeats Satan with Deuteronomy
Ruth	Matthew 1	The kinsman-redeemer and the royal line
1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings	1 and 2 Chronicles	The same history told from the prophetic and the priestly view
1 Samuel; 2 Samuel	Psalms	The historical settings of David's psalms

Book	Read With	Why
2 Kings 18-20	Isaiah 36-39	Hezekiah and the Assyrian crisis
2 Kings 25	Jeremiah; Lamentations	The fall of Jerusalem
Ezra; Nehemiah	Haggai; Zechariah; Malachi	The prophets of the return
Psalms	Hebrews; Acts	Christ proven from the Psalms
Proverbs	James	Practical wisdom in both Testaments
Isaiah	Matthew; Romans	The most-quoted prophet and the gospel he foresaw
Jeremiah 31	Hebrews 8	The new covenant
Daniel	Revelation	The end-time prophecies explained together
Ezekiel 40-48	Revelation 21-22	God's city, temple and river
Joel 2	Acts 2	The outpouring of the Spirit
Hosea	Romans 9; 1 Peter 2	"Not my people" become God's people
Jonah	Matthew 12	The sign of death and resurrection
Micah 5:2	Matthew 2	Born in Bethlehem
Habakkuk 2:4	Romans; Galatians; Hebrews	"The just shall live by faith"
Zechariah 9-14	Gospels' Passion accounts; Revelation	The rejected and returning King
Malachi	Matthew; Mark; Luke	The last prophecy and the first fulfillment
Luke	Acts	Two volumes by one author
Romans	Galatians	The gospel of justification by faith
Ephesians	Colossians	The church (body) and Christ (Head)
1 Timothy	Titus	Church order and leaders
2 Peter	Jude	Warnings against false teachers
John	1 John; Revelation	Same author: life, light, love and the Lamb

The Old Testament in the New Testament

The New Testament quotes the Old Testament directly about 300 times, with many hundreds of further allusions. Nearly every Old Testament book is quoted or alluded to. The books cited most often are:

Old Testament Book	Main New Testament Use
Psalms	The Messiah's sonship, suffering, resurrection, ascension, priesthood and reign (Acts, Hebrews, Gospels, Romans)
Isaiah	Virgin birth, ministry, Suffering Servant, Gentile salvation, Israel's future (Gospels, Acts, Romans)
Deuteronomy	Jesus' answers to Satan, the great commandment, the Prophet like Moses (Gospels, Acts, Romans, Galatians)
Genesis	Creation, marriage, Abraham's faith, the Seed, Melchizedek (Gospels, Romans, Galatians, Hebrews)

Old Testament Book	Main New Testament Use
Exodus	Passover, law, tabernacle, I AM (Gospels, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, Revelation)
Leviticus	Holiness, love thy neighbour, sacrifices and priesthood (Gospels, Hebrews, 1 Peter)
Daniel	The Son of man, the abomination of desolation, the end times (Gospels, 2 Thessalonians, Revelation)
Zechariah	The triumphal entry, betrayal price, pierced Messiah, smitten Shepherd (Gospels, Revelation)
Jeremiah	The new covenant (Hebrews, Gospels)

Revelation alone is reported to contain hundreds of allusions to the Old Testament while seldom quoting it directly, drawing especially on Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah and the Psalms. You cannot understand the last book without the first 39.