

Bible Basics Bullets,
compiled by Caleb and Rebekah Colley (2016)

Bible Basics Bullets:

GENESIS

Date of Writing: circa 1450 B.C.

Author: Moses

Theme: Beginnings

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about God, origins, and Israel.

Chapters	Contents
Genesis 1-2	Creation of the world
Genesis 3	Eve and Adam commit the first sin
Genesis 4	Cain and Abel worship; Cain slays Abel
Genesis 5-10	The Flood; Noah and the ark
Genesis 11	The tower of Babel
Genesis 12	God calls Abraham into Canaan.
Genesis 13-14	Abraham and Lot separate; Abraham rescues Lot
Genesis 15	God's covenant with Abraham
Genesis 16	Sarai and Hagar; the birth of Ishmael
Genesis 17-18	Circumcision and the promise of Isaac's birth; Abraham intercedes for Sodom
Genesis 19	God destroys Sodom and rescues Lot.
Genesis 20-21	Abraham's dealings with his family; Hagar and Ishmael
Genesis 22	Abraham offers Isaac; God renews promises to Abraham
Genesis 23	Sarah's death and burial
Genesis 24	Isaac and Rebekah
Genesis 25	Abraham's death; Esau sells his birthright
Genesis 26	Isaac deceives Abimelech, king of the Philistines.
Genesis 27	Rebekah and Jacob deceive Isaac; Jacob takes Esau's blessing and flees to Haran

Chapters	Contents
Genesis 28-30	Jacob marries Leah and Rachel while working for Laban.
Genesis 31	Jacob flees from Laban.
Genesis 32-33	Jacob reunites with Esau.
Genesis 34	Dinah is defiled.
Genesis 35	God blesses Jacob; Rachel and Isaac die.
Genesis 36	The Edomites
Genesis 37-47	Joseph is sold into slavery and saves Egypt.
Genesis 38	Judah and Tamar
Genesis 48-50	Jacob blesses his descendants; Jacob and Joseph die.

Key Verses:

- **Genesis 1:1.** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
- **Genesis 3:15.** I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
- **Genesis 6:8.** But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.
- **Genesis 12:2-3.** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
- **Genesis 22:12.** He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me
- **Genesis 39:9.** He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

Practical Lessons:

- ☒ God is the sovereign Creator. He is a covenant-making God Who always keeps His promises.
- ☒ Sin is man’s great problem, and God began working out the solution in the beginning.
- ☒ Holy living (including prayer, ethical behavior, and sacrifice) results in great blessings.
- ☒ Even if we do not understand why God requires some action, we must trust and obey.

Bible Basics Bullets:

EXODUS

Date of Writing: circa 1450 B.C.

Author: Moses

Theme: Deliverance (the word translated “Exodus” means “a way out”)

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about the true God and His power to deliver His people.

Chapters	Contents
Exodus 1	Israel enslaved in Egypt
Exodus 2	Birth and early life of Moses
Exodus 3-4	God, in the burning bush, commissions Moses
Exodus 5	Moses delivers God’s first command to Pharaoh
Exodus 6	God reassures Moses; Genealogy of Moses and Aaron
Exodus 7	The 10 plagues begin: (1) Water to blood
Exodus 8	(2) Frogs; (3) Lice; (4) Flies
Exodus 9	(5) Death of livestock; (6) Boils; (7) Hail
Exodus 10	(8) Locusts; (9) Darkness
Exodus 11-12	(10) Death of the firstborn; Passover instituted
Exodus 13	Feast of unleavened bread; God leads His people to the Red Sea
Exodus 14	Crossing of the Red Sea
Exodus 15	Songs of deliverance; Bitter water at Marah made sweet
Exodus 16	Manna and quail from heaven
Exodus 17	Water from the rock at Rephidim; Victory over Amalek
Exodus 18	Jethro’s advice to Moses
Exodus 19	God’s voice on Mount Sinai
Exodus 20	God gives the Ten Commandments

Chapters	Contents
Exodus 21-23	God's laws on slavery, restitution, social justice, Sabbaths, and festivals
Exodus 24	Israel agrees to God's covenant
Exodus 25-27	Instructions concerning the tabernacle
Exodus 28-29	Consecration of priests
Exodus 32-33	Israel worships the golden calf and is punished
Exodus 34	Moses makes two new tablets; The covenant is renewed
Exodus 35-40	The building of the tabernacle, with the ark of the covenant and the priestly garments

Key Verses:

- **Exodus 3:13-14a.** Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I am who I am."
- **Exodus 12:13.** The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.
- **Exodus 19:5-6a.** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God will deliver His people (see Romans 8:24-25; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; Galatians 1:3-5).
- ☑ The Lord fulfilled His promise to make of Abraham a great nation, and will fulfill His promises to us (2 Peter 1:3-4).
- ☑ Obedience is essential to salvation. Blood provides atonement, but we must choose to apply the blood by obeying God's commands (see Acts 22:16; Ephesians 2:13-14; Colossians 2:11-12).
- ☑ Salvation through Jesus has always been God's plan (Ephesians 3:7-13). God's redemptive work on the cross and through the church are foreshadowed in the Exodus passages that discuss the passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:6-8), the tabernacle (Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Timothy 3:15), and the priesthood (1 Peter 2:4-5).

Bible Basics Bullets:

LEVITICUS

Date of Writing: circa 1450 B.C.

Author: Moses

Theme: Holiness by atonement for sin

Meaning of Name: The Greek translators of the Old Testament gave the book the name “Leviticus” because it discusses the spiritual service administered of the Levites. Jewish tradition called it “The Law of the Priest” or “The Law of Offerings.”

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about the holiness that God expects from His people.

Chapters	Contents
Leviticus 1	Laws for burnt offerings
Leviticus 2	Laws for grain offerings
Leviticus 3	Laws for peace offerings
Leviticus 4-5	Laws for sin and guilt offerings
Leviticus 6-7	Laws for restitution; Laws for how priests administer sacrifices; Portions for Aaron and his sons
Leviticus 8	Consecration of Aaron and his sons
Leviticus 9-10	The Lord accepts Aaron’s offering; The Lord rejects Nadab’s and Abihu’s profane offering
Leviticus 11	Laws about clean and unclean animals
Leviticus 12-15	Laws about cleanliness and purification, especially concerning leprosy
Leviticus 16	The Day of Atonement
Leviticus 17	The sanctity of blood
Leviticus 18	Laws about sexual morality
Leviticus 19	Laws for dealing with neighbors, strangers, farming issues, the Sabbath, etc.
Leviticus 20	Punishments for various sins

Chapters	Contents
Leviticus 21-22	Holiness and the priests
Leviticus 23	The feasts (Sabbath; Passover; Firstfruits, Weeks [Pentecost], Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Booths)
Leviticus 24	Tabernacle lamps and bread; Punishments for various sins
Leviticus 25	Laws of the seventh year and year of Jubilee; Laws about lending and slavery
Leviticus 26	Blessings for obedience and punishment for disobedience
Leviticus 27	Laws about vows to God

Key Verses:

- **Leviticus 11:45.** For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.
- **Leviticus 16:30.** For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the Lord from all your sins.
- **Leviticus 17:11.** For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.
- **Leviticus 27:34.** These are the commandments that the Lord commanded Moses for the people of Israel on Mount Sinai.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Man cannot atone for his own sins. A sacrifice must be made, and the sacrifice of Christ is foreshadowed in the various sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 10:1-10).
- ☑ Obedience to God's details matters. It mattered in Israel's pleasing God through the Mosaic Covenant, and it matters in Christ's people pleasing God through His New Covenant (Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 8; 13:8).
- ☑ Sanctification, or being "set apart for a holy purpose," is essential for pleasing God. Even though we are not under the Old Law, every Christian shares the responsibility of being set apart in holiness (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 1:15-16).
- ☑ The priests carried out services *to* God and *for* His people. All Christians, as members of a "royal priesthood," are called to do so as well (1 Peter 2:9).

Bible Basics Bullets:

NUMBERS

Date of Writing: circa 1450 B.C.

Author: Moses

Theme: God disciplines His people.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know how God teaches His people obedience in order to bless their lives.

Chapters	Contents
Numbers 1	The census taken
Numbers 2	Arrangement of the Israelite camp
Numbers 3-4	Duties of Levites, and of Kohathites in particular
Numbers 5	Confession and restitution; Adultery
Numbers 6	The Nazirite Vow
Numbers 7	Offerings at the tabernacle's consecration
Numbers 8	Cleansing of the Levites
Numbers 9	The Passover celebrated
Numbers 10	Israel leaves Sinai
Numbers 11	Seventy elders chosen
Numbers 12	Miriam and Aaron oppose Moses
Numbers 13	Twelve spies sent into Canaan
Numbers 14	The people rebel; Moses intercedes for them; God judges the people
Numbers 15	Laws about sacrifice and the Sabbath
Numbers 16	Korah's rebellion
Numbers 17	Aaron's staff buds
Numbers 18	Duties of priests and Levites; Support for Levites
Numbers 19	Laws for purification

Chapters	Contents
Numbers 20	Death of Miriam and Aaron; Moses strikes the rock
Numbers 21	The bronze serpent
Numbers 22-24	Balam and his oracles
Numbers 25	Israel's harlotry and idolatry with Moab; God punishes the people
Numbers 26	The second census of Israel
Numbers 27-29	Laws concerning inheritance and offerings; Joshua inaugurated
Numbers 30	Laws concerning vows
Numbers 31	Vengeance on the Midianites
Numbers 32	Reuben and Gad settle east of the Jordan
Numbers 33	Israel's journey recounted
Numbers 34-35	Israelite boundaries in Canaan; Leaders appointed to divide the land.

Key Verses:

- **Numbers 1:2.** "Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head.
- **Numbers 6:24-27.** The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them
- **Numbers 23:19.** God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?
- **Numbers 24:17.** I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God has great plans for His people, and these plans involve service. We are saved in order to serve, and it is an honor for God's people to serve (Mark 10:45; 1 Peter 4:10).
- ☑ God has the right to discipline and punish His people. As our sovereign Creator, He has the right and the knowledge to do what He wishes with us (Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:8).
- ☑ No one is above sin. Even the children of Israel, who were physically guided by the Lord's presence, struggled with disbelief and sin (James 3:2; 1 John 1:5-10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

DEUTERONOMY

Date of Writing: circa 1450 B.C.

Author: Moses, with a second author (possibly Joshua) for chapter 34, which narrates Moses' death.

Theme: Remembering God's will

Meaning of Name: The Greek translators of the Old Testament gave the book the name "Deuteronomy," literally meaning "second law," because in the book Moses recounts the law to a new generation of Israelites, just prior to their entering the promised land.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about God's holiness and how He relates to man.

Chapters	Contents
Deuteronomy 1-2	Reviewing Israel's failure to enter the promised land; Subsequent wilderness wanderings, including victories over Sihon and Og
Deuteronomy 3	Moses disallowed from entering the promised land
Deuteronomy 4	Moses commands obedience and forbids idolatry; Cities of refuge
Deuteronomy 5-6	Reviewing the 10 Commandments; The greatest commandment
Deuteronomy 7-8	Blessings for a faithful, chosen people
Deuteronomy 9	Review of Israel's rebellions
Deuteronomy 10	The second pair of tablets; The essence of the covenant
Deuteronomy 11	Blessing for obedience; Curse for disobedience
Deuteronomy 12-13	True worship as opposed to idol worship; Punishment for idolatry
Deuteronomy 14-15	Laws about mourning, clean and unclean meats, and tithing
Deuteronomy 15	The sabbatical year
Deuteronomy 16	The Passover; The Feast of Weeks; The Feast of Tabernacles
Deuteronomy 17	Justice for criminals; Laws for future kings of Israel
Deuteronomy 18	Provisions for priests and Levites
Deuteronomy 19	Three more cities of refuge; Laws about witnesses

Chapters	Contents
Deuteronomy 20-21	Miscellaneous laws, including laws about warfare, inheritance, etc.
Deuteronomy 22-24	Miscellaneous laws, including laws about sexual morality
Deuteronomy 25	Marriage responsibility of the surviving brother; Defeating Amalek
Deuteronomy 26	Offering of firstfruits and tithes
Deuteronomy 27-30	Blessings for obedience; Curses for disobedience
Deuteronomy 31	Moses publicly names Joshua as his successor
Deuteronomy 32	The song of Moses, about Israel's unfaithfulness
Deuteronomy 33	Moses' final blessing for Israel
Deuteronomy 34	Death of Moses

Key Verses:

- **Deuteronomy 4:2.** You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you
- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9.** “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- **Deuteronomy 18:15.** “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers —it is to him you shall listen —
- **Deuteronomy 32:4.** “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God is always willing to forgive (2 Peter 3:9). Though He knew that Israel would rebel, He provided an opportunity to be saved (Deuteronomy 30).
- ☑ Man must repent before God will forgive Him (cf. Luke 17:3). There is no way to be saved while willfully remaining in sin (Romans 6:1-6).
- ☑ We must have the humility to always remember what the Lord has done for in our lives (1 Corinthians 11:24-28, 15:10; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JOSHUA

Date of Writing: ca. 1400 BC.

Author: Joshua (see Joshua 24:26), with others.

Theme: Faith is the victory.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about God's blessing of the Israelites as they conquered Canaan.

Chapters	Contents
Joshua 1	God commissions Joshua; Preparations to enter the land
Joshua 2	Rahab hides the spies
Joshua 3	Israel crosses the Jordan
Joshua 4	Twelve stones to memorialize the crossing
Joshua 5	Circumcision of those born in the wilderness; Joshua meets the Commander of the Lord's army
Joshua 6	The destruction of Jericho
Joshua 7	Ai defeats Israel; Achan's sin revealed; Achan punished
Joshua 8	Israel conquers Ai; Joshua renews the covenant
Joshua 9	Gibeonites trick Joshua and make a covenant with Israel
Joshua 10	Israel conquers various southern cities; The sun stands still at Gibeon
Joshua 11	Israel conquers various northern cities
Joshua 12	Summary of Moses' and Joshua's conquests
Joshua 13	Land divided on the east of the Jordan
Joshua 14	Land divided on the west of the Jordan; Caleb inherits Hebron
Joshua 15	The land of Judah; Caleb conquers Hebron and Debir
Joshua 16-17	The land of Ephraim and Manasseh
Joshua 18	Joshua urges Israel to take remaining land; The land of Benjamin
Joshua 19	The lands of Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, Joshua

Chapters	Contents
Joshua 20	Six cities of refuge
Joshua 21	Cities for the Levites; The fulfillment of God's promises to Jacob
Joshua 22	Eastern tribes return to their land; Confusion over the eastern altar
Joshua 23	Joshua's farewell address
Joshua 24	Joshua commits Israel to God's service; Joshua and Eleazar die

Key Verses:

- **Joshua 1:5-6.** No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.
- **Joshua 6:2.** And the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor.
- **Joshua 21:43-45.** Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. And the Lord gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands. Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.
- **Joshua 24:15.** And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Practical Lessons:

- ☒ God is serious about sin, and is sin's Enemy (Joshua 7:20-26). The conquering of the Canaan was not only to give God's people a dwelling place, but also to punish the wicked Canaanites (Joshua 3:10; cf. Leviticus 18:24-30; Deuteronomy 18:9-14). We must prepare to give account to a just and holy God (2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:8).
- ☒ God always keeps his promises (Joshua 21:43-45). He kept promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He will keep promises to us (2 Peter 1:3-4; Titus 1:2).
- ☒ Though we may be part of a family who serves God, each of us must make a personal decision to serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). God demands and deserves loyalty on the part of each individual (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12).
- ☒ We must consult the Lord before making important decisions (Joshua 9:14).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JUDGES

Date of Writing: Uncertain, with portions apparently written at different times (see 1:21; 18:30), but almost certainly by the mid-5th century B.C.

Author: Uncertain, probably Samuel. His authorship would mean the book was written in the late 11th century.

Theme: Sin leads to confusion and conflict.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know the history of Israel after they entered the Promised Land.

Chapters	Contents
Judges 1	Israel's incomplete conquest of the land
Judges 2	Israel's disobedience after inheriting the land; Relapse into sin
Judges 3	Othniel; Ehud; Shamgar
Judges 4	Deborah and Barak defeat Sisera
Judges 5	The song of Deborah, celebrating the victory
Judges 6	Midian oppresses Israel; God calls Gideon
Judges 7	Gideon's valiant 300 conquer the Midianites
Judges 8	Gideon kills two kings of Midian; Gideon's ephod; Gideon dies
Judges 9	Abimeleh's conspiracy against Gideon's 70 sons
Judges 10	Tola; Jair; Israel falls into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites
Judges 11	Jephthah conquers the Ammonites; Jephthah's rash vow
Judges 12	Jephthah's conflict with Ephraim; Ibzan; Elon; Abdon
Judges 13	The birth of Samson
Judges 14	Samson's Philistine wife; Samson's riddle
Judges 15	Samson defeats the Philistines in two conflicts
Judges 16	Samson and Delilah; Samson dies with the Philistines
Judges 17	Micah's idolatry

Chapters	Contents
Judges 18	The Danites adopt Micah's idolatry; Danites settle in Laish
Judges 19	The Levite and his concubine, who is killed by men of Benjamin
Judges 20	Israel's retributive war with the Benjamites
Judges 21	Wives provided for the Benjamites

Key Verses:

- **Judges 2:8-10.** And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110 years. . . . And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel.
- **Judges 7:2.** The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'
- **Judges 13:8.** Then Manoah prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born."
- **Judges 21:25.** In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must strive to finish those tasks that God has given us to do (2 Timothy 4:7-8). The Israelites failed to fully drive out the Canaanites (Judges 1:27-36). If we do not remain faithful until death, we cannot be saved (Matthew 10:22; Revelation 2:10).
- ☑ When humans—as individuals or as a nation—ignore the will of God and pursue their own interests, disaster results (Proverbs 14:12; Jeremiah 10:23; Daniel 5:23). Israel practiced idolatry and took pagan wives, angering the Lord (Judges 3:6). We must learn from their bad example and keep our lives pure (Philippians 4:8).
- ☑ There is a tendency for human beings to repeat their own mistakes (Proverbs 26:11; Romans 6:1-4; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:21-22). The book of Judges portrays a repeating cycle in which Israel depends on God, forsakes the Lord, suffers consequences, and seeks deliverance from their merciful God (see Judges 2:11-19).
- ☑ We must watch the company we keep (1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14). Samson fell in with the wrong crowd, and this had disastrous consequences (Judges 14:1-3).

