

# BIBLE CHRONOLOGY

MADE EASY



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# THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

Like all stories, the story of the Bible includes a few basic components. There are characters—the men, women, and families that the biblical story is about. There are also the characters of the spiritual realm—angels, demons, and the antagonist Satan. But the main character is God, his Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. The setting of the story takes place mainly in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, though we do get occasional peeks into heaven. And don't forget, all stories include a conflict—a problem to be solved. What the characters do to overcome that problem is the plot of the story.

In the Bible, the conflict happens right at the beginning. God's beloved creatures and beautiful world are ruined by sin. Adam and Eve's rebellion brings the curse of sin and death into their perfect lives and pristine world. What will God do to rescue his rebellious creatures?

Shock of shocks, God handpicks an old, childless couple, Abraham and Sarah, and promises to make them into a great nation and bless the entire world through them!

However, God's chosen family often fails to live as he commands. The Old Testament stories feature men and women who sometimes turn their hearts toward God, but other times turn their backs on him. Kingdoms and rulers rise and crumble. The curse of sin is not broken.



Then, after the last book of the Old Testament, nearly four centuries pass. The people of God find themselves at the mercy of foreign powers. They wonder: What about all those divine promises of a glorious future? Where is the Messiah that the prophets talked about?

Enter Jesus. This son born to Mary and Joseph of Nazareth is actually the Messiah promised in the Scriptures. Jesus is the unlikely hero of God's story. And what does Jesus do? He gathers followers. He claims to be divine. He tells people to put their faith in him. After living a sinless life, he willingly suffers an excruciating death on a Roman cross, offering his life as the payment for sin. He then defeats death, walking out of a borrowed grave! His followers take his message of love, forgiveness, and new life to the ends of the earth.



Most stories conclude with a resolution to the problem presented at the outset. Here's what's fascinating about God's story: The Bible's last book—Revelation—tells us that God's ultimate resolution is yet to come. The story isn't over. We get to play a part in God's holy plot to redeem and restore all things through Jesus Christ.

The Bible isn't simply "a bunch of old writings from the past," as some might think. It's the portion of God's story that the prophets and apostles recorded as examples for us (1 Cor. 10:11). Until Jesus returns, we get to add to the great, unfolding story. When Christ returns, he will conclude his two-part mission to vanquish evil and make all things new.

GENESIS



**Creation:**  
6 days; rest  
on 7th day

- ◆ Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden

◆ **Adamic covenant**



**The Fall:**  
Sin and death

- ◆ Adam and Eve expelled from Eden.
- ◆ Cain kills Abel.
- ◆ Noah's ark and the flood

◆ **Noahic covenant**

- ◆ Tower of Babel

KEY



Book of the Bible



Covenant



King or Queen

Dates for events before Abraham are unknown.

◆ **Abrahamic covenant**



**Abraham** goes  
to Canaan.  
2091 BC

- ◆ Ishmael is born to Abraham and Hagar.
- ◆ God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah.
- ◆ Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah.
- ◆ Abraham sends Hagar and Ishmael away.
  - ◆ Abraham is tested by God to sacrifice Isaac.
  - ◆ Death of Sarah
  - ◆ Isaac marries Rebekah.
  - ◆ Esau and Jacob are born.
  - ◆ Death of Abraham

JOB

Jacob receives Isaac and is given the blessing of the firstborn. ◆

2100 BC

2000 BC

1900 BC

Abraham 175 years

Sarah 127 years

Isaac 180 years

Jacob 147 years

Time line dates are approximate.

## EXODUS

- ◆ Jacob marries Leah and Rachel.
- ◆ Jacob has 12 sons.
  - ◆ Jacob is renamed "Israel."
  - ◆ Jacob and Esau reconcile.
  - ◆ Death of Rachel
  - ◆ Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery.
    - ◆ Death of Isaac
    - ◆ Judah and Tamar have a son.
    - ◆ Joseph thrown into prison.
    - ◆ Joseph is made an official in Egypt.
    - ◆ Joseph and his brothers reconcile.



