



# **Bible Surveyor Handbook: A 15-Lesson Overview of the Entire Bible**

*Christy Bower*

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The Bible is not written in chronological order. That is, if you read through the Bible from cover to cover, you'll jump around through different periods of history. And some events are repeated in different books, written by different authors, to different audiences, and for different purposes. This is one of the things that can make the Bible seem difficult or confusing. Being able to place the events you are reading about in their correct historical context helps you understand what you're reading.

In 15 lessons, we're going to walk through the pages of history to gain a better perspective on how the parts of the Bible flow as one continuous storyline of what God is doing in the world.

The Beginning  
The Fathers of Faith  
The Exodus  
The Conquest of the Promised Land  
The Judges  
The United Kingdom  
The Divided Kingdom  
The Surviving Kingdom  
The Babylonian Captivity  
The Return from Exile to Jerusalem  
Between the Testaments: Greek Influence  
Between the Testaments: Roman Influence  
The Life of Christ  
The Spread of the Good News about Christ  
The End: God's Ultimate Goal

We will start from the very beginning, with Adam and Eve in the Garden, and talk about how God began to establish a people of his own, starting with Abraham. Then we'll learn how that new tribe of Abraham's descendants became enslaved in Egypt and God rescued them in the Exodus.

Through the leadership of Moses and later Joshua, God led his people to the Promised Land, where he helped them conquer the people of the land, who had fallen under God's judgment. But then, after Joshua died, there was no clear leader and the people began to fall into sin and chaos. God repeatedly raised up judges to get the people back on track with God.

Eventually, the people wanted a strong, central leader, so they asked for a king to rule them. Saul, David, and Solomon ruled as kings over the people of Israel. But these glory days came to an abrupt end when rivalries divided the kingdom into Israel and Judah.

The Assyrians attacked Israel and the people were sent into exile. The surviving kingdom, Judah, was later attacked by Babylonians. The people of Judah were also taken into captivity, so all of God's people were scattered across the world.

Then, after seventy years of Babylonian captivity, God caused the Persians to conquer Babylon. The Persians allowed the captives to return to their home; subsidized their trip; and made offerings toward rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem.

Those who returned to Jerusalem faced a daunting task of rebuilding their demolished city. But the prophets of God encouraged them to persevere so God's promised Messiah (Christ) could return.

After the prophet Malachi, there are four hundred years of silence before the writings of the New Testament. In lessons 11 and 12, we'll discuss what influences shaped those years. The Greeks and Romans paved the way for God's Messiah and the spread of the Good News about Christ in the New Testament era.

Finally, we'll discuss "the end" as we look at God's ultimate goal throughout history. The Book of Revelation provides a glimpse into God's purpose for all of humanity.

Don't worry if this quick overview was a little overwhelming. We'll explain things more carefully as we go along. Before long, you'll be able to talk your way through Bible history, too.

For Beginning and Intermediate Bible Students

This Bible Surveyor Handbook provides an easy-to-understand overview of the entire Bible. At the end of each lesson, there are two suggested reading tracks: one for beginners who want to survey the Bible and one for intermediate students who want to explore the Bible more thoroughly.

Downloads

The suggested readings for each lesson may be downloaded in a convenient chart that can be printed and inserted in your Bible. You may download your free PDF of "101 Readings to Survey the Bible" or "Bible Explorer Readings" at [www.ChristyBower.com](http://www.ChristyBower.com) in the "Downloads" section. And you

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