Bible Basics Bullets:

RUTH

Date of Writing: About 1050 B.C.

Author: Uncertain, but Ruth was possibly written by Samuel after the birth of David (see Ruth 4:21)

Theme: Loyalty and love.

Context of the book: The events of the book of Ruth take place during the period of the judges (1:1). It covers about 10 years (1:4). Ruth is a Moabitess widow, who follows her widowed mother-in-law from Moab to Judah and becomes a proselyte to Israel (1:16; 2:11-12). Ruth weds Boaz and becomes the great-grandmother of David, part of the family line of the Messiah (4:13-22).

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but any who wanted to know about an example of faithfulness and loyalty during a period of great disloyalty on the part of the people of God.

Passages	Contents
Ruth 1:1-5	Elimelech and his family go to Moab; Elimelech and his two sons die
Ruth 1:6-22	Orpah remains in Moab, but Ruth returns to Judah with her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi
Ruth 2	Ruth meets Boaz, who allows her to reap generously from his field
Ruth 3:1-9	Ruth sneaks up on Boaz and asks him to marry her
Ruth 3:10-18	Boaz tells Ruth that there is a closer relative who has the duty to provide for Ruth first (cf. Deuteronomy 25:5-10)
Ruth 4:1-12	Boaz contacts the closer relative; Boaz redeems Naomi's field and takes Ruth as wife
Ruth 4:13-17	Ruth has a son, Obed (the grandfather of David)
Ruth 4:18-22	The genealogy of David

Key Verses:

- **Ruth 1:16-18.** But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.
- **Ruth 3:1.** Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?”
- **Ruth 3:11-12.** And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. And now it is true that I am a redeemer.
- **Ruth 4:17.** And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Practical Lessons:

- ☒ Widows can have a powerful influence for good (Ruth 1:11-12; cf. Acts 9:36-43; 1 Timothy 5:3 Titus 2:4-5)
- ☒ Rest and security comes from genuine faith and trust in God (Ruth 2-3). God provides richly for those who will put their trust in Him (Matthew 6:33; Ephesians 3:20-21).
- ☒ Virtue is rewarded (Ruth 3:11, 4:14-19; cf. 2 Peter 1:3-8).
- ☒ Bad circumstances do not destroy the resilient people of God (Ruth 1:20-21; cf. James 1:2-4)
- ☒ A good reputation is of great value (Ruth 3:11; cf. Proverbs 22:1; Philippians 4:5; 1 Peter 2:11-12).
- ☒ Persistence is rewarded (Ruth 1:16-18; cf. Galatians 6:9).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 SAMUEL

Date of Writing: Uncertain, but probably complete by the mid-700s B.C.

Author: Probably Samuel, but with other inspired contributors (see 1 Samuel 25:1; 1 Samuel 28:3). Samuel wrote a book (1 Samuel 10:25), and as the head over a company of prophets (1 Samuel 19:20), he is the logical choice for the primary author.

Theme: Faithful leadership and failed leadership

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also any who wanted to know about God's sovereign leadership over Israel and how Israel came to reject it.

Chapters	Contents
1 Samuel 1	Hannah's vow and Samuel's birth
1 Samuel 2-3	Hannah's prayer of praise; Samuel prophesies against Eli's household
1 Samuel 4	Philistines capture the ark of the covenant; Eli's sons killed
1 Samuel 5-6	God plagues the Philistines for taking the ark; The ark returned
1 Samuel 7	Samuel leads a revival; Israel drives out the Philistines
1 Samuel 8	Samuel makes his sons judges; Israel demands a king
1 Samuel 9-10	God selects Saul to be king; Saul anointed and proclaimed king
1 Samuel 11	Saul saves Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites
1 Samuel 12	Samuel's convicting speech at Saul's coronation
1 Samuel 13	Saul's army; Saul's preemptive, sinful sacrifice at Gilgal
1 Samuel 14	Jonathan saves Israel from the Philistines; Saul's rash vow
1 Samuel 15	Saul spares spoils and the Amalekite king; Saul rejected as king
1 Samuel 16	Samuel anoints David as king; Saul is troubled
1 Samuel 17	David and Goliath
1 Samuel 18-19	David's and Jonathan's friendship; Saul attempts to murder David
1 Samuel 20-21	Jonathan's loyalty to David; David eats the holy bread and flees
1 Samuel 22-23	David's 400 men; Saul murders priests; David saves the city of Keilah

Chapters	Contents
1 Samuel 24-26	David spares Saul twice; David marries Abigail
1 Samuel 27-28	David takes refuge with the Philistines; Saul consults a medium
1 Samuel 29-30	The Philistines reject David; David's men defeat the Amalekites
1 Samuel 31	Saul and his sons die in battle with the Philistines

Key Verses:

- **1 Samuel 3:10.** And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”
- **1 Samuel 15:22-23.** And Samuel said, “Has 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 listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king.
- **1 Samuel 16:7.** But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”
- **1 Samuel 17:26.** And David said to the men who stood by him, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God's timing is perfect, and we must prayerfully trust and obey (1 Samuel 1:1-20; Isaiah 40:31; 2 Peter 3:10).
- ☑ God is in control of the kingdoms of men, even while He allows men a degree of self-governance (1 Samuel 12; Daniel 2:20-23; Romans 13:1). Although there may be many over us in civil authority, our primarily allegiance always must be with God (1 Samuel 12:20-25; Matthew 6:33).
- ☑ We must not be so concerned with being like those around us that we go against the will of God (1 Samuel 8:5; Exodus 23:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14). There will often be nice-sounding excuses for turning away from God (1 Samuel 8:1-4; Acts 5:27-29), but we must resist.
- ☑ God evaluates the heart, and even though we may be little regarded in the eyes of men, we can be great in the sight of our Creator (1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 25:31-40).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 SAMUEL

Date of Writing: Uncertain, but probably complete by the mid-700s B.C.

Author: Uncertain; possibly the prophet Nathan or the prophet Gad; Nathan and Gad chronicled events of David's life (see 1 Chronicles 29:29).

Theme: God builds the kingdom of Israel through the successes of, and despite the failures of, a man after His own heart.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also any who wanted to know about the triumphant and troubled history of David.

Chapters	Contents
2 Samuel 1	David learns of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan; "Song of the Bow"
2 Samuel 2	The men of Judah anoint David as king; Ishbosheth made king of Israel; Israel and Judah begin warring
2 Samuel 3	Abner switches to David's side; Joab kills Abner
2 Samuel 4	Ishbosheth is murdered
2 Samuel 5	David reigns over all Israel; David conquers Jebusites at Jerusalem
2 Samuel 6	The ark of the Lord comes to Jerusalem; Michal hates David
2 Samuel 7	David disallowed to build the temple
2 Samuel 8	David defeats Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, etc.; David's officials
2 Samuel 9	David's kindness to Mephibosheth
2 Samuel 10	David defeats Ammonite and Syrian attackers
2 Samuel 11	David's adultery with Bathsheba; David has Uriah killed
2 Samuel 12	Nathan convicts David; David's son dies; Solomon is born
2 Samuel 13	Amnon rapes Tamar; Absalom murders Amnon and flees to Geshur
2 Samuel 14	Absalom returns to Jerusalem and steals the hearts of many people
2 Samuel 15	Absalom's treason forces David to leave Jerusalem
2 Samuel 16-17	Ziba blesses David; Shimei curses David; Hushai advises Absalom and then warns David

Chapters	Contents
2 Samuel 18	Absalom's force is defeated; Absalom is killed
2 Samuel 19	David mourns for Absalom and returns to Jerusalem
2 Samuel 20	Sheba's rebellion
2 Samuel 21	David avenges the Gibeonites; David's men defeat Philistine giants
2 Samuel 22	David praises God for His deliverance
2 Samuel 23	David's last words; David's mighty men
2 Samuel 24	David numbers the people; God plagues the people

Key Verses:

- **2 Samuel 7:12-13.** When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
- **2 Samuel 12:10-11.** Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' Thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.
- **2 Samuel 12:22-23.** He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."
- **2 Samuel 22:21.** "The Lord dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he rewarded me.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Disastrous sin begins when a person gives himself permission to look where he should not and/or think as he should not (2 Samuel 11:2-5; Mark 7:14-23).
- ☑ We must do good for those who are in need (2 Samuel 9; Galatians 6:10; Matthew 7:12).
- ☑ Sin has far-reaching consequences, which we may fail to take into account (2 Samuel 12:10-12; Galatians 6:7-8; Luke 15:11-18).
- ☑ God is ultimately responsible for all of our success (2 Samuel 22; James 1:17).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 KINGS

Date of Writing: Uncertain, but probably complete by the mid-sixth century B.C. (The two books of Kings were originally one book, as were 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles.)

Author: Uncertain, but probably Jeremiah or Ezra.

Theme: God's great blessing to the faithful; the tragedy of disunity among God's people.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also any who wanted to know about the triumphant and troubled history of Solomon, and the disaster of the divided kingdom.

Chapters	Contents
1 Kings 1	Adonijah presumes to become king; David proclaims Solomon king
1 Kings 2	David instructs Solomon to be faithful; David dies; Solomon executes Adonijah and Shimei; Solomon exiles Abiathar
1 Kings 3	Solomon prays nobly for wisdom, and receives it and more
1 Kings 4	Solomon's administration; The wealth and wisdom of his early reign
1 Kings 5	Solomon's deal with Hiram in preparing to build the temple
1 Kings 6	Solomon builds the temple; The details of its construction
1 Kings 7	Solomon's other building projects; The temple furnishings
1 Kings 8	Solomon brings the ark to the temple and dedicates the temple
1 Kings 9	God appears to Solomon again; Solomon's achievements
1 Kings 10	The queen of Sheba praises Solomon's kingdom
1 Kings 11	Solomon's foreign women turn his heart from God; Adversaries arise in Egypt and in Israel; Ahijah prophesies of Jeroboam's rise; Jeroboam flees from Solomon to Egypt; Solomon dies
1 Kings 12	Israel revolts against Rehoboam; Jeroboam made king over 10 tribes
1 Kings 13	The man of God prophesies against Jeroboam's altar
1 Kings 14	Abijah prophesies against the house of Jeroboam; Jeroboam dies; Rehoboam's disastrous reign in Judah
1 Kings 15	Abijah and Asa reign in Judah; Nadab and Baasha reign in Israel

Chapters	Contents
1 Kings 16	Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab reign in Israel
1 Kings 17	Elijah proclaims a drought; The widow of Zarephath
1 Kings 18	Elijah confronts Ahab and kills the prophets of Baal
1 Kings 19	Elijah's discouragement and escape; Elisha follows Elijah
1 Kings 20	Ahab defeats Ben-Hadad of Syria
1 Kings 21	Jezebel murders Naboth for his vineyard
1 Kings 22	Micaiah warns Ahab; Ahab dies in battle; Jehoshaphat reigns in Judah

Key Verses:

- **1 Kings 2:1-4.** When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, "I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn. . . ."
- **1 Kings 9:4-5.** And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.
- **1 Kings 18:21.** And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must be willing to "drop everything" and serve the Lord (1 Kings 19:19-21; cf. Matthew 4:21-22; 6:33).
- ☑ Parents have a mighty influence, which must be used for good and not ill (1 Kings 3:6; 15:25-26; cf. Ephesians 6:1-4).
- ☑ Wisdom from God is greater than wisdom from any other source (1 Kings 3:3-9; Proverbs 1:1-7; 1 Corinthians 2).
- ☑ We cannot serve two masters (1 Kings 18:21; Matthew 6:24; Romans 12:1-2).
- ☑ We cannot allow worldly people to draw us away from God (1 Kings 11:1-8; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 KINGS

Date of Writing: Uncertain, but probably complete by the mid-sixth century B.C. (The two books of Kings were originally one book, as were 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles.)

Author: Uncertain, but probably Jeremiah or Ezra.

Theme: One people, two kingdoms, and their destruction as a result of sin.

Original Audience: Judah primarily, but also any who wanted to know about the last days of Israel and Judah, and about how the kingdoms eventually fell.

Chapters	Contents
2 Kings 1	God, through Elijah, pronounces judgment on Ahaziah
2 Kings 2	Elijah ascends to heaven; Elisha succeeds him, performing miracles
2 Kings 3	Moab's rebellion against Israel put down
2 Kings 4	Elisha and the widow's oil; Elisha raises the Shunammite's son
2 Kings 5	Naamon's leprosy healed
2 Kings 6	The floating ax head; Syria besieges Samaria
2 Kings 7	The Syrian forces flee, and Israel plunders their camp
2 Kings 8	The death of the Syrian King; Jehoram and Ahaziah reign in Judah
2 Kings 9-10	Jehu anointed king of Israel; Jehu assassinates Ahab's family, as well as Jezebel and Ahaziah, king of Judah; Jehu dies
2 Kings 11	Athaliah reigns in Judah; Joash crowned king of Judah
2 Kings 12	Joash the boy king reigns in Judah; Joash repairs the temple
2 Kings 13	Jehoahaz and Jehoash reign in Israel; Elisha dies
2 Kings 14	Amaziah reigns in Judah; Jeroboam II reigns in Israel
2 Kings 15	Azariah and Jotham reign in Judah; Various kings reign in Israel
2 Kings 16	Ahaz reigns in Judah; Ahaz allies with Assyria against Syria
2 Kings 17	Hoshea reigns in Israel; Assyria conquers Israel
2 Kings 18	Hezekiah reigns in Judah; Sennacherib sends an army against Judah

Chapters	Contents
2 Kings 19	Isaiah assures Hezekiah; Hezekiah's prayer; Sennacherib's defeat
2 Kings 20	Hezekiah's life extended; Hezekiah's mistake and death
2 Kings 21	Manasseh and Amon reign in Judah
2 Kings 22	Josiah reigns in Judah; Hilkiah finds the book of the law
2 Kings 23	Josiah restores true worship and the Passover; Josiah dies
2 Kings 24-25	Nebuchadnezzar conquers Judah and destroys Jerusalem; King Zedekiah and the people carried into Babylonian captivity

Key Verses:

- **2 Kings 17:22-23.** The people of Israel walked in all the sins that Jeroboam did. They did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day.
- **2 Kings 23:24-25.** Moreover, Josiah put away the mediums and the necromancers and the household gods and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might establish the words of the law that were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. Before him there was no king like him, who 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, nor did any like him arise after him
- **2 Kings 24:1-4.** In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldeans and bands of the Syrians and bands of the Moabites and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by his servants the prophets. Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the Lord, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done. . . .

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Departure from God brings eventual ruin (2 Kings 25; Romans 6:23). God's judgment is not meant to surprise us, but will come as predicted (2 Kings 17:23; 2 Peter 3:8-11).
- ☑ We must restore the religion God has authorized (2 Kings 22:3-25; Romans 6:17; 2 John 9; 1 Corinthians 4:6).
- ☑ We may not understand why God commands some activities, but we must obey nonetheless (2 Kings 5:12-14; Mark 16:16).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 CHRONICLES

Date of Writing: Circa 430 B.C.

Author: Uncertain, but probably Ezra.

Theme: A history of Israel from Adam to Solomon, focusing on the successes of David.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know about God's dealings with man and his grace toward Israel.

Chapters	Contents
1 Chronicles 1	The genealogy of Adam's family, through Jacob
1 Chronicles 2	The genealogy of Jacob's family, through David
1 Chronicles 3	The genealogy of David's and Solomon's families
1 Chronicles 4	The genealogy of Judah's and Simeon's families
1 Chronicles 5	The genealogy of Reuben's, Gad's and Manasseh's families
1 Chronicles 6	Levites' history and dwelling places
1 Chronicles 7	The genealogy of Issachar's, Benjamin's, Naphtali's, Manasseh's, Ephraim's, and Asher's families
1 Chronicles 8	The genealogy of King Saul of Benjamin
1 Chronicles 9	Priestly and levitical responsibilities in Jerusalem
1 Chronicles 10	The death of Saul and his sons
1 Chronicles 11	David made king; David's mighty men
1 Chronicles 12	David's army
1 Chronicles 13	David brings the ark from Kirjath Jearim to Jerusalem; Uzza dies
1 Chronicles 14	David defeats the Philistines
1 Chronicles 15-16	David sets up the ark in Jerusalem and institutes worship
1 Chronicles 17	David disallowed to build the temple; God's covenant with David
1 Chronicles 18-20	David's military victories over the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, and Ammonites

Chapters	Contents
1 Chronicles 21	David numbers the people and Israel is punished
1 Chronicles 22	David helps Solomon to prepare for building the temple
1 Chronicles 23-24	The divisions of the Levites and priests for duty
1 Chronicles 25-26	Musicians and gatekeepers for the temple
1 Chronicles 27	Military and tribal leaders; David's administrative officials
1 Chronicles 28	David officially instructs Solomon to build the temple
1 Chronicles 29	Offerings to build the temple; Solomon anointed; David dies

Key Verses:

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- **1 Chronicles 14:10.** And David inquired of God, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" And the Lord said to him, "Go up, and I will give them into your hand."
 - **1 Chronicles 16:29.** Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him! Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;
 - **1 Chronicles 17:11-12.** When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever.
 - **1 Chronicles 28:9-10.** "And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever. Be careful now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God will make His name to be glorified among men (1 Chronicles 17:20-21; 29:10-11; Philippians 2:9-11).
- ☑ Those who serve God faithfully will be blessed in a wide variety of ways (1 Chronicles 17; 29:23; Ephesians 1:3-14).
- ☑ We must not sin, even if commanded to sin (1 Chronicles 21:3-4; Acts 5:29).
- ☑ We must trust in God and not in military strength (1 Chronicles 21; Romans 8:31-39; Ephesians 6:12-13).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 CHRONICLES

Date of Writing: Circa 430 B.C.

Author: Uncertain, but probably Ezra.

Theme: A history of Israel and Judah, from Solomon through the Babylonian exile of Judah.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know details about the Jewish kingdom and about what led to the Babylonian captivity.