**Jacob's family**  
migrates to  
Egypt. 1876 BC

- ◆ Jacob blesses his sons before his death.
  - ◆ Death of Joseph



**Israel enslaved**  
in Egypt.  
(dates unknown)

**SONS OF JACOB (ISRAEL)**

1. Reuben
2. Simeon
3. Levi
4. Judah
5. Dan
6. Naphtali
7. Gad
8. Asher
9. Issachar
10. Zebulun
11. Joseph
12. Benjamin

1800 BC

1700 BC

1600 BC

Israelites in Egypt 430 years

LEVITICUS

DEUTERONOMY

EXODUS

NUM.

JOSHUA

JUDGES

Birth of Moses

Moses drawn out of the Nile. 1526 BC



Moses raised by Pharaoh's daughter.

Some scholars date the exodus at a low date of 1290 BC, in which case the era of the judges would be shorter. This time line follows a high date of 1446 BC.

- ◆ Moses flees Egypt.
  - ◆ God speaks to Moses from a burning bush.
  - ◆ 10 plagues on Egypt
  - ◆ First Passover
  - ◆  **Exodus** 1446 BC (high date)
  - ◆ Parting of the Sea
  - ◆ Songs of Moses and Miriam
  - ◆  Mosaic covenant
  - ◆ Tabernacle built.
  - ◆ Ten Commandments given.
  - ◆ Ark of the covenant constructed.
  - ◆ Israelites spy out Canaan.
    - ◆ Death of Moses
    - ◆  **Joshua leads the conquest.** 1406 BC
    - ◆ Rahab saves the spies.
    - ◆ Walls of Jericho fall.

1600 BC

1500 BC

1400 BC

1300 BC

Wilderness  
40 years

Israelites in Egypt 430 years

Conquest of Canaan  
7 years

Moses 120 years

1 CHRONICLES

1 SAMUEL

2 SAMUEL

RUTH

- Ruth marries Boaz.

- Samuel leads Israel.

- Israel demands a king.



**Saul: First king of Israel**  
1051 BC

- Exodus  
1290 BC (low date)



**Judges of Israel**  
(dates unknown)

**JUDGES**

- Othniel (40 years)
- Ehud (80 years)
- Shamgar (unknown)
- Deborah (40 years)
- Gideon (40 years)
- Tola (23 years)
- Jair (22 years)
- Jephthah (6 years)
- Ibzan (7 years)
- Elon (10 years)
- Abdon (8 years)
- Samson (20 years)

- David is anointed by Samuel.

- David kills Goliath.

- Death of Saul and Jonathan.



- David becomes king.

- David brings the ark to Jerusalem.



- Davidic covenant

- Eli the high priest

- Hannah dedicates her son, Samuel.

- David's sin with Bathsheba

- Death of David

PSALMS



PROVERBS



1200 BC

1100 BC

1000 BC

Saul

David

Solomon

Era of the Judges 300 years


United Kingdom of Israel  
120 years


# DIVIDED KINGDOM


2 CHRONICLES


1 KINGS

2 KINGS


 King Jeroboam of Israel

 King Rehoboam of Judah

 King Jehoshaphat of Judah

 King Ahab and Queen Jezebel of Israel

◆ Elijah defeats the prophets of Baal.

 Solomon becomes king.

◆ Temple built in Jerusalem.

◆ Death of Solomon




**Kingdom Divides.**  
931 BC

◆ Elijah taken to heaven.

◆ Elisha prophesies.

 King Jehu of Israel

 King Uzziah of Judah

 King Jeroboam II of Israel

 JONAH

◆ Jonah in the belly of a great fish

 AMOS


 HOSEA


 ISAIAH

 MICAH



**Israel Falls to Assyria.**  
722 BC

 King Hezekiah restores the temple.

