

Philemon

The gospel causes drastic social change. Case in point: Slaves were by law objects but in Christ are brothers and sisters.

General Epistles



Hebrews

Christ and the new covenant is superior to all others, yet he identifies with us. Despite opposition, stand firm in faith!

James

We're not saved by works, but if we are indeed saved, the evidence is seen by our actions. Submit to God, and he will lift you up.

1 Peter

As God's chosen people, live in Christian holiness before those who oppose you. Be encouraged and stand firm despite persecution.

2 Peter

Make your salvation sure, stand against false teaching, and be ready for the Day of the Lord.

1 John

As children of God walk in the light of God, who is love. Be aware of spiritual deception and evil. And love one another.

2 John

Love one another, and continue in the teaching of Christ.

3 John

Do people and the Bible speak well of you and your life?

Jude

Godless leaders are doomed. Continue well in your faith.

Revelation

Through historical and end-times prophecies of opposition, Jesus is Lord of all, and believers will endure and triumph to the end.

Getting to Know God's Word

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These are quick summaries of each book of the Bible. Learning and remembering them helps us get a basic and confident grip on what happens, when, and where. This in turn helps us get a much better handle on the endless, amazing insights and lessons throughout the Bible.

The message of salvation and how to live comes through the stories of God's interaction with humanity here on earth.

Old Testament

Law (Torah)



Genesis

We witness the origins of the world, mankind, sin, God's redemptive relationship with the world, and the origin of Israel, through whom the Savior will come.

Exodus

God saves Israel from slavery in Egypt, and then enters into a special covenantal relationship with them.

Leviticus

God gives instructions in the sacrificial system for how to worship him and restore relationship with him and with our neighbor.

Numbers

Israel fails to trust and obey God and wanders in the wilderness for forty years, yet God is still with them.

Deuteronomy

Moses recaps and interprets Israel's history and God's Law for how to love and obey God in the Promised Land.

History



Joshua

Joshua, Israel's new leader, leads Israel to conquer the Promised Land then parcels out territories to the twelve tribes.

Judges

Israel goes through cycles of bad behavior, gets relief and a leader to re-establish order, then goes bad and badder.

Ruth

During the Judges, this is a story of the providence of God and hope in a dark time, where a widow finds a man.

1 Samuel

Samuel, the last Judge, leads the nation well, but they want a king, and they get Saul. David rises as a young man.

2 Samuel

David rules Israel. He's a great conqueror on the battlefield, but his family life, and then his rein, are full of trouble.

1 Kings

Solomon succeeds David and has a glorious reign that ends in a divided kingdom of north vs. south.

2 Kings

The two kingdoms have tumultuous episodes. The north gets scattered by Assyria; later the south gets exiled by Babylon.

1 Chronicles

Israel's history is reviewed from the beginning, with a focus on the meanings of events, and an emphasis on David.

2 Chronicles

The historical review continues its focus on the meanings of events with Solomon then the kings of the southern kingdom of Judah.

2 Corinthians

This intensely personal letter addresses reconciliation, the glory of God's covenant, giving, and defense of Paul's spiritual authority.

Galatians

Opposing Judaizers, or any similar "Jesus plus _____," we have freedom in Christ, not bondage under the law.

Ephesians

God has an eternal purpose in establishing the universal church of Jesus Christ. We are called to unity, maturity, and victory.

Philippians

Despite any circumstance, rejoice in the Lord! Stand firm, press forward, and don't be frightened or discouraged.

Colossians

Grow and be set apart in Christ, who is supreme and is the head of the church.

1 Thessalonians

In the face of opposition, be encouraged! And here's how to live out our faith until the last days.

2 Thessalonians

Stand firm in the face of evil and opposition. The end of the world isn't yet, so don't be lazy!

1 Timothy

Hold to sound doctrine in the church, to good works and clear order as a church, and to godly lifestyle.

2 Timothy

As a servant of Christ, be faithful, reliable, and diligent. Opposition will come, so be prepared and rejoice through it.

Titus

Recognize ungodliness, and by God's grace say no to it and do what is good.

New Testament

Gospels



Matthew

Jesus' story is told to Jews as the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise. Five blocks of teaching with the most material common to the gospels.

Mark

Jesus' story is told to Gentiles, with fast and hard-hitting action. Stories are fewer but more developed. Two halves: in Galilee and in Jerusalem.

Luke

Jesus' story is told to the Greco-Roman world, pronouncing the universality of the gospel. Emphasis is on parables, prayer, Holy Spirit, and Jesus' humanity.

John

A supplement to the other gospels, this is less biographical and more theological, with a main theme of eternal life. 7 signs and 7 I am's in two halves: Jesus' mighty deeds and then holy week.

Acts

The story of the early church, first with Peter then with Paul, the church is missional, universal, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.



Pauline Epistles

Romans

Righteousness is a gift from God through faith in Christ. Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome need to live together in Christ.

1 Corinthians

Unity, purity, love, truth, and the Spirit are critical for a church beset by quarreling, bickering, immorality, and disorder.

Ezra

Ezra leads the exiles in Babylon back to Israel. He restores the temple and restores their right relation back to God.

Nehemiah

Nehemiah leads the returned exiles to restore the walls of Jerusalem and to restore God's law by which they live.

Esther

The beautiful Jewish queen in the land of Persia risks everything to save her people from disaster.

Wisdom Literature



Job

Job addresses and debates the big question of why do good people suffer? And where is God in it all?

Psalms

150 poems by many different authors express grief and complaint, faith, thanksgiving, wisdom, and praise.

Proverbs

These sayings express God's intended order in the world and wisdom as knowing and following the ways of God.

Ecclesiastes

Solomon expresses the meaninglessness of the material world or activity apart from God—contrasted with God's positive view.

Song of Songs

A musical drama celebrating love and sex in marriage—God's antidote for adultery and pornography.

Prophets



Major

Isaiah

First come judgments then comfort for all Israel; the coming king will rule Israel and the nations with justice.

Jeremiah

Stern warnings come to Judah to turn from sin and submit to Babylon as God's judgment.

Lamentations

Jeremiah laments the destruction that has befallen sinful Jerusalem

Ezekiel

Destruction and exile were necessary for God to correct his people—but restoration is coming, along with a new temple.

Daniel

Above his followers' total allegiance, the sovereign God rules history, destroys the rebellious, and delivers the faithful.

Minor

Hosea

Israel has turned away to other gods and committed spiritual adultery—in contrast to God's steadfast love.

Joel

A locust invasion is like the coming Day of the LORD. So repent.

Amos

In the face of economic and social ills, God calls for justice and righteousness.

Obadiah

God judges Edom and the nations, and demands righteousness.

Jonah

God sends a reluctant prophet to Nineveh, Israel's enemy and oppressor.

Micah

God judges Judah for the same sins Amos addressed in Israel and calls for humility, justice, and mercy.

Nahum

As Nineveh, capital of Assyria, oppresses God's people, this prophecy pronounces judgment.

Habakkuk

The prophet asks how God can tolerate evil in his people, then in the even-worse people who bring justice. God answers.

Zephaniah

Judgment is proclaimed against respectable sins of idolatry, complacency, pride, and rebelliousness; then restoration.

Haggai

Rebuild the temple! God doesn't bless you because you don't put him first. Then blessing will come.

Zechariah

Gentile empires will be destroyed. God will preserve Israel through her ordeals and bring the Messiah and end times.

Malachi

God is not pleased with behavior that dishonors him or with second-rate offerings. The Day of the LORD is coming.