Chapters	Contents
2 Chronicles 1	Solomon requests wisdom and builds the military and economy
2 Chronicles 2	Solomon, with Hiram's help, prepares to build the temple
2 Chronicles 3	Solomon builds the temple
2 Chronicles 4	Solomon builds the furnishings for the temple
2 Chronicles 5	Solomon brings the ark of the covenant to the temple
2 Chronicles 6-7	Solomon's speech and prayer; The dedication of the temple
2 Chronicles 8	Solomon's additional achievements; His Egyptian wife
2 Chronicles 9	The Queen of Sheba praises Solomon; His great wealth; His death
2 Chronicles 10	Jeroboam leads a revolt against Rehoboam, Solomon's son
2 Chronicles 11	Rehoboam sets up his administration and builds cities
2 Chronicles 12	Egypt attacks Judah; Rehoboam dies
2 Chronicles 13	Abijah's reign in Judah; Abijah defeats Jeroboam
2 Chronicles 14-15	Asa's good reign and reforms in Judah
2 Chronicles 16	Asa relies on Syria rather than God for protection; Asa dies
2 Chronicles 17	Jehoshaphat's good reign in Judah
2 Chronicles 18	Micaiah's true prophecy; Ahab, king of Israel, dies in battle
2 Chronicles 19-20	Jehoshaphat's reforms and military victories
2 Chronicles 21	Jehoram's evil reign in Judah; God strikes Jehoram; He dies

Chapters	Contents
2 Chronicles 22	Ahaziah's and Athaliah's evil reigns in Judah
2 Chronicles 23-24	Athaliah's death; Joash's good and bad reign; Joash dies
2 Chronicles 25	Amaziah's good and bad reign; Amaziah's wars; He dies
2 Chronicles 26	Uzziah's good and bad reign in Judah; Uzziah dies
2 Chronicles 27	Jotham's good reign in Judah; Jotham dies
2 Chronicles 28	Ahaz's evil reign in Judah; Syria and Israel defeat Judah; Ahaz dies
2 Chronicles 29-31	Hezekiah's good reign and reforms in Judah
2 Chronicles 32	God defeats Sennacherib of Assyria; Hezekiah dies
2 Chronicles 33	Manasseh's bad and good reign; Amon's evil reign in Judah
2 Chronicles 34-35	Josiah's good reign and reforms; Josiah dies in battle
2 Chronicles 36	The reigns and captivities of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin; The rebellion of Judah's king Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem; Babylonian captivity; Cyrus' decree concerning the rebuilding of the temple

Key Verses:

- **2 Chronicles 7:14.** [I]f my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
- **2 Chronicles 34:21.** “For great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do according to all that is written in this book.”
- **2 Chronicles 36:20.** He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia,

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The way of transgressors is hard (2 Chronicles 36:15-21; cf. Proverbs 13:15).
- ☑ The plea to restore true religion—the “Restoration Plea”—is valid (2 Chronicles 34:8-35:19; cf. Romans 6:17).
- ☑ Any sinner may repent and please the Lord (2 Chronicles 33:12-13; Acts 22:1-15).

Bible Basics Bullets:

EZRA

Date of Writing: Circa 430 B.C.

Author: Ezra

Theme: The return of two groups of Israelites from Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem, to rebuild the temple and re-establish observance of the law of Moses.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know details about the first returns from Babylonian captivity under the Zerubbabel and Ezra the priest and scribe.

Chapters	Contents
Ezra 1	Cyrus' decree that Israelites could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple; Donations to support the remnant which returned; Cyrus returns the articles that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple
Ezra 2	The registry of those who returned to Jerusalem
Ezra 3	Jeshua the priest and Zerubbabel restore worship to God and keep the Feast of Tabernacles; Rebuilding of the temple begins
Ezra 4	Local tribes oppose the rebuilding of the temple; Their letter to King Artaxerxes warning of Jewish revolt against Persia; With the king's support, the tribes force the Jews to stop working
Ezra 5	Haggai and Zechariah motivate the Jews to start working again; Tattenai and Shethar-Boznai challenge the legitimacy of the building project, writing to King Darius
Ezra 6	Darius' decree authorizing the continuation of the work; The temple completed and dedicated; The Jews keep the Passover
Ezra 7	Ezra arrives with a letter from Artaxerxes establishing Ezra's authority
Ezra 8	Heads of families who returned with Ezra; The company fasts and prays for protection on the journey to Jerusalem
Ezra 9	Ezra's prayer of penitence in light of Israel's intermarriage with pagan women
Ezra 10	The people repent of ungodly marriages and put away their pagan wives and those born by them

Key Verses:

- **Ezra 1:1-3.** 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, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel — he is the God who is in Jerusalem.
- **Ezra 3:2.** Then arose Jeshua the son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel with his kinsmen, and they built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of God.
- **Ezra 7:9-10.** For on the first day of the first month he began to go up from Babylonia, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the good hand of his God was on him. For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.
- **Ezra 10:3.** Therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the Law.

Practical Lessons:

- ☒ There are disastrous results from failing to study God’s word. The people’s ignorance of Scripture was one of the causes of their captivity in Babylon (Isaiah 5:13), from which Ezra leads a return. When we fail to study and apply the Bible, we are causing ourselves grief and struggle (Hosea 4:6). In the book of Ezra, relearning the law of Moses takes priority (Ezra 7).
- ☒ There are grave consequences for marrying the wrong person (Ezra 10; cf. 1 Kings 11:1-8; Ephesians 5:22-23).
- ☒ There is great power in godly preaching to produce penitence (Ezra 7:6; cf. Isaiah 55:11; 1 Peter 4:11).
- ☒ Sin always brings sorrow (Ezra 9:13; 10:1; cf. Jeremiah 20:18; Romans 6:23), but godly sorrow leads to repentance unto salvation (Ezra 9:15-10:44; cf. 2 Corinthians 7:10).
- ☒ God’s prophecy and providence are decisive. Cyrus’ edict allowing Jews to return to Judea was a direct fulfillment of Jeremiah’s and Isaiah’s predictions of hundreds of years prior to Cyrus’ birth (Ezra 1:1; cf. Jeremiah 25:12; 29:4-10; Isaiah 44:28-45:1).
- ☒ We must be prepared to treat a variety of enemies with respect, but continue to do the Lord’s work despite their challenges (Ezra 4-5; cf. Romans 12:19-21).

Bible Basics Bullets:

NEHEMIAH

Date of Writing: Circa 430 B.C.

Author: Nehemiah, but perhaps with portions written by Ezra

Theme: The return of a third group of Israelites, with Nehemiah, to rebuild Jerusalem.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know details about the rebuilding of Jerusalem by the remnant that returned from captivity, or about the character and accomplishments of Nehemiah and Ezra

Chapters	Contents
Nehemiah 1	Nehemiah, cupbearer to the king of Persia, learns of the dreadful state of things in Judah; He prays for his people
Nehemiah 2	King Artaxerxes sends Nehemiah to Judah to help his people by rebuilding Jerusalem; Nehemiah arrives and views the ruins
Nehemiah 3	Registry of those who led the work on the wall
Nehemiah 4	Sanballat of Samaria and Tobiah the Ammonite plot to stop the work; The people guard while they build
Nehemiah 5	Nehemiah reforms the system whereby Israelites were charging their brethren interest and forcing them to be sold into slavery; Nehemiah's generosity toward the people
Nehemiah 6	Nehemiah thwarts the conspiracy of Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab; The wall is completed in 52 days
Nehemiah 7	Registry of those who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel
Nehemiah 8	Ezra reads the law to the people; Israel keeps the Feast of Tabernacles
Nehemiah 9	The people confess their sins and the sins of Israel throughout its history
Nehemiah 10	A covenant sealed, to ensure faithfulness and provision for the temple service
Nehemiah 11	Registry of those dwelling inside and outside Jerusalem
Nehemiah 12	Registry of the priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel; Nehemiah dedicates the wall

Chapters	Contents
Nehemiah 13	Purification of Ammonites and Moabites from among the people; Nehemiah's reforms in the following areas: (1) Reversing the priest Eliashib's alliance with Tobiah; (2) Giving the Levites their due portion; (3) Collecting the people's tithes; (4) Stopping the buying and selling on the Sabbath; (5) Condemning and stopping intermarriage with pagans

Key Verses:

- **Nehemiah 2:4-5.** Then the king said to me, "What are you requesting?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it."
- **Nehemiah 4:6.** So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.
- **Nehemiah 4:16-18.** From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah, who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other. And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me.
- **Nehemiah 6:2-3.** Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The Lord expects His people to work in His service (Nehemiah 4:6; James 2:14-26), and great things are accomplished when the Lord's people are determined to do His work (Nehemiah 6:15; 1 Peter 1:3-7).
- ☑ Each person must do his own share in the Lord's work (Nehemiah 3; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:5). The dedicated service of each individual is valuable in the Lord's sight (e.g., 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; 2 Corinthians 9:7).
- ☑ Watchfulness against the devil's attacks is essential (Nehemiah 4:16-23). We must be ready to resist the devil no matter how he attempts to bring us down (e.g., Ephesians 6:10-20; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8).

Bible Basics Bullets: ESTHER

Date of Writing: Circa 430 B.C.

Author: Uncertain, possibly Ezra or Mordecai

Theme: God uses His brave servants to deliver His chosen people.

Original Audience: Either Israel, Persia, or both. The account reminds Israel of God's providential rescue of His exiled people from near extinction at the hands of the Persians. The account would also serve to explain to the Persians the background of the Jewish celebration of Purim, which commemorated God's deliverance from Haman's plans (see Esther 9:18-32).

Chapters	Contents
Esther 1	King Ahasuerus banishes Vashti when she refuses to parade herself before his guests
Esther 2	The king loves Esther, a Hebrew more than all the other women, and makes her queen; Esther's cousin Mordecai overhears two doorkeepers discussing a plan to capture Ahasuerus; Mordecai reports the plot and the doorkeepers are hanged; Report of Mordecai's service is recorded in the king's chronicles
Esther 3	Haman is insulted by Mordecai's refusal to bow to him; Haman accuses the Jews of breaking the king's laws and gets him to authorize a law stating that all Jews in the kingdom would be killed on a certain day
Esther 4	Mordecai appeals to Esther to appeal to the king on behalf of the Jews; She agrees, in spite of the danger of going to the king's inner court uninvited
Esther 5	The king accepts Esther's invitation to a banquet; Esther invites Ahasuerus and Haman to a subsequent banquet; Haman has a gallows built, on which he hopes to hang Mordecai
Esther 6	The king hears a reading of his chronicles, is reminded of Mordecai's thwarting of the plot against the king; The king honors Mordecai; Haman unwittingly provides the plan for honoring his enemy Mordecai

Chapters	Contents
Esther 7	Esther reveals to Ahasuerus that she is a Jewess, and that Haman is threatening her people; Haman is hanged on the gallows he designed for Mordecai
Esther 8	The king gives Mordecai the signet ring he had given to Haman; The king allows Mordecai and Esther to write a second decree, authorizing the Jews to defend themselves and, in effect, invalidating Haman's decree
Esther 9	The Jews overpower their enemies; The institution of the feast of Purim
Esther 10	The king advances Mordecai to second in command

Key Verses:

- **Esther 1:10-12.** On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded ... the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, for she was lovely to look at. But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs.
- **Esther 4:14-16.** For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."
- **Esther 8:17.** And in every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict reached, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many from the peoples of the country declared themselves Jews, for fear of the Jews had fallen on them.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God highly values women's modesty (Esther 1:10-12; cf. 1 Timothy 2:9-10; Matthew 5:28).
- ☑ God has plans for His people to accomplish great things for Him, when they bravely live for Him (Esther 4:14-16; Esther 8-9; Matthew 25:14-30). Those who oppose God's plan will be punished, even if they seem to have the upper hand presently (Esther 7:7-10).
- ☑ God, Whose sovereignty extends to every nation, can take a bad situation and use it to bring about a great good (Esther 8:17; Esther 10; cf. Genesis 41:37-57; Romans 8:28).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JOB

Date of Writing: Although Job almost certainly lived during the patriarchal age, the book was probably written or compiled during the era of Solomon, circa 10th century B.C.

Author: Uncertain; perhaps Solomon

Theme: Human faithfulness despite human suffering, and God's sovereignty

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know about the human condition.

Chapters	Contents
Job 1	Satan's attacks on Job's character; Job loses his property and children
Job 2	Satan attacks Job's health; Job's three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) come to counsel with him
Job 3	Job wishes he never had been born
Job 4-5	Eliphaz: Job's suffering is the consequence of his sin, and God chastens Job
Job 6-7	Job proclaims his innocence; Job says that his suffering is comfortless
Job 8	Bildad: Job should repent, and God will restore blessings to him
Job 9-10	Job: God is wise, but there is no mediator between me and God
Job 11	Zophar urges Job to repent
Job 12-14	Job defends his innocence and prays despondently
Job 15	Eliphaz accuses Job of iniquity and failure to understand God's dealings
Job 16-17	Job rebukes his "miserable comforters" and prays for relief from suffering
Job 18	Bildad: The wicked are the ones who receive punishment
Job 19	Job trusts in his Redeemer to rescue him at last
Job 20	Zophar discusses the awful fate of the wicked man
Job 21	Job responds that sometimes the wicked prosper, but will be judged in the end
Job 22	Eliphaz questions Job's character and urges him to repent
Job 23	Job declares that he is faithful to God, and that God is right in His judgments

Chapters	Contents
Job 24	Job observes man's wickedness on Earth
Job 25	Bildad: Man cannot be pure before God
Job 26-27	Job declares the majesty of God and maintains his own integrity
Job 28	Job's discourse on the value of wisdom
Job 29-31	Job summarizes his defense of his character
Job 32	Elihu: Job's three friends have not successfully contradicted him
Job 33	Elihu criticizes Job for contending with God
Job 34-37	Elihu proclaims God's justice and goodness, and condemns self-righteousness
Job 38-41	God answers Job out of the whirlwind and questions him
Job 42	Job repents of overstepping his bounds; God commands Job's three friends to offer a burnt offering and to ask Job to pray for them; God restores Job's losses after he prays for his three friends

Key Verses:

- **Job 1:20-22.** Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.
- **Job 19:25-26.** For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God. . . .
- **Job 23:10.** But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.
- **Job 40:6-7.** Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: "Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The righteous suffer, for God allows His children to be tested to facilitate their growth (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; cf. James 2:1-4; 1 Peter 1:3-9; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:7-11).
- ☑ Our confidence must be primarily in God and not in our family or friends (Job 1:9-10; 29:21-30:15; 2 Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 10:34-38; Luke 14:26).
- ☑ Christ is the only Mediator between God and man (Job 9:1-3, 32-33; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1).

Bible Basics Bullets:

PSALMS

Date of Writing: Compiled ca. 430 B.C., but composed over the years

Author: Various, including David, Moses, Asaph, the “sons of” (including “students of”) Korah, and Solomon

Theme: Various, including worship, creation, salvation from enemies, the wonderful law of God, captivity, the coming Savior, unity of the Lord’s people, the temple, etc.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone interested in the corporate and individual worship of God’s chosen people, and in the history of God’s relationship to mankind.

NOTE: The Psalms are grouped into five books (Psalms 1-41; Psalms 42-72; Psalms 73-89; Psalms 90-106; Psalms 107-150). Each book concludes with a doxology (affirmation of praise to God). This grouping into five books probably had to do with facilitating temple worship, but there is not an obvious topical arrangement. The following chart groups the psalms topically, although there is material on various topics throughout the psalms, and there may be some overlap.

Chapters	Contents
Psalms 3; 14; 22; 31; 38; 39; 42-44; 49; 51; 53-61; 64; 69-71; 73-74; 77; 79-80; 82; 83; 85; 86; 88; 90; 94; 102; 109; 115; 120; 123; 130; 137; 139; 140-143	<i>Laments:</i> This is the largest group of psalms, including both corporate and individual laments. These are variously motivated, often asking God for deliverance.
Psalms 18; 30; 32; 34; 40; 65-67; 75; 92; 107; 108; 116; 118; 124; 129; 136; 138	<i>Thanksgiving Psalms:</i> Grateful reflections on blessings from God.
Psalms 8; 12; 24; 29; 30; 33; 45; 47; 48; 50; 68; 76; 84; 89; 92; 93; 100; 103; 104; 108; 111; 113; 114; 117; 132; 144-150	<i>Hymns of Praise:</i> Psalms that praise God for Who He is, including His roles as Creator and Lord of all.
Psalms 9; 10; 41; 78; 105; 106; 126; 135; 136	<i>Salvation History Psalms:</i> Psalms that rehearse God’s special provision for his people in the past.
Psalms 2; 4; 18-21; 26; 29; 45-48; 72; 76; 81; 84; 87; 93; 95-99; 101; 110; 119; 122; 132	<i>Psalms of Celebration and Affirmation:</i> Psalms addressing such issues as personal and corporate dedication to the covenant, the kingship, or the glory of Jerusalem.

Chapters	Contents
Psalms 1; 5; 25; 36; 37; 49; 52; 73; 94; 101; 112; 127; 128; 133	<i>Wisdom Psalms:</i> Psalms that highlight the merits of wisdom and corresponding faithfulness to God.
Psalms 6; 7; 11; 13; 15-17; 23; 27; 28; 31; 34; 35; 46; 62; 63; 91; 121; 125; 131	<i>Songs of Trust:</i> Psalms that focus on the fact that God can be trusted, even during the difficult times of life.

Key Verses:

- **Psalms 1:1-2.** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- **Psalms 8:1, 3-4.** O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. . . . When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?
- **Psalms 19:7-10.** The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.
- **Psalms 90:1-2.** Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The Messiah came to establish His everlasting kingdom (Psalms 45; 72; 110; 132:11; cf. Matthew 22:44; Acts 2:34-35).
- ☑ God delivers His people, but not always on their preferred timetable (Psalms 13; 46; 70; cf. Romans 8).
- ☑ Unity among God's people is both precious and possible (Psalms 133; cf. John 17:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 2:2).
- ☑ God's revealed will is perfect for leading mankind to the best kind of life (Psalms 119). Thus, we we should study the Law of God (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 4:11).

Bible Basics Bullets:

PROVERBS

Date of Writing: Uncertain, because we have no information about the dates of some authors. Proverbs 25:1 implies that the book was completed no earlier than the reign of King Hezekiah (ca. 700 B.C.).

Author: Solomon, Agur, and Lemuel (perhaps another name for Solomon), and perhaps others.

Theme: Practical principles for daily living; God's revealed wisdom allows us to make sense of the world, and to live the best possible life.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know about the wisdom that God has for His people.