 SONG OF SONGS

 ECCLESIASTES

Kings and rulers are shown by length of reign and prophets by length of prophetic ministry.

900 BC

800 BC

700 BC

Solomon

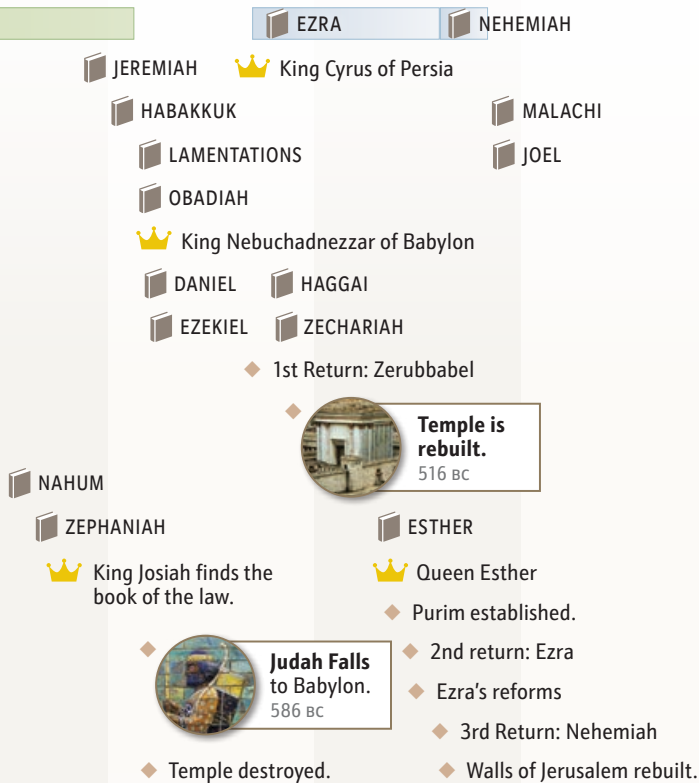
Northern Kingdom of Israel 209 years

Isaiah 59 years

Southern Kingdom of Judah 345 years

Assyrian Empire

# EXILE AND RETURN



NAHUM

ZEPHANIAH

King Josiah finds the book of the law.

Judah Falls to Babylon. 586 BC

Temple destroyed.

EZRA

NEHEMIAH

JEREMIAH King Cyrus of Persia

HABAKKUK

LAMENTATIONS

OBADIAH

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

DANIEL

HAGGAI

EZEKIEL

ZECHARIAH

1st Return: Zerubbabel



Temple is rebuilt. 516 BC

ESTHER

Queen Esther

Purim established.

2nd return: Ezra

Ezra's reforms

3rd Return: Nehemiah

Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt.

600 BC

500 BC

400 BC

Jeremiah 44 years

Daniel 70 years

Ezekiel 22 years

Exile 70 years

Babylonian Empire

Medo-Persian Empire

# INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD



**Alexander the Great** conquers Judea. 332 BC


- ◆ Hellenization begins.
- ◆ Death of Alexander
- ◆ Alexander's empire splits.

**Pompey** conquers Jerusalem for Rome. 63 BC



- ◆ Ptolemy captures Jerusalem.
  - ◆ Earliest Dead Sea Scrolls written.

First Triumvirate: Julius Caesar, Crassus, Pompey

Herod the Great rules Judea. 

◆ Septuagint: translation of Hebrew Scriptures into Greek

Herod begins expansion of temple complex.

◆ Seleucids defeat the Ptolemies.

- ◆ Antiochus IV Epiphanes desecrates the temple.
- ◆ Maccabean Revolt led by Judas Maccabeus.



**Hanukkah:** Temple rededicated. 164 BC

- ◆ Pharisees and Sadducees established as religious groups.
- ◆ Hasmonean dynasty

## BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

After the end of Old Testament history, the Persian Empire gave way to the Greeks, who brought their language, religion, and culture to conquered territories (Hellenization). Though Jews experienced a short period of independence, the Roman Empire came to rule the region through the time of Jesus and the early church.

