

Bible Navigation

What the Bible Is

- The story of God: the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of all that exists
- Different versions: New International Version (NIV), King James Version (KJV), New King James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), etc. You may use any version you prefer. There are some word differences among the versions—for example, “love” (modern translation) and “charity” (KJV). If you are using a Bible app on an electronic device, you may choose from a variety of translations.
- 66 writings by more than 40 human authors: This is a collection of different forms: poetry, historical narrative, teaching, prophecy of future events.
- We teach with the understanding that the Bible is without error, because God cannot err or lie. Therefore, it is without contradiction though we may not immediately see how that is true.

How to Navigate the Bible

- What version of the Bible do you have? Turn to the title page to find that information.
- Locate the Preface
- Turn to the Table of Contents
 - Divided into Old and New Testaments
 - Some Bibles have an Alphabetical List of Books
 - Some books have two parts (1 and 2 Samuel; 1 and 2 Corinthians; etc.).
 - In most Bible apps, you can choose to view the books in either an alphabetical list or a traditional list.
- Reference notation
Book [chapter]: [verse] — Genesis 1:3; 1:3a means first part of verse; 1:3b means second part of verse. In Bible apps, you can choose the book and then chapter and verse, or you can type the information into the Search function.
- Other potential helps in your Bible:
 - Maps — page # _____
 - Dictionary/concordance — page # _____
 - Commentary notes
 - Footnotes
 - Marginal references
 - Cross references
 - (For Bible apps, these helps may require an additional download. However you can highlight, make notes or even share passages.)

The Message of the Bible

- **The Bible** tells one great story, the story of God — the Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of all that exists — and His purpose of redemption for His people.
- **The Old Testament:** The history and faith of the Jewish people, also called the Hebrews, the Israelites, Israel and Judah.

- **5 Books of the Law** (*Genesis to Deuteronomy*): Beginnings of the Hebrew nation (Abraham); the giving of God's law by which He intends people to live (Moses); The Exodus from Egypt; the Ten Commandments; the journey to the land promised to Abraham
- **12 Books of Israel's History** (*Joshua to Esther*): God's promise of a coming Redeemer/Savior/Messiah through the descendants of King David are woven throughout.
 - Historical narrative of the people and nations
 - Years of monarchy under three kings: most famous David (wrote many psalms, including Psalm 23)
 - Years of people divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah
 - Both kingdoms in exile, some to Assyria and others to Babylon
 - Judah returns to promised land.
- **5 Books of Wisdom and Poetry**: *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*
- **5 Major Prophets**: *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*
- **12 Minor Prophets**: *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*
 - “Major/ Minor” prophets refers to size of book not to importance.
 - Prophets call God's people to return to Him, foretell God's coming judgments and mercies; give further promises of the Messiah-Redeemer.
- **The New Testament**
 - **5 Books of History**
 - 4 Gospels of Jesus Christ (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*): Historical narrative of the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of the long-awaited Redeemer — the man Jesus of Nazareth who is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
 - 1 Acts of the Apostles: History of the Church in first century following Jesus' ascension into heaven; beginning in Jerusalem, spread throughout Asia Minor, especially through the main characters Peter and Paul
 - **21 Epistles** (letters from the apostles to the churches and individuals)
 - *Romans to Jude*
 - Further explain the teachings of Jesus Christ, the implications of His life, death, resurrection and ascension, and the importance of His present ministry from heaven and through His people
 - **1 Prophecy** (*Revelation*): The full title is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” as God and coming King, which is future to us.

Studying the Bible in BSF

- **Daily study**
 - Establish a time and place for the daily study.
 - Begin each day's study by asking God to help you answer the questions.
- Day One**
 - Question on the lecture and on the notes
 - It is helpful to answer immediately after or the day following class.
- Days Two through Six**
 - Read the assigned passage for that day and base your answers on it.
 - Types of questions
 - Facts/information: What is the passage about?
 - Truths stated or implied: What do I learn from the passage?
 - Practical implications: How can I apply what I learned to my life?