Chapters	Contents
Proverbs 1	A wise man hears instruction, heeding wisdom's call
Proverbs 2	Wisdom is valuable, leading away from immorality and destruction
Proverbs 3	Guidance for the young man; Knowledge originates with God
Proverbs 4	Wisdom provides security throughout life
Proverbs 5	The danger of adultery
Proverbs 6	Dangers of bad promises, laziness, adultery; Seven things God hates
Proverbs 7	The deceptive woman who ensnares an unwise, young man
Proverbs 8	Wisdom is excellent and has always been in the mind of God
Proverbs 9	Those who are simple can learn wisdom's way or they can choose folly
Proverbs 10-22	Wise sayings of Solomon on a wide variety of topics, including honesty, hatred, patience, consequences, pride, mercy, gossip, wealth, husbands and wives, humanism, understanding, youth and old age, drinking, friendship, hypocrisy, child rearing, work, anger, etc.
Proverbs 23-24	Further wise sayings on subjects such as rulers, goals, the afterlife, envy, the value of truth, the danger of alcoholic beverages, etc.
Proverbs 25-29	Further wise saying of Solomon on subjects such as legal matters, messengers, indulgence, contention, hatred, flattery, arrogance, lawlessness, gluttony, guilt, the blessings of faithfulness, generosity toward the poor, parenting, prophecy, justice, etc.

Chapters	Contents
Proverbs 30	Wise sayings of Agur, on subjects such as respecting God's authority, honesty, greed, adultery, and little things that accomplish great tasks
Proverbs 31	The words of Lemuel's mother concerning the danger of alcoholic beverages and the need to help the disadvantaged; The virtuous woman who faithfully takes care of her family

Key Verses:

- **Proverbs 1:5-7.** Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- **Proverbs 3:5-6.** Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.
- **Proverbs 6:16-19.** There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.
- **Proverbs 30:5-6.** Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The Lord is dependable to reward us for our faithful giving (Proverbs 19:17; cf. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Philippians 4:19).
- ☑ Ultimately, the Lord alone is in the position of judging the rightness or wrongness of human actions (Proverbs 16:12; cf. Matthew 20:1-16; John 12:48; Acts 10:42; 1 Peter 4:5).
- ☑ Peace in our homes and hearts is more valuable than extravagant riches (Proverbs 17:1; Luke 6:24-26; Philippians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 6:6, 17; James 5:1-6).
- ☑ Blessings which we may suppose come from our own labor or ingenuity are really from the Lord (Proverbs 19:14; cf. Psalms 85:12; John 3:27; 1 Corinthians 4:7; James 1:16-17).
- ☑ Laziness is ungodly, and unchecked laziness leads to death and destruction (Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4, 26; 13:4; 15:19; 19:15, 23; 20:4; 22:13; cf. Acts 20:35; 1 Timothy 5:8; Titus 1:12; Colossians 3:23).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ECCLESIASTES

Date of Writing: ca. 950 B.C.

Author: Solomon, who charts his own spiritual journey in the book

Theme: Human life is unfulfilling without a relationship with God. (“Under the sun,” or “under heaven,” a recurring phrase in Ecclesiastes, denotes life without God and without hope.)

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know how to be content in life.

Chapters	Contents
Ecclesiastes 1	There is nothing new under the sun; Understanding brings grief and does not satisfy
Ecclesiastes 2	Pleasure does not satisfy; Great accomplishments do not satisfy; Labor does not satisfy; The wise man and the fool both die and are forgotten; God gives whatever pleasures we enjoy under the sun
Ecclesiastes 3	There is an appropriate time for everything; God is sovereign, yet injustice seems to prevail on Earth
Ecclesiastes 4	Much evil is done under the sun; Selfishness does not satisfy; Riches do not satisfy; Friends are valuable
Ecclesiastes 5	People must fear God and keep promises, especially promises made to God; Honors do not satisfy; We will leave all that we have gained on Earth; Joy is available through God
Ecclesiastes 6	Foreigners often consume the riches that God has given to someone under the sun; A man’s time on Earth is temporary
Ecclesiastes 7	Sadness can teach valuable lessons; Rebukes can teach valuable lessons; Practical wisdom is valuable in life, although wise people do not always have more worldly success under the sun
Ecclesiastes 8	A wise person obeys authorities; The wise and the evil both die
Ecclesiastes 9	All are in God’s hands; God provides many physical benefits to those living on Earth; We cannot tell what may happen to us in the future
Ecclesiastes 10	The fool is worse off than the wise, although the foolish sometimes are exalted in society

Chapters	Contents
Ecclesiastes 11	Diligence is valuable; The young especially should seek God, enjoying life while remembering that God is their Judge
Ecclesiastes 12	The young should remember God during the days when they are physically capable of greater service; The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments

Key Verses:

- **Ecclesiastes 1:8-9.** All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.
- **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.** For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.
- **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must keep our eventual death in perspective (Ecclesiastes 3:2; cf. Hebrews 9:27; James 4:14-16; 2 Peter 3:11-13). When we leave this world, we will not be able to take any material possessions with us (Ecclesiastes 5:15; cf. Matthew 6:20-21; 1 Timothy 6:7).
- ☑ When we come to worship, we must come eager to learn rather than with the foolish idea that we already know everything (Ecclesiastes 5:1-3; John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Titus 3:14).
- ☑ Leaders must remain humble and heed wise counsel (Ecclesiastes 4:13; cf. Proverbs 12:15; Matthew 20:25-26; Luke 14:11).
- ☑ We can do everlasting good when we use our resources for the glory of God, but not when we selfishly hoard (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11; cf. 1 Timothy 6:6-10; Ephesians 4:28).
- ☑ Contentment is under our control, for it comes from a relationship with God (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; cf. Deuteronomy 10:12; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:11-13; Hebrews 13:5).

Bible Basics Bullets:

SONG OF SOLOMON

Date of Writing: ca. 950 B.C.

Author: Solomon

Theme: The love of a husband and wife for one another; the sanctity of marriage; the power of faithful love.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also anyone who wanted to know about God's plan for marriage and how marriage blesses the lives of God's people.

Chapters	Contents
Song of Solomon 1	The wedding day of King Solomon and the Shulamite woman
Song of Solomon 2	The Shulamite woman's adoration of Solomon
Song of Solomon 3	The Shulamite woman's reflections on her courtship with Solomon
Song of Solomon 4	Solomon's praise of the Shulamite woman
Song of Solomon 5	The Shulamite woman is saddened by Solomon's absence
Song of Solomon 6	Solomon returns and joyfully praises the Shulamite woman
Song of Solomon 7	Expressions of praise exchanged by Solomon and the Shulamite woman
Song of Solomon 8	The commitment to marriage shared by Solomon and the Shulamite woman

Key Verses:

- **Song of Solomon 2:1-2.** [She:] I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. [He:] As a lily among brambles, so is my love among the young women.
- **Song of Solomon 2:7.** I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases.
- **Song of Solomon 2:16.** My beloved is mine, and I am his. . . .

- **Song of Solomon 8:6-7.** Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God does not view marriage as a less holy state than being single (see 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:4).
- ☑ God's jealousy is holy (Song of Solomon 8:6). God's jealousy is His conviction that what belongs to Him should not be unjustly taken from him (e.g., Deuteronomy 32:16; Exodus 34:14; Ezekiel 8:5-6). We may espouse this kind of righteous jealousy ourselves, as Paul did (2 Corinthians 11:2). God's jealousy is not the same as envy, which is the sinful belief that someone else's possessions should be taken from him and given to oneself (e.g., Matthew 20:1-16; 27:18; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 13:4).
- ☑ God has a high view of marriage according to which a husband and wife are exclusively for one another (Song of Solomon 8:6; cf. Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:1-3). God takes marriage vows very seriously, and so should we (Matthew 19:9; Hebrews 13:4). Premarital sex is outside of God's plan (see Song of Solomon 2:7).
- ☑ Solomon wrote the book, but largely reports his wife's point of view. In marriage, the perspective of both the husband and the wife is important (Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:7).
- ☑ The happiness experienced by Solomon and the Shulamite woman was not derived from wealth, but from their loving commitment to one another and to God. Happiness in life does not derive from wealth, but from having a right relationship to God and His people (Philippians 4:11-13; Colossians 1:11; 1 Peter 1:8; Philemon 7).
- ☑ Both Israel and the church are considered to be symbolically married to God. Those who were "married to God" as part of Israel in the Old Testament, and those who are married to Christ by being part of His bride, the church, must remain faithful to Him (see Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 54:5; 62:5; Ezekiel 23:37; Jeremiah 2:2; Hosea 2:19-20; Mark 12:29-30; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25; Revelation 19:7-8). The bride of Christ must give him undivided devotion, just as the Shulamite gave Solomon her undivided devotion (see 1 Corinthians 7:35; Matthew 6:33; Romans 12:1-2).
- ☑ Just as the Shulamite woman and Solomon found great pleasure in following God's plan for marriage, we can find great happiness in following God's plan for all relationships, including the marriage bond (John 10:10; Ecclesiastes 12:13).
- ☑ Love is the greatest, most powerful virtue of all (1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 John 5:3). Love results in sacrifice (Song of Solomon 2:4). We find the greatest example of this in God's sacrifice on behalf of humanity (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ISAIAH

Date of Writing: ca. 700 B.C.

Author: Isaiah

Theme: National punishment for sin, and the deliverance of God's people through His Son.

Original Audience: Those of both the northern and southern tribes (before, during, and after their exile), but also any who wanted to know about God's righteousness and the coming salvation for all mankind. This salvation would be through the Messiah and His kingdom.

Chapters	Contents
Isaiah 1	Judah's wickedness and false worship; Opportunity for salvation
Isaiah 2	The house of God will be established in Jerusalem; The day of the Lord
Isaiah 3-5	Judgment on Judah; The Lord's disappointing vineyard
Isaiah 6	God calls Isaiah to be a prophet
Isaiah 7	Isaiah's prophecy to Judah's king Ahaz; The Immanuel prophecy
Isaiah 8	Israel's coming destruction at the hand of Assyria
Isaiah 9-10	The coming Son; The punishment of Samaria and Assyria
Isaiah 11-12	The Branch of Jesse, Who is worthy of praise
Isaiah 13-17	The Medes as God's instrument; The destruction of various nations
Isaiah 18-20	Prophecies against Ethiopia and Egypt; Blessings for those who repent
Isaiah 21-24	The fall of Babylon; Proclamations against Edom, Arabia, Tyre, Jerusalem
Isaiah 25-26	The authority of God and His salvation for those who serve Him
Isaiah 27-29	Woes to Ephraim and Jerusalem; Restoration in the long-term
Isaiah 30-32	The foolishness of trusting in Egypt or military might; God's grace
Isaiah 33	A prayer to the Lord, the Conqueror of evil, including Judah
Isaiah 34-35	God's judgment on Edom; God's restoration of Jerusalem
Isaiah 36-37	Sennacherib boasts against Judah, but an angel kills 185,000 Assyrians
Isaiah 38	God agrees to extend Hezekah's life by 15 years

Chapters	Contents
Isaiah 39	Hezekiah exposes his treasures to the Babylonian envoy; Isaiah prophesies Judah's destruction at the hand of the Babylonians
Isaiah 40-41	Comfort and assurance for Israel in the long-term; The futility of idolatry
Isaiah 42-44	The Lord will help His people, particularly through His Servant
Isaiah 45	Cyrus will return Jews to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and temple
Isaiah 46-47	God is greater than idols; He will humiliate Babylon and save Israel
Isaiah 49-50	The Servant Who will bring salvation to all peoples
Isaiah 50-53	God comforts Jerusalem and saves through the Suffering Servant
Isaiah 54-56	God does not forsake His people; He provides salvation for Gentiles
Isaiah 57-59	The false religion of idolatry; The false religion of hypocrisy
Isaiah 60-62	The Servant's salvation for all; His everlasting covenant
Isaiah 63-66	The Lord's salvation and judgment; True and false worship

Key Verses:

- **Isaiah 9:6-7.** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.
- **Isaiah 53:4-5.** Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God's concern has always been with the salvation of all mankind, and not just with one group (Isaiah 2:1-2; 49:6; 60; Acts 17:30; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:47). As His servants, we must take the gospel to all (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 10:44-48).
- ☑ It is possible to worship with the appropriate forms, but with an unrighteous heart (Isaiah 1:12-20; 29:13; 66:1-4; John 4:24; Matthew 15:8). We must avoid such vain worship.
- ☑ We must be thankful for the pre-planned sacrifice of God's Suffering Servant, our Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4; 1 John 4:10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JEREMIAH

Date of Writing: Completed circa 570 B.C.

Author: Jeremiah

Theme: Judgment on Judah's sin, and hope for their redemption.

Original Audience: Judah primarily. However, Jeremiah's prophetic work also targeted a variety of nations to which God was attentive.

Chapters	Contents
Jeremiah 1	God calls Jeremiah to be His prophet; God inspires Jeremiah
Jeremiah 2	This sins of Judah that warrant God's punishing it
Jeremiah 3-4	Jeremiah calls Judah to repent and promises the invasion of Jerusalem
Jeremiah 5-6	The evil of God's people and their coming destructors from the north
Jeremiah 7-8	Hypocrisy in Judah's religion; The failure of false prophecy
Jeremiah 9-10	The folly of the people's sins; The coming captivity of Judah
Jeremiah 11-12	Judah has broken God's covenant; Jeremiah's life is threatened
Jeremiah 13	The symbols of the sash and the wine bottles; The need for humility
Jeremiah 14-15	Judah will be destroyed by sword and pestilence
Jeremiah 16	Jeremiah is to live a celibate life; God will bring His people back to Judah
Jeremiah 17	Jeremiah calls Judah to respect the Sabbath law
Jeremiah 18-19	The symbol of the potter and the clay; The symbol of the broken flask
Jeremiah 20	Jeremiah put in the stocks; Jeremiah's determination despite persecution
Jeremiah 21-23	Jeremiah's prophecies to the royal families; The coming "branch" of David
Jeremiah 24-25	The symbol of two baskets of figs; Upcoming 70 years' captivity in Babylon
Jeremiah 26-27	Jeremiah saved from martyrdom; The symbol of the bonds and yokes
Jeremiah 28-29	Hananiah's false prophecy and death; Jeremiah's letter to Judah's captives
Jeremiah 30-33	Judah's remnant will return; The new covenant

Chapters	Contents
Jeremiah 34-35	Prophecy against Zedekiah; Treatment of slaves; Lesson of the Rechabites
Jeremiah 36-38	Baruch's scroll destroyed; Jeremiah imprisoned; Counsel to Zedekiah
Jeremiah 39-40	Jerusalem falls; Jeremiah in Gedaliah's custody
Jeremiah 41-42	Ishmael's rebellion put down by Johanan; Jeremiah forbids flight to Egypt
Jeremiah 43-44	Jeremiah taken to Egypt; Jeremiah's prophecy against the Jews in Egypt
Jeremiah 45-51	God assures Baruch; Prophecies to various nations
Jeremiah 52	A review of the fall of Jerusalem; King Jehoiachin released from prison

Key Verses:

- **Jeremiah 10:23.** I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.
- **Jeremiah 20:9.** If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.
- **Jeremiah 31:31-34.** "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God's people must proclaim His message to the lost even when it is unpopular (Jeremiah 18:18-23; 20; 36:20-26; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2).
- ☑ True teaching must be distinguished from false teaching (Jeremiah 7; 28; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 9-11).
- ☑ Those who persist in evil practices will be punished, even if they seem to prosper in the moment (Jeremiah 12; 50; Psalms 73; John 5:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 4:4-5).

Bible Basics Bullets: LAMENTATIONS

Date of Writing: ca. 570 B.C.

Author: No author is named in the book, but the author is probably Jeremiah (cf. 2 Chronicles 35:25; Lamentations 3:1; Jeremiah 9:1). There are many similarities between the two books, and the two books were written on the same occasion.

Theme: The love and justice of God; Sorrow over sin and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Original Audience: Judah and Israel primarily, but also anyone who is interested in God's help in a time of suffering and God's plan for mankind.

Chapters	Contents
Lamentations 1	Mourning in reflecting on the destruction of Jerusalem; Jerusalem is like a weeping widow, and there are none to comfort her
Lamentations 2	God taking on the role of an enemy against His people; The "daughter of Zion" is covered with a cloud; The Lord has fulfilled His promises, even though it meant the destruction of the temple and the starvation of Jerusalem's people
Lamentations 3	The prophet expresses Jerusalem's plight with his own voice; The Lord does not delight in punishing people
Lamentations 4	The degradation of Jerusalem and God's iniquitous people; Jerusalem is like gold that has changed into nothing better than clay pots; Compassionate women have been reduced to cannibals
Lamentations 5	Judah's late confession of sins; Acknowledgment of the harm of sins; A prayer for Israel's restoration;

Key Verses:

- **Lamentations 1:6.** From the daughter of Zion all her majesty has departed. Her princes have become like deer that find no pasture; they fled without strength before the pursuer.
- **Lamentation 2:5.** The Lord has become like an enemy; he has swallowed up Israel; he has swallowed up all its palaces; he has laid in ruins its strongholds, and he has multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

- **Lamentations 2:20.** “Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint for hunger at the head of every street.
- **Lamentations 3:22-23.** The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.”
- **Lamentations 3:25-26.** The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
- **Lamentations 5:21.** Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old. . . .

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God wants His people to mourn over sin (Lamentations 1:8; 2:19; 5:15-18; Psalms 51:17; Isaiah 61:2-3; Matthew 5:4; John 16:20; 2 Corinthians 7:10; James 4:9-10).
- ☑ The correct response to suffering in life is to turn to God (Lamentations 2:19-20; cf. Job 19; 1 Peter 4).
- ☑ God does not delight in punishing His people. Instead, His inspired messenger mourns over the lost nation (Lamentations 3:31-33; Romans 12:15; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).
- ☑ Sin brings great tribulation and sorrow, often much worse consequences than the prospective sinner anticipated (Lamentations 4:11; 5:7-9; Proverbs 13:15; Hosea 8:7; Luke 15:14-17).
- ☑ Sin on the part of God’s people leads sinners to blaspheme (Lamentations 1:8; 2:15; Romans 2:24; Titus 2:1-5).
- ☑ Divine chastening is part of God’s plan to help His people in their spiritual growth (Lamentations 3; cf. Hebrews 12:5-6).
- ☑ Children of God can fall from grace (Lamentations 1:7-8; 4:16; 5:16; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 3:1-2; 12:15; 2 Peter 3:17).
- ☑ There is always hope for those who are willing to turn to the Lord (Lamentations 3:19-66; 1 Kings 8:46-53; Acts 2:38; 3:19-20).
- ☑ Each person must personally examine his own lifestyle and make corrections according to God’s word (Lamentations 3:40; Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 6:4).