Events in the intertestamental period are not recorded in the 66 books of the Bible.

300 BC

200 BC

100 BC

Between the Old and New Testaments 400 years

Greek Empire

Ptolemies

Seleucids

Hasmoneans

Herod the Great

LUKE

MATTHEW

- ◆ Annunciation: Mary will bear a son, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Birth of John the Baptist
- ◆ Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem.



### Birth of Christ

4 BC

- ◆ Infant Jesus is recognized at the temple as the Messiah.
- ◆ Magi from the east visit Jesus.
- ◆ Joseph, Mary, and Jesus flee to Egypt to escape Herod.
- ◆ Death of Herod
  - ◆ Joseph, Mary, and Jesus settle in Nazareth.



Jesus (age 12) amazes teachers at the temple. AD 8

### THE FOUR GOSPELS

The first four books of the New Testament narrate the ministry of Jesus the Messiah, with Luke and Matthew also describing events just before and after his birth. The gospels give us four viewpoints of Jesus' words and deeds. But together, they tell one story and one message that points to the cross and life beyond the grave.

AD 1

AD 10

AD 20

Caesar Augustus

Emperor Tiberius

Herod Antipas

 ACTS

 MARK

 JOHN

**Holy Spirit  
at Pentecost**  
AD 30

- ◆ Peter and John preach the gospel in Jerusalem.
- ◆ Stephen martyred in Jerusalem.


**Baptism  
of Jesus**  
AD 27

- ◆ Philip ministers in Judea and Samaria.
- ◆ Ethiopian official baptized.
  - ◆ Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus
- ◆ Paul in Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tarsus
- ◆ Peter takes the gospel to gentiles (Cornelius).
  - ◆ Barnabas brings Paul to the church in Antioch.
  - ◆ James (apostle) martyred.
  - ◆ Peter's miraculous escape from prison
  - ◆ Death of Herod Agrippa I
- ◆ Temptation of Jesus
- ◆ First miracle: water into wine
- ◆ Jesus gathers disciples, teaches, heals, performs miracles, and raises the dead.
  - ◆ Sermon on the Mount
    - ◆ Death of John the Baptist
      - ◆ New covenant in Jesus
      - ◆ Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
      - ◆ Olivet Discourse
      - ◆ Last Supper



**Death and  
Resurrection  
of Jesus** AD 30

- ◆ Great Commission
- ◆ Jesus ascends to heaven.

AD 30


AD 40


 Ministry of Jesus 3 years
 

 Early travels
 

 Emperor Tiberius
 

 Emperor Caligula
 

 Pontius Pilate
 

 Herod Agrippa I
 

 Herod Antipas
 



**1st Missionary Journey: Paul and Barnabas** AD 47

JAMES

GALATIANS

Jerusalem Council

2nd Missionary Journey: Paul and Silas

1 THESSALONIANS

2 THESSALONIANS

3rd Missionary Journey: Paul, Timothy, and others

1 CORINTHIANS

2 CORINTHIANS

ROMANS

Paul in prison for 2 years

Paul stands trial.

Paul shipwrecked on Malta.

Paul under house arrest in Rome for 2 years.

EPHESIANS

PHILIPPIANS

COLOSSIANS

PHILEMON

HEBREWS

JUDE

2 TIMOTHY

James (brother of Jesus) martyred.

1 TIMOTHY

TITUS

1 PETER

2 PETER

Nero's persecution of Christians begins.

Paul and Peter imprisoned in Rome.