Bible Basics Bullets:

EZEKIEL

Date of Writing: The book was completed around 570 B.C., but Ezekiel's prophecies date from 593-571 B.C. (surrounding the climactic fall of Jerusalem in 586).

Author: Ezekiel, the priest and prophet

Theme: The glory of God; Knowledge of the Lord as the one true God.

Original Audience: Exiled Jews primarily, but also any who wanted to know about God's character, and the coming restoration of the Jews in Jerusalem.

Chapters	Contents
Ezekiel 1	The power and majesty of God revealed to Ezekiel in a vision
Ezekiel 2-3	Ezekiel commissioned to be a watchman to urge Israel to repentance
Ezekiel 4-6	Ezekiel portrays the siege of Jerusalem and God's punishment of Judah
Ezekiel 7	Ezekiel surveys Judah's abominations and aspects of its punishment
Ezekiel 8	Ezekiel reviews idolatrous abominations that the Jews put in the temple
Ezekiel 9-10	The wicked are slain and the glory of the Lord departs from the temple
Ezekiel 11	Judgment on wicked counselors; God's promise to restore Israel
Ezekiel 12-14	Ezekiel portrays Judah's captivity; Judgment on false prophets and the idolatrous
Ezekiel 15	Judah is like a vine that is cast out
Ezekiel 16	Ezekiel reviews God's generational care for Israel and her rebellion
Ezekiel 17	Ezekiel's riddle about the eagles and the vine
Ezekiel 18	A comparison between the righteous and the unrighteous
Ezekiel 19-23	The rebellions and degradations of Judah; Babylon as God's sword
Ezekiel 24	The symbol of the cooking pot; The death of Ezekiel's wife
Ezekiel 25-32	Prophecies against and lamentations for a variety of nations, including Egypt, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, and Philistia
Ezekiel 33-34	Ezekiel's role as a watchman; God as the righteous shepherd

Chapters	Contents
Ezekiel 35-36	Future punishment of Edom; Future blessing on Israel
Ezekiel 37	God takes Ezekiel to the valley of dry bones that come to life
Ezekiel 38-39	Ezekiel's vision of the victorious battle against Gog and Magog (i.e., nations that will oppose Christianity)
Ezekiel 40-44	Ezekiel's vision of the pattern for the rebuilding of the temple
Ezekiel 45-48	Ezekiel's vision of the restoration of God's people.

Key Verses:

- **Ezekiel 18:4, 20.** Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die. . . . The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.
- **Ezekiel 33:11.** Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?
- **Ezekiel 36:23-26.** And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must warn those who are in sin before it is too late (Ezekiel 33:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:1-5).
- ☑ Each person is individually responsible for his own sin—not the sin of his parents (Ezekiel 18; Ezekiel 33:10-20; 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- ☑ Just as God acts perfectly in accordance with His own will, we should strive to act in accordance with His will (Ezekiel 20:44; cf. Exodus 3:14-15; Matthew 5:48).
- ☑ We must love and honor the Holy Spirit, who is mentioned many times in Ezekiel (e.g., 3:12, 14; 11:1; 11:5; 37:14; 39:29; 43:5; cf. Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 10:29).

Bible Basics Bullets:

DANIEL

Date of Writing: ca. 530 B.C.

Author: Daniel

Theme: The Lord rules over the kingdoms of men; The Lord's coming, permanent kingdom.

Original Audience: Exiled Jews in Babylon primarily, but perhaps also Gentiles who were interested in the religion of Daniel the governor, or in the unusual events in the Babylonian empire. Also, Daniel's book would have been of interest to those who returned to Jerusalem at Cyrus' command, as well as to any others who were interested in God's plans for His people.

Chapters	Contents
Daniel 1	Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, obey God and prove themselves before Nebuchadnezzar
Daniel 2	Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream, predicting the Lord's endless kingdom; Nebuchadnezzar promotes Daniel and his three friends
Daniel 3	Daniel's three friends refuse to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image; The Lord saves them from the fiery furnace; Nebuchadnezzar praises God
Daniel 4	Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, predicting the king's humiliation, in which he will do as a beast of the field does; Nebuchadnezzar is humiliated, then humbles himself and praises God
Daniel 5	Belshazzar (Nebuchadnezzar's son) holds a feast, at which the handwriting on the wall signals the conquering of Babylon by Darius the Mede; Belshazzar is slain and Babylon is overthrown
Daniel 6	The satraps plot to send Daniel to the lion's den; The Lord saves Daniel from the lion's den; Darius makes a decree honoring God
Daniel 7	Daniel's vision of the four beasts; Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man
Daniel 8	Daniel's vision of the ram and goat; Gabriel's interpretation of the vision
Daniel 9	Daniel's prayer for Israel, confessing sin and asking God to restore Jerusalem; Gabriel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, culminating in the death of the Anointed One

Chapters	Contents
Daniel 10-11	Daniel's vision of the glorious Man; Prophecies concerning Persia, Greece, Syria, and Egypt
Daniel 12	Daniel's vision about the end of time, including the resurrection of the dead

Key Verses:

- **Daniel 2:20-23.** Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter.
- **Daniel 2:44.** And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever. . . .
- **Daniel 6:25-27.** Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must determine that we will serve God and resist temptations long prior to the time when those temptations confront us (Daniel 1:8; 3:16-18; cf. Ephesians 6:10-20).
- ☑ Ungodly people can be impressed and humbled by the power of God (Daniel 4:34-36; 6:24-28; cf. 1 Kings 21:25-29; 2 Chronicles 33:10-20; Acts 16:25-34; Philippians 4:22).
- ☑ Christians must remember that they are citizens of the one kingdom that is greater than all other kingdoms (Daniel 2:1-45; cf. Hebrews 12:28).
- ☑ We will be rewarded for our soul-winning efforts (Daniel 12:3; cf. Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 19:27-30; 2 Timothy 2:1-3).
- ☑ Regular, private, sincere, personal prayer is a vital part of the godly life (Daniel 6:10; cf. Matthew 6:5-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

Bible Basics Bullets:

HOSEA

Date of Writing: ca. 700 B.C.

Author: Hosea

Theme: God's loyalty and love for His people; The need to repent of spiritual adultery.

Original Audience: Israel (the 10 northern tribes), but also any who wanted to know about God's patience, the rebellion that led God to finally overthrow Israel, and God's plan to ultimately redeem Israel through the Messiah; Also any who wanted to know details about the Canaanite idolatry that so attracted and perverted God's people.

Chapters	Contents
Hosea 1	Hosea marries Gomer, a wife of harlotry, and they have two children with the names "No mercy" and "Not my people"
Hosea 2	Israel's worship of Baal and God's mercy toward the people
Hosea 3	Hosea buys back Gomer from another man, portraying Israel's future redemption
Hosea 4	Conflict, ignorance of God's law, idolatry, and harlotry are typical of Israel
Hosea 5	Assyria cannot save Israel because Israel is faithless and prideless, having made choices based only on human precepts
Hosea 6	Hosea's call for Israel and Judah to repent
Hosea 7	Israel has mixed itself among the pagan peoples and looks to them for aid, but God's discipline is sovereign over all nations
Hosea 8	Israel will receive the just consequences for having forgotten its Maker
Hosea 9	Israel will have to wander among the other nations
Hosea 10	It is time for Israel to seek the Lord, although rebellion is its longstanding practice
Hosea 11	God does not want to give up Israel; He eventually will restore Israel
Hosea 12	The nation of Israel has forsaken the godly heritage of its founder, Jacob
Hosea 13	Spiritual death has occurred in Israel due to Baal worship; Israel rebelled foolishly in demanding an earthly king

Chapters	Contents
Hosea 14	Repentance is still possible, and help from God still available, for those who will give up idolatry

Key Verses:

- **Hosea 4:6.** My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
- **Hosea 8:7-8.** For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; it shall yield no flour; if it were to yield, strangers would devour it. Israel is swallowed up; already they are among the nations as a useless vessel.
- **Hosea 11:8.** How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? [NOTE: Admah and Zeboiim were cities that were destroyed alongside Sodom and Gomorrah (Deuteronomy 29:23).] My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender.
- **Hosea 13:14.** Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from Death? O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We sometimes find Old Testament statements that symbolically predict an event in the New Testament. For example, Matthew 2:15 cites Hosea 11:1 as being about Jesus' return from Egypt to Palestine, although Hosea's immediate meaning has to do with Israel gaining its freedom from Egypt in the days of Moses.
- ☑ Ignorance of God's word threatens our spiritual lives (Hosea 4:6; cf. Psalms 119:11; Isaiah 5:13; 2 Timothy 2:15).
- ☑ We cannot avoid reaping what we have sowed (Hosea 8:7; cf. Luke 8:4-15; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 6:7-8).
- ☑ We must not rely on human leaders instead of relying on God (Hosea 8:10; 13:11; cf. Luke 20:19-26; Acts 5:29).
- ☑ God hates adultery, and so all married people must avoid temptation to commit this sin (Hosea 2:1-13; Matthew 5:27-32; 15:19-20; 19:9; 1 Peter 2:14; Revelation 2:22).
- ☑ Our heavenly Father allows us to be disciplined, but He loves us even when we are in rebellion against Him (Hosea 2:14-23; 11:8; cf. Romans 3:25; 5:6-10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JOEL

Date of Writing: Uncertain, but probably around 800 B.C.

Author: Joel, the son of Pethuel (there are 12 men in the Bible with the name of Joel)

Theme: “The day of the Lord”—In His own time God brings discipline, and salvation for those who will repent.

Original Audience: The nation of Israel, but also anyone who wanted to know about the destructive locust plague that came upon Palestine; Also anyone interested in the coming of the Lord.

Chapters	Contents
Joel 1	The terrible locust plague, foreshadowing the Lord’s coming judgment; The need for religious restoration
Joel 2	The day of the Lord; The eventual healing of the land; Prophecy concerning the pouring out of God’s Spirit on all flesh
Joel 3	God is the judge of all nations (e.g., Edom, Egypt, Philistia, Israel), including the enemies of the Israelites; The valley of decision

Key Verses:

- **Joel 2:28-32.** “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. . . . And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God requires not only the outward forms of worship, but also devoted hearts (Joel 2:13; cf. Matthew 15:8-9; John 4:24; Ephesians 5:19).
- ☑ God has always had in His mind the plan for the church of which we may be members today (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:16-21; Romans 10:13), so we must love the church (1 Peter 2:17).
- ☑ We must make a decision about God (Joel 2:14; cf. Joshua 24:15; Matthew 11:28; 12:30).

Bible Basics Bullets:

AMOS

Date of Writing: ca. 755 B.C.

Author: Amos

Theme: God requires that sin be rejected and that His people treat one another justly.

Original Audience: The Northern Kingdom (Israel) primarily, but also other nations.

Chapters	Contents
Amos 1-2	The sins of Israel's neighbors (e.g., Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah) and their punishment
Amos 3-6	The sins of Israel (e.g., oppressing the poor, accepting bribes, fornication, materialism) and her punishment—defeat at the hands of the Assyrians
Amos 7-8	Amos' visions, symbolizing the punishment that would come upon the Israelites; Amaziah the priest confronts Amos
Amos 9	The destruction of Israel vividly portrayed; The coming restoration of "David's tabernacle" (the founding of the church)

Key Verses:

- **Amos 6:1.** "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria. . . ."
- **Amos 7:14.** Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I was no prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. But the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The gospel is for all (Amos 9:11-12; cf. Acts 15:16-18; Matthew 28:19-20).
- ☑ Revelation from God is precious (Amos 8:11-12; cf. Proverbs 29:18; 1 Corinthians 1:6-16).
- ☑ People often are drawn to God more during hardship than during easy times (Amos 6:1; Matthew 19:23-24).
- ☑ We must be neither indifferent nor selfish (Amos 6:1-6; cf. Luke 6:24-26; Matthew 5:4).

Bible Basics Bullets:

OBADIAH

Date of Writing: Probably just after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem (586 B.C.).

Author: Obadiah

Theme: Brotherhood and humility

Original Audience: The Edomites (descendants of Esau), but also Israelites who needed to know that God had not abandoned them. There had been a longstanding feud between Edom and Israel; Obadiah's message to both is that God ultimately is on the side of the faithful.

Chapters	Contents
Obadiah 1:1-14	Edom will be punished by God (through pillaging, disloyal allies) because of her cruelties toward Israel and the pride that led her to forget God
Obadiah 1:15-21	Israel will be restored, inhabiting the promised land once again

Key Verses:

- **Obadiah 1:3.** The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?"
- **Obadiah 1:10-12.** Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever. On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. But do not gloat over the day of your brother in the day of his misfortune; do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their ruin. . . .

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must not find joy in the misfortune of others, but rather seek to help them (Obadiah 1:10-14; cf. Numbers 20:20-21; Amos 1:11; Proverbs 17:5, 17; Galatians 6:10).
- ☑ God knows what we do, and so we should act accordingly (Obadiah 1:1; cf. Psalms 139:7; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 4:5).
- ☑ Pride goes before a fall (Obadiah 1:3; cf. Proverbs 3:5; Matthew 5:3; 1 Corinthians 10:12; James 4:6).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JONAH

Date of Writing: ca. 750 B.C.

Author: Jonah

Theme: Political loyalties must not outweigh loyalty to God, nor the urgency of evangelism.

Original Audience: Israel primarily, but also any who wanted to know about God's concern for Gentile nations.

Chapters	Contents
Jonah 1	In disobedience Jonah refuses to preach to the Ninevites and instead takes a ship to Tarshish; God sends a storm; The mariners throw Jonah overboard and a great fish swallows him
Jonah 2	Jonah prays (largely from the Psalms) for salvation and God tells the fish to vomit Jonah onto the dry land
Jonah 3	Jonah preaches repentance to the Ninevites; They repent and God relents from the disaster that He had planned for them
Jonah 4	Disappointed that God did not destroy Nineveh, Jonah pouts; God sends a plant to shade him; When the plant dies Jonah is sad, and God asks Jonah if it is right to pity a perishing plant but not perishing people

Key Verses:

- **Jonah 2:2.** "I called out to the Lord, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice."
- **Jonah 3:6.** The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ There is always a ship to Tarshish—a way for us to be lost if we choose it (Jonah 1:3; Genesis 4:7; James 4:7-8; 1 Peter 5:8).
- ☑ Sinners are valuable to God, and so we must believe in the possibility of their repentance (Jonah 3:9-10; Jonah 4:11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Peter 3:9).

Bible Basics Bullets:

MICAH

Date of Writing: ca. 700 B.C.

Author: Micah of Moresheth

Theme: The wrath and mercy of God

Original Audience: Israel and Judah primarily, but also anyone interested in God's character.

Chapters	Contents
Micah 1-2	First speech: Mourning for coming destruction; Woe to those who do evil; God's view of false prophets; The Lord's ultimate restoration of Israel
Micah 3-5	Second speech: Wicked rulers who hurt the people and prophets who deceive; A coming famine of prophecy; Prophecy of the building of the Lord's house in Jerusalem; Prophecy of the Lord being born in Bethlehem
Micah 6-7	Third speech: God's complaint against unfaithful Israel; The need for sincere worship that mirrors a submissive lifestyle; The ethical sins of Israel, including lying, bribery, contempt of family members, etc.; God will forgive Israel in the end, and nations will see God's glory

Key Verses:

- **Micah 6:6-8.** "With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, 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?" He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ True religion involves not only the proper formalities of worship, but also the engagement of the heart in a faithful life (Micah 6:6-8; cf. Isaiah 1:11-20; Matthew 15:8; John 4:23-24).
- ☑ The effect of Christ's presence in our lives is peace (Micah 5:4-5; cf. Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:14; Romans 10:15). His kingdom of peace, of which we are members, never can be destroyed, and represents an open invitation to salvation for all people (Micah 4:1-5; cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 3:28). We must take this good news to the lost (Romans 10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

NAHUM

Date of Writing: ca. 620 B.C.

Author: Nahum of Elkosh

Theme: Every generation needs to be taught and converted. (Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, but in less than 200 years Nineveh was again lost in wickedness.)

Original Audience: Nineveh primarily, but also Israel, and any who wanted to know about God's concern for Gentile nations and the need to remain faithful after committing to God.

Chapters	Contents
Nahum 1	The judgment of God—His avenging wrath, carried out with amazing force; His control over natural forces; His protection of those who serve Him
Nahum 2	Specific applications of God's judgment—He plans to restore Jacob's people; He plans to destroy thoroughly Jacob's enemy, Nineveh; This "city of lions" no longer will be feared
Nahum 3	The siege and fall of Nineveh—God will shame Nineveh for its wickedness and make it an embarrassment among the nations; Nineveh's allies will not help her

Key Verses:

- **Nahum 1:7-8.** The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Repentance must be genuine and produce fruits as evidence of a change of heart (see Matthew 3:8; Acts 8:14-24; 17:30-31).
- ☑ No gates or barriers can restrict the great God we serve (Nahum 3:13; cf. Romans 8:37-39).
- ☑ We must work while God's patience is still extended to lost humanity, for God's justice eventually must be served fully (Nahum 1:1-3; cf. Isaiah 30:18; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Peter 3:9-10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

HABAKKUK

Date of Writing: ca. 600 B.C.

Author: Habakkuk

Theme: God's justice eventually will be satisfied, even if it seems that evil is prevailing.

Original Audience: Judah primarily, which soon would be carried off into Babylonian captivity; also Babylon herself and other nations who would hear the message that the Lord was in control.

Chapters	Contents
Habakkuk 1	Habakkuk's first question: "Why do the wicked in Judah prosper?"; God's answer: "I am raising up the Chaldeans (Babylonians) to punish the wicked." Habakkuk's second question: "Why would you use people <i>more</i> wicked than Israel to punish Israel?"
Habakkuk 2	God's response to Habakkuk's second question: "Righteous people will be rewarded eventually, and the wicked will be punished eventually."
Habakkuk 3	Habakkuk's prayer: "May the glory of the Lord triumph, working the salvation of His people. We must rejoice in the Lord even as we wait for His ultimate will to be done."

Key Verses:

- **Habakkuk 1:5-6.** "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own."
- **Habakkuk 2:20.** "But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We may be confident that God's justice will be served (Habakkuk 2:2-20; cf. Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:10-15).
- ☑ We may question God reverently; i.e., we may ask for wisdom and providential help as we study His word (Habakkuk 1:2-4, 12-17; cf. Job 10; Matthew 26:39; 27:46; James 1:5).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ZEPHANIAH

Date of Writing: ca. 600 B.C.

Author: Zephaniah

Theme: The essentiality of repentance in order to avoid God's judgment; God's fervent desire to restore penitent sinners.

Original Audience: Judah primarily, but also all those who wanted to know about how God responds to penitent sinners.

Chapters	Contents
Zephaniah 1	Zephaniah's warning of impending judgment: The "day of the Lord" will come, when idolatry in Judah will be punished; Even high-ranking officials will become captives
Zephaniah 2	Zephaniah's call for Judah to repent: A remnant of penitent Jews will be returned to the land; Assyria and Ethiopia also will be punished
Zephaniah 3	The righteous character of the faithful people who will be returned to the land.

Key Verses:

- **Zephaniah 2:3.** Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord.
- **Zephaniah 2:9.** "Therefore, as I live," declares the Lord of hosts ... "The remnant of my people shall plunder them, and the survivors of my nation shall possess them."

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ God wants to save us, though we be part of "the remnant," a small, faithful minority of the population (Zephaniah 2:1-3; Matthew 7:13-14; Luke 13:23-24).
- ☑ Sin in our lives results in great disaster ultimately, even if it appears that we enjoy momentary success (Zephaniah 2:12-15; cf. Luke 15:11-17; Hebrews 11:25).
- ☑ Money will not save anyone from divine judgment (Zephaniah 1:8; Matthew 6:19-20; Luke 18:18-30; 1 Timothy 6:10; James 5:1-6).

Bible Basics Bullets:

HAGGAI

Date of Writing: ca. 520 B.C.

Author: Haggai

Theme: Do the Lord's work; Receive the Lord's blessing.

Original Audience: Primarily the Jews who recently returned from Babylonian exile but needed encouragement to finish rebuilding the temple; also anyone who was interested in the urgency of the mission of those post-exilic Jews.

Chapters	Contents
Haggai 1	Haggai relays God's command to rebuild the temple; God will bless the people when they stop focusing only on their own fine houses and focus on the house of the Lord; Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the priest obey this command, leading the people to work on the temple
Haggai 2:1-9	God promises that the rebuilt temple will be filled with His glory, and that the glory of the second temple will be greater than that of the first
Haggai 2:10-23	The people are defiled and must repent if their worship is to be acceptable; God promises to bless the people and to use Zerubbabel to lead them in the right way (Zerubbabel is in the genealogy of Jesus [see Matthew 1:12-13; Luke 3:27]).

Key Verses:

- **Haggai 1:7-8.** "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord" (cf. Ezra 5:1-2).
- **Haggai 2:7-9.** And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. . . . The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts."

Practical Lesson:

- ☑ If our priorities are right, we will not put off doing what is most important (Haggai 1:3-4; cf. Matthew 6:33; 16:26; 22:36-40; Romans 12:1-2).

Bible Basics Bullets:

MALACHI

Date of Writing: ca. 425 B.C.

Author: Malachi

Theme: The messenger of the Lord (Malachi means “my messenger,” and Malachi prophesies of the coming of another messenger, John the Baptist [Malachi 3:1]).

Original Audience: Primarily Jews returned from exile who were forgetting the love of God; but also anyone who was interested in the religious and political status of the post-exilic Jews.

Chapters	Contents
Malachi 1	Malachi reminds the Jews that God has loved them; The Jews’ forgetting of God’s love has led them to offer polluted, blemished sacrifices in the rebuilt temple; God cannot accept such worship
Malachi 2	Malachi says that the priesthood has become corrupt; Malachi describes what the priesthood should be; The people’s infidelity to God makes Him weary of their prayers
Malachi 3	Malachi says that a messenger will come and prepare the way before the Lord suddenly comes to His temple; God does not change, although man changes; Judah has robbed God by forsaking their tithes; The people complain against God; God’s book of remembrance for the saved
Malachi 4	The coming day of judgment, preceded by the coming of “Elijah”

Key Verses:

- **Malachi 1:2.** “I have loved you,” says the Lord. But you say, “How have you loved us?”
- **Malachi 3:8.** Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must never profane the name of God by our words or actions. For example, we must never worship insincerely (Malachi 1:11-12; cf. Matthew 15:8-9).
- ☑ It is not enough for us to *say* that we love God. Our love must show itself in obedience (Malachi 1:7-14; cf. John 14:15; 1 John 2:3-6).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ZECHARIAH

Date of Writing: ca. 520 B.C.

Author: Zechariah, the son of Berechiah

Theme: The Lord of hosts mercifully remembers His people

Original Audience: Primarily the Jews who recently returned from Babylonian exile but needed encouragement to finish rebuilding the temple; also anyone who was interested in the urgency of the mission of those post-exilic Jews; also anyone who was interested in the Jews' Messianic hope.

Chapters	Contents
Zechariah 1	The vision of the first horseman (probably a symbol of Christ) and subsequent horses, representing God's judgment of the nations; The vision of the four horns, representing the various nations that God used to punish Israel
Zechariah 2	The vision of a surveyor and measuring line, representing the reestablishment of Jerusalem as the city of God's people and ultimately the center of Messianic hope
Zechariah 3	The vision of Joshua the high priest and his filthy garments, representing the sins of the people
Zechariah 4	The vision of a lampstand and olive trees, representing God's help in the construction of the temple
Zechariah 5	The vision of a flying scroll, representing the need to be governed by the law of God; The vision of a woman in a basket, representing wickedness that had polluted the people
Zechariah 6	The vision of four chariots coming from between two mountains of brass, probably symbolizing the overthrowing of Babylon by Cyrus; The crowning of Joshua the priest
Zechariah 7	The delegation from Bethel with their question about the frequency of fasting; The Lord's rebuke of fasting when it is merely empty ritualism; Zechariah reminds the people of why they went into captivity in the first place
Zechariah 8	The future restoration of Jerusalem, with better living conditions

Chapters	Contents
Zechariah 9	The Lord's judgment of various cities; The coming King of Israel
Zechariah 10	The Lord in contrast to idols; Future restoration of Judah and Israel
Zechariah 11	Sorrow over the present state of Israel; The prophecy against the flock that rejects its Shepherd
Zechariah 12	The coming deliverance of Judah; Mourning for the one Who is pierced (cf. John 19:34)
Zechariah 13	The end of idolatry among God's people; The Shepherd Who is God's Companion, and who is murdered; The refining of God's people through testing
Zechariah 14	The great day of the Lord, after which all nations who have opposed God will worship the King

Key Verses:

- **Zechariah 3:8-10.** Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. . . . I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. In that day, declares the Lord of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree."
- **Zechariah 9:9.** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- **Zechariah 14:8-9.** On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. And the Lord will be king over all the earth.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We should earnestly desire the coming of Christ, Who will set everything right (Zechariah 9:9-10; cf. Revelation 22:6-20).
- ☑ When we worship, our hearts must be focused on the Lord (Zechariah 7:5-7; cf. John 4:24). Having a right relationship with God will allow us to overcome fear—and we must do so (Zechariah 8:15; cf. Hebrews 13:6; Luke 12:4-7; 1 Peter 3:6).
- ☑ Eventually, impenitent enemies of God (and thus, *our* enemies) will be overcome and destroyed (Zechariah 9:1-6; cf. Acts 2:34-35; Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 20:15).

Bible Basics Bullets:

MATTHEW

Date of Writing: Early 60s A.D.

Author: The apostle Matthew (Levi), the tax collector (Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32).

Theme: Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy. Focuses on the kingdom of God and the second coming of Christ. The only Gospel to use the word “church” (Matthew 16:18; 28:17). Focuses on giving the Jews a reason to accept Jesus as the Messiah.

Original Audience: Jewish audience, unknown location.

Chapters	Contents
Matthew 1	Genealogy of Jesus
Matthew 2	Wise men visit; Joseph and family flee Herod
Matthew 3	John the Baptist prepares the way
Matthew 4	Temptation of Jesus; Call of the 12 apostles
Matthew 5-7	Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 8-9	Jesus preforms numerous miracles
Matthew 10	Apostles sent on the limited commission
Matthew 11	John enquires about Jesus’ identity
Matthew 12	Miracles preformed; Blasphemy against Holy Spirit condemned
Matthew 13	Parables: The sower, weeds, hidden treasure, pearl of great price and the net
Matthew 14	Death of John the Baptist; Feeding of 5,000; Jesus walks on water
Matthew 15	Jesus performs healings; Feeding of 4,000
Matthew 16	Peter confesses Christ; Jesus foretells His death and resurrection
Matthew 17	The Transfiguration; Rebuking of a demon; Jesus pays the temple tax
Matthew 18	Parable of the lost sheep; Parable of the unforgiving servant
Matthew 19	Teachings on divorce; The rich, young ruler
Matthew 20	Parable of the vineyard; Request for the sons of Zebedee
Matthew 21	The triumphal entry; Cleansing of the temple; Cursing of the fig tree

Chapters	Contents
Matthew 22	Parable of the wedding feast; The greatest commandment
Matthew 23	Seven woes to the scribes and pharisees
Matthew 24	Foretelling of the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem
Matthew 25	Parable of the 10 virgins and talents; Teaching about the judgment day
Matthew 26	Institution of the Lord's supper; Betrayal and arrest of Jesus
Matthew 27	Crucifixion and burial of Jesus
Matthew 28	The Resurrection; Great Commission

Key Verses:

- **Matthew 5:17-18.** “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”
- **Matthew 9:36-38.** “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”
- **Matthew 13:34-35.** “All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.”

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We are part of God’s overall plan, which includes the sacrifice of Christ and the building of His church, His kingdom (Matthew 5:10; 13; 16:18; Colossians 1:13).
- ☑ Our character must be molded to the image of Christ rather than the people (even religious people) living around us (Matthew 5-7; cf. Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:15-16).
- ☑ When we do works of service for others, we must do it out of love and not to be seen of men (Matthew 6:1-4; cf. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7).
- ☑ Those of us who wish to be in the kingdom of Christ must meet His terms (Matthew 22:1-13; cf. Matthew 7:21-23; 1 John 2:29; 2 John 9-11).
- ☑ It is not up to us to determine what is right and wrong; Rather, God sets all value (Matthew 20:1-16; cf. Genesis 18:25; Job 38-41; 2 Timothy 4:8).

Bible Basics Bullets:

MARK

Date of Writing: Mid-50s A.D.

Author: John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10) and companion of Paul (Acts 12:15; 15:37; Philippians 2:24; 2 Timothy 4:11). Mark probably was influenced by Peter (1 Peter 5:13).

Theme: Jesus as a powerful servant and world conquerer. Mark's is a gospel of action, often using phrases such as, "and immediately."

Original Audience: Probably Christians in Rome.

Chapters	Contents
Mark 1	John the Baptist prepares the way; Jesus begins His ministry
Mark 2	Jesus heals a paralytic; Jesus teaches on fasting and the Sabbath
Mark 3	Jesus heals the sick; Jesus appoints the 12 apostles
Mark 4	The parables of the sower, the growing seed, and the mustard seed
Mark 5	Jesus heals a man possessed; Jesus raises Jairus' daughter
Mark 6	The limited commission; The death of John the Baptist; The feeding of the 5,000
Mark 7	Jesus teaches on tradition versus commandment; Jesus casts the demon out of the Syrophoenician woman's daughter
Mark 8	The feeding of the 4,000; Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ
Mark 9	The transfiguration; Jesus foretells His death and resurrection
Mark 10	Jesus teaches on marriage and divorce; The rich young ruler; The request for the sons of Zebedee
Mark 11	The triumphal entry into Jerusalem; Jesus curses the fig tree; Jesus cleanses the temple
Mark 12	The parable of the tenants; The greatest commandment
Mark 13	Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem
Mark 14	The institution of the Lord's supper; The betrayal and arrest of Jesus
Mark 15	The crucifixion and burial of Jesus

Chapters	Contents
Mark 16	The resurrection and great commission

Key Verses:

- **Mark 1:9-11.** In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”
- **Mark 1:35-38.** And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.”
- **Mark 8:27-30.** And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.
- **Mark 15:37-39.** And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Being a Christian means taking action—specifically the actions of a servant. Humble service, as modeled by Jesus, is a powerful inspiration for change in the world (Mark 14:3-9; cf. Matthew 20:26-27; 23:11-12; Luke 14:11).
- ☑ We must never be ashamed of our relationship to Christ (Mark 8:38; cf. Matthew 10:32-33; 2 Timothy 1:8).
- ☑ We must not neglect our private prayer life (Mark 1:35; cf. Matthew 6:6; Philippians 4:6-7).
- ☑ The power of the Gospel has the ability to change lives (Mark 1:15; 10:29; Romans 1:16).
- ☑ Those of us who are Christians today are citizens of the kingdom of Christ (Mark 9:1; cf. Colossians 1:13-14; Revelation 1:5).
- ☑ We must preach the gospel throughout the world (Mark 13:9-13; cf. Colossians 1:6; 28).

Bible Basics Bullets:

LUKE

Date of Writing: 61-62 A.D.

Author: Luke, the Gentile physician (Colossians 4:11-14).

Theme: Jesus as the perfect Son of Man. Luke's is the longest and most comprehensive of the four Gospels. Luke focuses on individuals, prayer, women, and the Holy Spirit.

Original Audience: Theophilus, possibly a Gentile of high standing, whose name means "lover of God" (Luke 1:1-4).

Chapters	Contents
Luke 1	The birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus foretold and prepared
Luke 2	The birth and childhood of Jesus
Luke 3	John the Baptist prepares the way; The genealogy of Jesus
Luke 4	Jesus is tempted; The beginning of Jesus' ministry
Luke 5	Jesus calls His apostles; Jesus heals a leper and a paralytic
Luke 6	Jesus' sermon on the plain
Luke 7	Jesus performs numerous miracles
Luke 8	The parable of the sower; Jesus calms the storm; Jesus raises Jairus's daughter
Luke 9	The limited commission, Jesus feeds the 5,000; The transfiguration
Luke 10	Jesus sends out the 72; Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan; Martha and Mary have different interests
Luke 11	The model prayer; Woe pronounced on the Pharisees and lawyers
Luke 12	Jesus teaches not to fear nor worry; The importance of being ready
Luke 13	Jesus teaches about the narrow door; Jesus laments over Jerusalem
Luke 14	Healing on the sabbath; Jesus' parable of the wedding feast; Jesus' parable of the great banquet; The cost of discipleship
Luke 15	Jesus' parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and lost son
Luke 16	Jesus' parable of the dishonest manager; The rich man and Lazarus

Chapters	Contents
Luke 17	Jesus cleanses the 10 lepers; Jesus teaches about the coming of the kingdom
Luke 18	Jesus' parable of the persistent widow; Jesus' parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector; The rich, young ruler
Luke 19	Zacchaeus is saved; Jesus' triumphal entry; Jesus cleanses the temple
Luke 20	Jesus' parable of the wicked tenants; Jesus teaches about paying taxes; Sadducees challenge Jesus concerning resurrection
Luke 21	Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem
Luke 22	Jesus institutes Lord's supper; Jesus foretells His betrayers; Jesus' arrest
Luke 23	Jesus before Pilate and Herod; Jesus' crucifixion and burial
Luke 24	Jesus' resurrection; Jesus teaches on the road to Emmaus; Jesus' ascension

Key Verses:

- **Luke 4:17-21.** “And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”
- **Luke 24:25-27.** And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Followers of Christ pay their taxes, even if some of the tax money is used for sinful purposes (Luke 20:19-26; cf. Romans 13:1-8; Titus 3:1).
- ☑ We should not seek for others to honor us, but rather we should humbly serve God (Luke 14:7-14; cf. James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5-6).
- ☑ Nobody today may be saved by obeying the law of Moses (Luke 16:16; cf. Galatians 5:4).
- ☑ It is possible to resist the temptation of the devil by knowing and applying the word of God (Luke 4:1-13; cf. Psalms 119:11; 1 John 2:1).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JOHN

Date of Writing: 80s A.D.

Author: John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee; “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).

Theme: Jesus as the divine Son of God; John includes the great themes of Jesus as the shepherd, the light, the way, the truth, the life, etc. John emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit.

Original Audience: Those who needed to believe, or continue to believe in, the Christ (John 20:31). Possibly those suffering from persecution, perhaps second generation believers.

Chapters	Contents
John 1	John the Baptist testifies of Jesus; Jesus calls His apostles
John 2	Jesus’ first miracle at the wedding at Cana; Jesus cleanses the temple
John 3	Nicodemus meets with Jesus; John the Baptist exalts Christ
John 4	Jesus meets with the Samaritan woman; Jesus heals an official’s son
John 5	Jesus heals at the pool of Bethesda; Jesus testifies of His own divinity
John 6	Jesus feeds the 5,000; Jesus walks on water; Jesus is the bread of life
John 7	Jesus at the Feast of Booths; An attempt to arrest Jesus
John 8	The woman caught in adultery; Jesus is the light of the world
John 9	Jesus heals a man born blind
John 10	Jesus is the good shepherd; Jesus explains His unity with the Father
John 11	Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead; Jesus says He is the resurrection
John 12	Mary anoints Jesus; Jesus speaks of His death
John 13	Jesus washes the disciples feet; Jesus foretells His betrayals
John 14	Jesus explains His unity with the Father; Jesus promises the Holy Spirit
John 15	Jesus is the true vine; The world will hate Christ’s followers
John 16	Jesus explains the work of the Holy Spirit; Jesus is overcoming the world
John 17	Jesus prays for His apostles, and for those who will believe on Him through the words of the apostles

Chapters	Contents
John 18	The betrayals, arrest, and trials of Jesus
John 19	The crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus
John 20	The resurrection and appearances of Jesus; Thomas deals with his doubt
John 21	Jesus and the apostles eat breakfast by the sea; Jesus challenges Peter to tend His sheep

Key Verses:

- **John 1:1-5, 14.** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- **John 17:20-21.** “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Jesus had many conversations with individuals (John 2:1-11; 3:1-15; 4:7-26; 8:1-11; 19:26-27, etc.). So we, like Jesus, must take time for people, concerned for the welfare of individuals, and not just for the masses (cf. Matthew 25:40; Galatians 6:1).
- ☑ Children of God must strive to love one another as Christ loved His disciples (John 13:34-35; 15:12; cf. Ephesians 5:2; 1 John 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 14:10; 16:14).
- ☑ Our main priority in life, even above eating food, must be to do the will of our Father (John 4:34; cf. Job 23:12; Psalms 119:103).
- ☑ We must judge not “by appearances,” without having all the relevant facts (John 7:24; cf. Matthew 7:1-5, 12).
- ☑ The fact that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us should give us great comfort in this life (John 14:1-4; cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
- ☑ We must point people to the historicity of the biblical accounts, for Jesus’ signs (miracles) in the book of John are enough to convince a reasonable person of Jesus’ divinity (John 20:30-31; cf. Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; 2 Peter 1:16-21).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ACTS

Date of Writing: 62-65 A.D.