Jewish uprising against Romans in Jerusalem

**Paul and Peter martyred in Rome.** AD 66–68



AD 50

AD 60

AD 70

Paul's Journeys

1st 2nd

3rd

Prison

Rome

Later travels and prison

Emperor Claudius

Emperor Nero

Herod Agrippa II



**Temple destroyed by Romans.**  
AD 70

1 JOHN

2 JOHN

3 JOHN

- ◆ Masada falls to the Romans.
  - ◆ Josephus writes *Jewish War*.
  - ◆ Mt. Vesuvius erupts.
  - ◆ The *Didache* (early Christian practices) written.
- ◆  **Colosseum in Rome completed.**  
AD 80
  - ◆ Emperor Domitian declares himself "Lord and God."
  - ◆ Domitian persecutes Christians.

AD 70

AD 80

AD 90

Emperor Vespasian

Emperor  
Titus

Emperor Domitian

Herod Agrippa II

- ◆ Josephus writes *Antiquities of the Jews*.



**John** is exiled  
on Patmos.

#### REVELATION

- ◆ Clement, bishop of Rome
  - ◆ Rise of Gnostic heresies within the church
    - ◆ Death of John in Ephesus
    - ◆ Writings of early church leaders: Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp
    - ◆ Churches established as far as Carthage, Edessa, Alexandria, and Rome.

Most events after Acts are not recorded in the Bible.

AD 100

AD 110

Emperor  
Nerva

Emperor Trajan

# BEGINNINGS

## CREATION

### **Genesis 1–2**

The first chapter of Genesis tells how God brought form to the formless and filled the emptiness with life.

“Now the earth was formless and empty ... and God said, ‘Let there be light, and there was light’” (Gen. 1:2–3). With the power of his word, God created light where there was none, put the galaxies in space, made birds to fill the air and fish to fill the seas, and like a potter at his wheel, he formed the first human being from the dust of the ground. What an extraordinary sight that must have been!

The creation story reveals who God is. He is the Creator who gives life to humanity and all living things. In this story, we see God as designer, artist, architect, and life-giver; a good and loving God who takes delight in his creation.

## A FALLEN WORLD

### **Genesis 3–11**

The first two chapters of Genesis portray a picture of the world that is “very good” (Gen. 1:31). God put the first man and woman in the garden of Eden, a place where they cared for God’s creation and God cared for them. Both Adam and Eve were naked and felt no shame (Gen. 2:25).

*“In the beginning  
God created  
the heavens  
and the earth.”*

GENESIS 1:1

Consider the world as it is today. It's easy to see that many things are not the way they should be. If everything was once so good, how did it go so wrong? The next chapter in Genesis answers this question. As image bearers of God, Adam and Eve had a choice: trust in the goodness of their creator or go their own way, rebelling against the kind of life God had given them. God issued them one restriction: "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Gen. 2:17).

Deceived by a manipulative serpent, Eve chose the fruit of the one tree that was off limits. (Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 point to the involvement of Satan—"that ancient serpent"—in this deception in the garden.) Adam also ate the fruit and things were never the same. Shame, followed by hiding from God, was their immediate response (Gen. 3:7-8). The man and woman had known only the goodness of God. In rebellion against their maker, they came to know evil as well.

The following stories in the book of Genesis give a clear—and at times disturbing—portrait of the effects of sin in the world. This is especially seen in the story of Adam and Eve's sons, where Cain, jealous that Abel's sacrifice



was accepted by God when his was not, murders his own brother. It's seen in the account of the rampant wickedness in the days of Noah and God's judgment upon the earth in the form of a massive flood in which only Noah and his family were saved from destruction. Later, it's seen when God confuses the languages and scatters a people who tried to build a name for themselves with the tower of Babel.



## GENESIS

The book of Genesis covers from the creation of the world to the story of Joseph in Egypt around 1800 BC. The stories take place in Mesopotamia, Canaan, and Egypt. Genesis is a book about beginnings. The word *genesis* comes from a Greek word meaning “to be born.” Chapters 1–3 explain the origin of the world and humanity, followed by the origin of nations in chapters 4–11; and chapters 12–50 deal with the origin of Israel.