Author: Luke, the Gentile physician (Colossians 4:11-14).

Theme: The acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles and other Christians, in the early church.

Original Audience: Theophilus, possibly a Gentile of high standing, whose name means “lover of God.”

Chapters	Contents
Acts 1	Ascension of Jesus; Appointment of Matthias
Acts 2	Pouring out of the Holy Spirit; Birth of the church at Pentecost
Acts 3	Peter and John heal a lame man at Solomon’s Portico
Acts 4	Peter and John defend the Gospel to angry Jews
Acts 5	Ananias and Sapphira; Apostles imprisoned and freed by the Holy Spirit
Acts 6	Deacons appointed; Stephen seized and accused by false witnesses
Acts 7	Defense and stoning of Stephen
Acts 8	Simon the magician and the Ethiopian Eunuch obey the Gospel
Acts 9	Conversion of Saul; Saul goes to Jerusalem; Dorcas is restored to life
Acts 10	Peter’s vision concerning Gentiles; The Holy Spirit poured out on Gentiles
Acts 11	Peter reports to the Jerusalem church the news of a Gentile mission
Acts 12	James martyred; Peter imprisoned and freed; The death of Herod
Acts 13-14	Paul’s first missionary journey, with Barnabas
Acts 15	The Jerusalem meeting; Paul and Barnabas separate
Acts 16-18	Paul’s second missionary journey; Paul encounters Lydia, the Philippian jailer, and Aquila and Priscilla
Acts 19	The seven sons of Sceva; Demetrius the silversmith; Riot at Ephesus
Acts 20	Eutychus raised from the dead; Paul bids farewell to the Ephesian elders
Acts 21	Paul returns to Jerusalem and is arrested in the temple

Chapters	Contents
Acts 22	Paul defends himself before the people and to the council
Acts 23	Jews plot to kill Paul; Paul is sent to Felix the Governor
Acts 24	Paul defends himself before Felix
Acts 25-26	Paul appeals to Caesar; Paul defends himself before Agrippa and Bernice
Acts 27-28	Paul leaves for Rome; Paul is shipwrecked at Malta; Paul arrives in Rome

Key Verses:

- **Acts 2:42-47.** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- **Acts 17:24-25.** The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things.
- **Acts 20:24.** But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must treasure the church, which is so precious to God that He personally superintended the church's establishment and growth (cf. 1 Timothy 3:15).
- ☑ We must be so convinced of the truth of Christianity that we will not be able to stop speaking it (Acts 4:20, 29; 5:29; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 John 1:1-4).
- ☑ While God aids in the spread of the gospel, His chosen method for the delivery of the saving gospel has always been indirect—the preaching of Christians, not direct operation on people. We must share the gospel with people of every nation (Acts 10-11; cf. Romans 10:5-17).
- ☑ We may not compromise the truth of the plan of salvation, which is plainly taught in the scriptures (see Acts 2:38; 22:16; cf. Romans 6:1-4; 10:10; 1 Peter 3:21).

Bible Basics Bullets:

ROMANS

Date of Writing: ca. 57 A.D.

Author: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God” (Romans 1:1).

Theme: Salvation is a gift, needed by and accessible to all races, by obedient faith. This gift comes from Jesus’ work on the cross, in which God judges sin and manifests saving grace.

Original Audience: “To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints” (1:7). The letter was passed through the Roman congregations (16:3, 14), likely a mixed demographic of converted Jews and Gentiles.

Romans 1	Greeting; God’s judgment on the unrighteous Gentiles
Romans 2	God’s judgment on the unrighteous Jews; Circumcision is of no value in the Christian age
Romans 3	All people are sinners; God’s righteousness in everything; Righteousness obtained through faith
Romans 4	Abraham’s justification through faith; God’s promises realized through faith
Romans 5	Peace with God is possible through Jesus, repairing the tragedy of sin as introduced by Adam and continued by all people
Romans 6	Dying to sin and living to God; Slavery to righteousness rather than to sin
Romans 7	Christians are released from the law of Moses; Humanity’s inability to keep that law
Romans 8	Life in the Spirit; Future glory through the love of Christ
Romans 9	God is not unjust in His inclusion of Gentiles
Romans 10	The necessity of preaching the gospel so that all may hear and be saved
Romans 11	The possibility of salvation for Israel, even while God grafts in Gentiles
Romans 12	Living life as a sacrifice in response to God’s sacrifice of grace; Life in the body of Christ
Romans 13	Submission to governmental authorities; Love and moral purity
Romans 14	Do not pass judgment or be a stumbling block in matters of judgment
Romans 15	Learning from the Old Testament; The example of Christ; Paul’s plans

Key Verses:

- **Romans 3:23-24.** [F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . .
- **Romans 6:1-6.** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.
- **Romans 8:37-39.** [I]n all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- **Romans 12:1-2.** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Our relationship to Christ must influence every aspect of our lives (Romans 12:1-2; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:16; Matthew 6:33).
- ☑ We must not bind where God has not bound; Rather, in areas where God has not bound, we must not criticize or judge one another (Romans 14; cf. 1 Corinthians 8).
- ☑ The fact that our sins are forgiven through grace does not mean that we may sin as a way of magnifying God's grace (Romans 6:1-5). Rather, God's grace should lead us to live faithful lives (Romans 6:6-14; cf. Titus 2:11-14).
- ☑ Nobody can be saved without hearing the words of the gospel (Romans 10:14-17; Galatians 1:6-10; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 4:1-2).
- ☑ Paul tells the Romans to obey civil government even though they lived under an unjust and ungodly government (Romans 13:1-7). We must submit to government unless government requires disobedience to God (see Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Titus 3:1-3; 1 Peter 2:13-15).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 CORINTHIANS

Date of Writing: 53-54 A.D.

Author: “Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes.” (1 Corinthians 1:1).

Theme: Division of the body is sinful. All church issues can be resolved through the humility that leads us to follow the wisdom of God rather than our own wisdom.

Original Audience: “To the church of God that is in Corinth” (1 Corinthians 1:2).

1 Corinthians 1	Greeting; Thanksgiving for the Corinthian brethren; Condemnation of church division; God’s wisdom is the solution for church problems
1 Corinthians 2	God’s wisdom, imparted to spiritual people, through the Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 3	Jesus Christ as the foundation of the church; Paul as a humble servant
1 Corinthians 4	The humble place of preachers, who serve the brethren
1 Corinthians 5	Church discipline prescribed, to cleanse the church of sin
1 Corinthians 6	Lawsuits against believers condemned; Disciplining our bodies for God
1 Corinthians 7	Instructions to Christians who are married, unmarried, and widowed, particularly during troubled times
1 Corinthians 8	Instructions concerning meat offered to idols; Submission to one other in Christ, in pursuit of unity in the church
1 Corinthians 9	Paul defends his apostleship; Those who preach should live of the gospel
1 Corinthians 10	Warning against idolatry; Glorifying God in all
1 Corinthians 11	Instructions concerning head coverings and the Lord’s Supper
1 Corinthians 12	Instruction concerning spiritual gifts; The body of Christ has many members that should work together
1 Corinthians 13	The primary position of Christian love; The pending cessation of spiritual gifts after prophecy is completed
1 Corinthians 14	Instructions concerning miraculous tongue-speaking
1 Corinthians 15	Christ’s resurrection as a guarantee of our resurrection on the last day

Key Verses:

- **1 Corinthians 2:11-12** . For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.
- **1 Corinthians 10:12-13**. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.
- **1 Corinthians 13:9-10**. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.
- **1 Corinthians 15:51-57**. Behold! I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Those with whom we closely associate will influence us (1 Corinthians 15:33), and so the church must be kept pure from impenitent sin (1 Corinthians 5:6; cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:6).
- ☑ A person who shows Christian love will promote the best interest of those around him (1 Corinthians 3:4-7; cf. Romans 15:1-2; Philippians 2:4).
- ☑ We should deprive ourselves rather than to cause a brother to sin (1 Corinthians 8:12-13; cf. Romans 14:13). The unity of the church is precious (1 Corinthians 1:10; cf. Romans 14:19).
- ☑ Preachers may be fine orators, but if they are not preaching "Jesus Christ and him crucified," then they are in error (1 Corinthians 2:1-2; cf. 1 Peter 4:11).
- ☑ We must protect the church's influence among those who are lost in the world (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; 14:23; cf. Colossians 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; 1 Timothy 3:7).
- ☑ We must believe the historical truths about Christianity based on reliable testimony (1 Corinthians 15:1-11; cf. John 20:30-31; 2 Peter 1:16-21).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 CORINTHIANS

Date of Writing: 55 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother” (2 Corinthians 1:1).

Theme: The relationship between suffering in the Christian life and the power of God, which were combined in the cross, showing that the power of God is manifested through suffering.

Original Audience: “To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia” (2 Corinthians 1:2). Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.

2 Corinthians 1	Greeting; God comforts in affliction; Paul’s travel plans
2 Corinthians 2	Forgiving the brother who was withdrawn from; Spreading the gospel
2 Corinthians 3	Boldness of the apostles through the new covenant
2 Corinthians 4	The light of the gospel, a treasure in jars of clay; Transformation through the gospel
2 Corinthians 5	Desire for our heavenly dwelling; The Christian’s ministry of reconciliation
2 Corinthians 6	Sacrificing for the gospel; Christians relating to non-believers; The Christian’s body as a temple of God
2 Corinthians 7	Paul’s defense of his first letter; The necessity of godly sorrow; Titus’ love for the Corinthians
2 Corinthians 8	The contribution by the poor brethren of Macedonia; Encouragement to give generously; Commendation of Titus
2 Corinthians 9	The collection for the poor in Jerusalem; Giving cheerfully
2 Corinthians 10	Paul defends his ministry; Boasting only in Christ
2 Corinthians 11	Paul challenges the Corinthians about false apostles; Paul defends his own apostleship
2 Corinthians 12	Paul’s visions and thorn in the flesh; Paul’s concern for the Corinthian church
2 Corinthians 13	Warning against sin; Self-examination; Final greetings

Key Verses:

- **2 Corinthians 4:6-10.** For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.
- **2 Corinthians 5:6-10.** So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.
- **2 Corinthians 10:12-13.** Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you.
- **2 Corinthians 12:7-9.** So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Just as Paul endured hardship, we must be willing to endure anything for the sake of Christ (2 Corinthians 6:1-13; 11:23-28; cf. Matthew 10:22; Hebrews 3:6; Revelation 2:10).
- ☑ Suffering produces more dedicated servants of Christ (2 Corinthians 12:7-10; James 1:2-4). Although our bodies may be weaker, our souls become stronger (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; cf. 1 Peter 3:8-22).
- ☑ We must give with a cheerful heart (2 Corinthians 9:7; cf. Acts 20:35). When we give, we not only facilitate the spread of the gospel, but we also encourage others in their giving (2 Corinthians 8; cf. Mark 12:41-44).
- ☑ We must not put ourselves in positions where we feel obligated to sin in order to please other people (2 Corinthians 6:14; cf. Ephesians 4:17-19; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Peter 2:9; 4:1-6).

Bible Basics Bullets:

GALATIANS

Date of Writing: 46-48 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle ... and all the brothers who are with me” (Galatians 1:1-2a).

Theme: Putting away the Law of Moses in order to be justified by Christ alone. Justification through Christ must always be followed by sanctification through the Spirit, resulting in a lifestyle that reflects the sacrifice of Christ.

Original Audience: “To the churches of Galatia” (Galatians 1:2b).

Galatians 1	Greeting; Warning against other doctrines; Paul’s apostolic calling
Galatians 2	Paul’s acceptance by the apostles; Correction of Peter; Justification by faith
Galatians 3	Faith of the new covenant compared to works of the old covenant
Galatians 4	Christians are sons and heirs of God; Sarah and Hagar are illustrative of the difference between the new covenant and the old covenant
Galatians 5	Freedom brought by Christ; Walking in the Spirit and not after the flesh
Galatians 6	Restoring the unfaithful; Bearing one another’s burdens; Paul’s final exhortation

Key Verses:

- **Galatians 5:22-25.** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must reap the consequences of our choices (Galatians 6:7; cf. Job 4:8; Hosea 8:7; Luke 16:25; Romans 6:20-23; 2 Corinthians 9:6).
- ☑ We must be eager to restore those who are overtaken by sin (Galatians 6:1-2; cf. Luke 15:11-32; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Hebrews 12:12-13; James 5:19-20).
- ☑ We have not put on Christ until we have been baptized into Christ, and so baptism is essential to our salvation (Galatians 3:27; cf. 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-4).

Bible Basics Bullets:

EPHESIANS

Date of Writing: 59-61 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God” (Ephesians 1:1).

Theme: The reconciliation of man to God, through Christ. All people have the opportunity to be reconciled through Christ, and His church is the manifestation of this reconciliation on earth.

Original Audience: “To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:1).

Ephesians 1	Spiritual blessings in Christ; Thanksgiving and prayer for the Ephesians
Ephesians 2	Salvation by grace through our faith; Reconciliation through Christ’s blood
Ephesians 3	Paul’s calling to the mystery of the Gospel; Prayer for the Ephesians’ spiritual strength, that Christ would dwell in them
Ephesians 4	Unity among the diverse members of the body of Christ; New life in Christ
Ephesians 5	Walking in love; Wives and husbands reflect Christ and the church
Ephesians 6	Relationships between children and parents, bondservants and masters; Putting on the armor of God to withstand the devil’s attack

Key Verses:

- **Ephesians 4:1-3.** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- **Ephesians 5:15-17.** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ Our expression of thanks to God is a song (Ephesians 5:19-20; cf. Colossians 3:16-17).
- ☑ Christian love should characterize our entire lives (Ephesians 5:1; cf. 1 Corinthians 16:14). This will ensure the unity of the singular body of Christ—the church (Ephesians 4:1-7).

Bible Basics Bullets:

PHILIPPIANS

Date of Writing: 59-61 A.D.

Author: “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:1)

Theme: Encouragement and joy in the Christian life.

Original Audience: “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons” (Philippians 1:1).

Philippians 1	Thanksgiving and prayer; Living is for Christ and furthering the Gospel
Philippians 2	The humility of Christ; Recommendation of Timothy and Epaphroditus
Philippians 3	Righteousness through faith in Christ; Straining toward the goal of heaven
Philippians 4	Exhortation and encouragement; Prayer and final greetings

Key Verses:

- **Philippians 2:5-8.** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- **Philippians 3:7-8.** But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must be joyful people, for we have much about which to rejoice (Philippians 4:4).
- ☑ We must be in constant communication with God (Philippians 4:6; cf. Proverbs 16:3).
- ☑ Our primary focus must be on heaven and not upon the past (Philippians 3:13; Luke 9:62).
- ☑ Our lifestyle must be consistent with the gospel we teach (Philippians 1:27; 3:20; cf. Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 3:1-17).

Bible Basics Bullets:

COLOSSIANS

Date of Writing: 59-61 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, and Timothy our brother” (Colossians 1:1).

Theme: Christ is Lord over all, both in earthly and spiritual spheres. He has secured salvation to all those who participate in His death, burial, and resurrection.

Original Audience: “To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae” (Colossians 1:2).

Colossians 1	Thanksgiving and prayer; Preeminence of Christ; Paul’s ministry
Colossians 2	The basis of Christian living; Let no one disqualify you from faithfulness to Christ
Colossians 3	Putting on the new self; Rules for Christian households
Colossians 4	Final exhortations, recommendations, and greetings

Key Verses:

- **Colossians 1:18-20.** And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
- **Colossians 3:1-2.** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We can be Christians regardless of our background or external circumstances in life (Colossians 3:11; cf. Galatians 3:28; 5:6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 3:29-30).
- ☑ Christian brethren who work with us in the Lord are precious (Colossians 4:10-17; cf. 2 Corinthians 8:23; Philemon 17; Philippians 1:5; 4:15).
- ☑ We must never put anything in life above Christ, for He is preeminent in the Universe (Colossians 1:15-20; cf. John 1:1-4; 3:31; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:10).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 THESSALONIANS

Date of Writing: 50 A.D.

Author: “Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy” (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

Theme: God is faithful to those who are sanctified, and will grant them their inheritance of salvation when Christ returns.

Original Audience: “The church of the Thessalonians” (1 Thessalonians 1:1), which Paul established on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-9). The church consisted of a mixed demographic, both former pagans (1 Thessalonians 1:9) and former Jews (Acts 17:2).

1 Thessalonians 1	Greeting; The faith of the Thessalonians and their example to the Christians in Macedonia and Achaia
1 Thessalonians 2	Paul’s honest ministry; How the Thessalonians received the gospel; Paul’s longing to see the Thessalonians again
1 Thessalonians 3	Timothy’s encouraging report about the Thessalonians’ faith and love
1 Thessalonians 4	The lifestyle of faithful Christians; The second coming of the Lord
1 Thessalonians 5	Preparing for the day of the Lord; Final instructions and prayer

Key Verses:

- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:15-18.** See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must test claims and opinions by what the word of God says (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
- ☑ When Christians pass to the next life, we do not have to sorrow in the same way that sinners sorrow, because we have hope for heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; cf. Ephesians 2:12-13).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 THESSALONIANS

Date of Writing: 50-51 A.D. (shortly after the writing of 1 Thessalonians)

Author: “Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy” (2 Thessalonians 1:1).

Theme: Christians must persevere through the difficulties of the sinful world, and not be deceived while waiting for the second coming of Christ.

Original Audience: “The church of the Thessalonians” (1 Thessalonians 1:1), which Paul established on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-9). The church consisted of a mixed demographic, both former pagans (1 Thessalonians 1:9) and former Jews (Acts 17:2).

2 Thessalonians 1	Greeting; The impending judgement at the return of Christ
2 Thessalonians 2	The man of lawlessness who would come before Christ returns; The gospel had called the Thessalonians to stand firm in Christ
2 Thessalonians 3	God’s faithfulness to the church; Warning against idleness; Prayer

Key Verses:

- **2 Thessalonians 1:6-10.** ... God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.
- **2 Thessalonians 3:5.** May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must take the gospel to those who do not know it, because they will be lost if they never come to obey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8; cf. Romans 2:8; 10:16).
- ☑ We must not get revenge, because God will take care of evildoers in the judgment (2 Thessalonians 1:6; cf. Joel 3:4-7; Exodus 23:22; Romans 12:17-19; Hebrews 10:30-31).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 TIMOTHY

Date of Writing: ca. 62-63 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope” (1 Timothy 1:1).

Theme: The Gospel, free from false teaching, will change one’s character, and produce spirituality and God-authorized, fruitful organization in the church.

Original Audience: “To Timothy, my true child in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2).

1 Timothy 1	Warning against false teachers; The Gospel of Jesus
1 Timothy 2	Pray for all people; The role of godly women
1 Timothy 3	Qualifications for elders and deacons
1 Timothy 4	Warning against apostasy; Faithful teaching of the gospel
1 Timothy 5	Instructions for the church; Paying the elders and widows indeed
1 Timothy 6	False teachers and controversies; Fight the good fight of faith

Key Verses:

- **1 Timothy 3:16.** Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.
- **1 Timothy 6:11-12.** But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must not love money, but steward it for God’s goals (1 Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5-6).
- ☑ We must groom future church leaders, because men do not accidentally meet the qualifications for leadership roles (1 Timothy 3:1-13; cf. 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-32).
- ☑ We get some benefit from physical exercise, but a much greater benefit from spiritual exercise (1 Timothy 4:8-10; cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Isaiah 40:30-31; Romans 12:2).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 TIMOTHY

Date of Writing: ca. 64-65 A.D.

Author: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:1).

Theme: Persevere in the Gospel and fight the good fight, despite suffering.

Original Audience: “To Timothy, my beloved child” (2 Timothy 1:2).

2 Timothy 1	Guard the Gospel; Faithfully teach the gospel
2 Timothy 2	Being a soldier of Christ; Vessels for honor, approved by God
2 Timothy 3	Godlessness in the last days; The inspiration of Scripture
2 Timothy 4	Exhortation to evangelists; Personal instruction and final greeting

Key Verses:

- **2 Timothy 1:8-9.** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. . . .
- **2 Timothy 2:21.** Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We may pass on our faith to our children and grandchildren (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15; cf. Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:7; 11:19; Psalms 78:4; Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6).
- ☑ We must study to rightly handle the word of God (2 Timothy 2:15; cf. Psalms 1:1-2), teaching the gospel even when it is unpopular to do so (2 Timothy 4:1-5; 3:1-5, 12; Acts 14:22; Matthew 5:10; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Peter 4; Revelation 2:10).
- ☑ If we fall in love with the present world, not only will we be lost, but we also will alienate ourselves from God’s loving family (2 Timothy 4:10; 1 Corinthians 5; 1 John 2:15-17).

Bible Basics Bullets:

TITUS

Date of Writing: ca. 64-65 A.D.

Author: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ” (Titus 1:1).

Theme: There is an inseparable relationship between faith and works, Christian belief and Christian behavior. Faith is manifested in Christian living and church organization.

Original Audience: “To Titus, my true child in a common faith” (Titus 1:4).

Titus 1	Greeting; Qualifications of elders; Some try to turn people from the truth
Titus 2	The need to teach sound doctrine; Christian behavior in the home and other contexts; The grace of God as a teacher
Titus 3	The need to teach Christians how to treat one another to avoid division in the church; Final instructions and greetings

Key Verses:

- **Titus 2:2-5.** Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.
- **Titus 3:4-7.** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ The church may be fully organized and flourish even in an area where most people are particularly sinful (Titus 1:12-13; cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Colossians 3:5-11).
- ☑ The primary job of a mother with children is to keep the home. If this job goes undone, the word of God can be blasphemed (Titus 2:5; cf. Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:4-9; 1 Timothy 5:14).
- ☑ In principle, we must support every good work—not just those we started or organized (Titus 3:1, 14; cf. 2 Timothy 2:10, 21; 5:25; 6:18; Acts 9:36; Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 10:24).

Bible Basics Bullets:

PHILEMON

Date of Writing: ca. 59-61 A.D.

Author: “Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother” (Philemon 1).

Theme: The gospel transforms lives by transforming actions, and in so doing the gospel will transform interpersonal and business relationships.

Original Audience: “To Philemon our beloved fellow worker and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house” (Philemon 1-2).

Philemon 1-7	Greeting; Commendation of the faithfulness of Philemon, Apphia, and Archippus
Philemon 8-22	Paul pleads for the new Christian Onesimus, a runaway slave, to be accepted again; Paul requires Philemon’s obedience, but does not overtly state a command; Paul offers to pay Philemon for anything owed
Philemon 23-25	Greetings from Paul’s prison to his fellow workers

Key Verses:

- **Philemon 5-6.** I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.
- **Philemon 12-13.** I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel,

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must forgive someone who repents (Philemon 11-12; cf. Matthew 6:14-15; 18:15, 23-35; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Luke 17:3-4; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13).
- ☑ We may be partakers in the work of gospel preachers all over the world, through our prayers and financial support (Philemon 7; cf. 2 Corinthians 7:4; Philippians 1:7; 4:14).
- ☑ We cannot do anything better to help someone than to bring him to Jesus, and so it is likely that we will be very close to those we convert (Philemon 12; cf. 1 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12; 3 John 4; Philippians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

Bible Basics Bullets:

HEBREWS

Date of Writing: ca. 65 A.D.

Author: Unknown.

Theme: The superiority of Christ and the Christian system. Christ is greater than the angels, the Old Testament heroes, former high priests, and the Law of Moses. Because of His love, sacrifice and supremacy, we must put our faith in Christ in order to obtain the rest He promises.

Original Audience: Specific group and its location unknown; The audience is certainly Christians who were struggling with the temptation to abandon faith in Christ and return to Judaism.

Hebrews 1	Jesus, being the Son of God, is a greater Messenger than the prophets and angels
Hebrews 2	Warning against neglecting salvation; Jesus is the Founder of salvation
Hebrews 3	Jesus is greater than Moses; Jesus provides rest for the people of God if they do not harden their hearts, as Israel did in Moses' day
Hebrews 4	Jesus provides a greater rest than Joshua did; Jesus is the great High Priest
Hebrews 5	Jesus is the eternal High Priest, greater than Aaron; The immaturity of the letter's audience
Hebrews 6	Warning against apostasy; God's promise to Christians is certain, just as His promise to Abraham was certain
Hebrews 7	The priestly order of Melchizedek; Jesus compared to Melchizedek
Hebrews 8	Jesus is the High Priest of a better covenant, enacted on better promises; The old covenant is obsolete
Hebrews 9	Worship by sacrifices in the tabernacle has been replaced by the blood of Christ, Who died once for all
Hebrews 10	Sacrifices under the Law of Moses foreshadowed Christ's sacrifices; The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins; Urging not to reject the sacrifice of Christ, which is the exclusive means of salvation
Hebrews 11	Great Old Testament examples of obedient faith
Hebrews 12	Christians, assured that Christ's kingdom cannot be shaken, must not grow weary

Key Verses:

- **Hebrews 3:13.** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
- **Hebrews 10:21-31.** [S]ince we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- **Hebrews 11:6.** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
- **Hebrews 12:1-2.** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must be obedient to the elders in matters where God has not specified what is to be done (Hebrews 13:7, 17; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Acts 20:28).
- ☑ Our faith in Christ gives us confidence and security (Hebrews 13:5, 6; cf. 1 John 2:28).
- ☑ If we leave Christ, there is no other way for us to be saved (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:19-20, 26-29; cf. Acts 4:12; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- ☑ We cannot give up—Christ is our example of endurance (Hebrews 12:1-17).
- ☑ We can depend on Christ, because He is unchanging (Hebrews 13:8; cf. Titus 1:2).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JAMES

Date of Writing: ca. 45 A.D.

Author: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (James 1:1), the half-brother of Jesus.

Theme: Worldliness is opposed to godliness. A person’s godliness will become evident as good works of obedience permeate his lifestyle, beyond mere professed belief in Jesus as the Christ.

Original Audience: “To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion” (James 1:1). Written to Jews scattered beyond Israel (specifics unknown), relating Christian and Jewish moral teaching.

James 1	Trials as a testing of faith; Hearing and doing God’s word is pure religion
James 2	The sin of partiality; Faith without works is dead
James 3	Taming the tongue; Seeking wisdom from God and not from men
James 4	Warnings against worldliness, unjust judgment of brethren, and boasting about the future
James 5	Warnings to the rich; Exhortation to patience in suffering; Benefits of faithful prayer

Key Verses:

- **James 1:2-4.** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- **James 2:24.** You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must endure the trials of life, being aware of the benefits of suffering (James 1:2-4, 12; 5:7-11; cf. Isaiah 48:10; Zechariah 13:8-9; Psalms 66:10; Romans 5:3-52 Timothy 1:8; 2:3; 4:5; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; John 16:33; Matthew 5:10-12).
- ☑ We must learn to control our tongues (James 3:1-12; cf. Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6).
- ☑ We cannot be worldly in our thinking and expect to find favor with God (James 4:4; Matthew 6:19-21; Romans 12:2; 2 Timothy 4:10; 1 John 2:15-16).

Bible Basics Bullets:

JUDE

Date of Writing: ca. 67 A.D.

Author: “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James” (Jude 1).

Theme: The church must contend for the faith that was given once for all, by resisting false teachers and following the truth.

Original Audience: “To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ” (Jude 1). Specific Christian audience unknown.

Jude 1-2	Greeting
Jude 3-16	The need to contend for the faith; God’s judgment on false teachers, past and present
Jude 17-23	Persevering in the face of opposition to true Christianity
Jude 24-25	Prayer of exaltation to God

Key Verses:

- **Jude 3.** Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.
- **Jude 20-23.** But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must learn many lessons from Old Testament characters (Jude 5-16; cf. Romans 15:4).
- ☑ We must be on guard against false teachers who may creep into the church unnoticed (Jude 3-4; cf. Acts 20:28-32; 1 Corinthians 11:19; Galatians 2:4; 2 Peter 2:1).
- ☑ In evangelizing we must use a variety of appeals, depending on the spiritual status of the prospective converts (Jude 22-23; cf. Acts 8:29-35; Matthew 9:35-37; 23:15-39).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 PETER

Date of Writing: ca. 62-64 A.D.

Author: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:1).

Theme: Those who persevere in the faith through persecution will be rewarded, both with God’s spiritual blessings on earth, and the everlasting blessing of heaven.

Original Audience: “To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Peter 1:1). The epistle was written possibly after the occasion of Paul’s death, encouraging “Paul’s people” to continue through their earthly suffering (see 1 Peter 1:12, 2 Peter 3:15-16).

1 Peter 1	Christians are born again to a living hope; Christians are called to be holy
1 Peter 2	Christians are living and holy stones built on the chief cornerstone, Christ; Living in submission to proper authorities
1 Peter 3	Wives and husbands; Suffering persecution for the sake of Christ
1 Peter 4	Living a pure lifestyle as stewards of God’s grace; Suffering as Christians only, and not as offenders
1 Peter 5	Exhortations to elders and those under them; Anticipation of future exaltation for Christians; Final greetings

Key Verses:

- **1 Peter 1:15-16.** [B]ut as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
- **1 Peter 2:9-10.** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We must be humble before God and before one another (1 Peter 5:5-6; cf. James 4:6-10).
- ☑ In suffering as Christians, we identify with Christ (1 Peter 3:17-18; 4:1, 12-15; cf. Acts 5:41; Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 1:5; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 1:24).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 PETER

Date of Writing: ca. 64 A.D.

Author: “Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:1).

Theme: Even in the face of persecution, the grace of God transforms people, and serves as a foundation for all of the fruit that Christians bear.

Original Audience: “To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:1). Possibly written after the occasion of Paul’s death, encouraging "Paul's people" to continue through their earthly suffering (1 Peter 1:12, 2 Peter 3:15-16).

2 Peter 1	The need to develop in various qualities God desires Christians to exhibit; Peter’s eyewitness account of Christ; The nature of Bible inspiration
2 Peter 2	Warning against false prophets and teachers; Their ultimate punishment
2 Peter 3	The coming of the day of the Lord; Final exhortation to grow in Christ

Key Verses:

- **2 Peter 1:5-8.** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **2 Peter 3:9-10.** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ In the Scriptures, we have everything we need to produce godly living (2 Peter 1:3; cf. Matthew 4:4; Ephesians 6:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12).
- ☑ God will not allow us to fall if we diligently pursue Christian behavior (2 Peter 1:10-11).

Bible Basics Bullets:

1 JOHN

Date of Writing: ca. 91 A.D.

Author: John, brother of James, son of Zebedee; the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).

Theme: God is love, and His followers in turn must love Him and love one another. Christian love is manifested in true doctrine, obedient living, and fervent devotion.

Original Audience: Probably the same audience to whom the Gospel of John is addressed. (John’s gospel focuses on the *divinity* of Christ, and 1 John seems to be correcting a neglect of the *humanity* of Christ.)

1 John 1	The Word is life, and people must walk in His light
1 John 2	Jesus is the Christian’s Advocate; Love for brethren is essential; Warning of antichrists
1 John 3	Those who are faithful are God’s children; The need to love one another in response to Christ’s love
1 John 4	The command to test the spirits; The love of Christ perfects Christians
1 John 5	Those who love God overcome the world and have confidence in God

Key Verses:

- **1 John 2:1-2.** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
- **1 John 3:1.** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We sin when we act in opposition to the law of God (1 John 3:4; cf. 2 John 9). To sin is not necessarily the same as doing something that is socially unacceptable (see Galatians 1:10).
- ☑ We must test all ideas by the doctrine of Christ, for there are many who would have us believe falsehoods (1 John 4:1; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Acts 17:11).
- ☑ Through Christ, we may have confidence on Judgment Day (1 John 3:21; 4:17-18; 5:13).

Bible Basics Bullets:

2 JOHN & 3 JOHN

Date of Writing: ca. 91 A.D.

Author: John, brother of James, son of Zebedee; the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). Specifically “the elder” (2 John 1; 3 John 1).

Theme(s): Love for God is manifested in obeying Him (2 John), and remaining steadfast throughout opposition (3 John).

Original Audience(s): “[T]he elect lady and her children” (2 John 1); “the beloved Gaius” (3 John 1).

2 John	Walking in truth and love; Warning concerning deceivers who deny that Christ came in the flesh; Regulation concerning Christian hospitality
3 John	Examples of supporting the gospel (Gaius, Demetrius, and others) and opposing the gospel (Diotrephes)

Key Verses:

- **2 John 6.** And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.
- **3 John 4.** I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
- **3 John 11.** Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

Practical Lessons:

- ☑ We cannot offer endorsement or hospitality to those teaching false doctrine (2 John 10-11).
- ☑ We must make sure our children know that our highest aspiration for their lives is that they be faithful, New Testament Christians (3 John 4; cf. Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6).
- ☑ There are some things that we need to say face-to-face and not through some other medium, whereas some things cannot wait until a face-to-face meeting (2 John 12; 3 John 13).
- ☑ We must avoid not only those things that God has explicitly condemned, but also those things about which He has been silent, for which He has not given His authority (2 John 9). In other words, we must ask ourselves, “Do I have Bible authority for this?” (Colossians 3:16-17).

Bible Basics Bullets:

REVELATION

Date of Writing: ca. 95-96 A.D.

Author: John, brother of James, son of Zebedee; the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). “[H]is servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw” (Revelation 1:1-2).

Theme: The ultimate victory of Christ (and therefore Christians) over the forces of evil.

Original Audience: “The seven churches that are in Asia” (Revelation 1:4).

Revelation 1	Greeting; Purpose of the book; The vision of the Son of Man
Revelation 2	Jesus’ evaluation of the congregations in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, and Sardis
Revelation 3	Jesus’ evaluation of the congregations in Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea
Revelation 4	The throne room of God
Revelation 5	The scroll and the entrance of the Lamb, Who is worthy to open the scroll
Revelation 6	The seven seals, announcing coming destruction
Revelation 7	The 144,000 of Israel, who will be spared from destruction; A great multitude from every nation, who also will be spared (the church)
Revelation 8-11	The seventh seal and the golden censer with incense, representing the prayers of the saints; The seven trumpets, announcing the fall of the Roman Empire (Babylon) by natural calamity, moral decay, and invasion by external armies
Revelation 12-14	Events involving the seven mystic figures: The woman clothed with the sun (probably Israel initially and then spiritual Israel, the church), the red dragon (Satan), the woman’s child (Jesus, who sprung from Israel), Michael the angel, the sea beast (probably 10 Roman emperors), the land beast (probably emperor worship), the Lamb of God (Christ); The harvest of the Earth
Revelation 15-16	The seven angels pouring out the seven bowls of wrath, at God’s direction (each bowl provides a different perspective on God’s wrath being poured out on Rome because of its persecution of the church)
Revelation 17-18	The sevenfold judgment on the “great harlot” who is “drunk with the blood of the saints,” with details about Rome’s immorality

Revelation 19-22:5	The saints rejoice at the marriage supper of the Lamb; The sevenfold triumph, including the capture of the beast, the capture of the false prophet who has deceived many, the binding of Satan, the reign of the saints with Christ, the destruction of Satan and his servants, the Judgment Day, and the saints' inheritance of the new Jerusalem
Revelation 22	The future coming of Christ and the invitation to be in a right relationship with God; Warning against adding to or taking from the book of Revelation

Key Verses:

- **Revelation 1:1.** The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw.
- **Revelation 2:10-11.** Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'
- **Revelation 3:15.** "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.
- **Revelation 22:17** The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

Practical Lessons:

- ☒ We must be humble before God, for humility before Him is required of all beings, whether in heaven or in Earth (Revelation 4; 5:11-14; cf. Psalms 145:21; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5-6).
- ☒ If we worship anything other than the true God, we will be lost (Revelation 19:20). We must remain dedicated to the Lord throughout life, not leaving our first love (Revelation 2:10; 2:4, 19). If we will be faithful to Christ, we will overcome all evil and all difficulty.
- ☒ We must know our Old Testament, for much of the Book of Revelation is understandable only when read with the Old Testament in mind, particularly the books of prophecy.
- ☒ We must ensure that we are right with God, for only those of us who are part of the bride of Christ will be saved (Revelation 21; cf. Ephesians 5:21-33). To put it another way, only God's kingdom of priests will be saved (Revelation 1:6; cf. Colossians 1:13-14).

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