

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE**

New Testament Lesson #162

Although the Bible looks like one big book, it is actually a collection of 66 smaller books, some of which are fairly long and others that are only one page. These books were written by about 40 different authors over a period of around 1,600 years.

The books of the Bible include many different things: history, prophecies, a love poem, songs of praise, stories about people, philosophy, laws, letters, visions, dreams, the life of Jesus and announcements of God's Good News.

The Bible is divided into two main sections: the Old Testament, which contains 39 of the 66 books, and the New Testament, which contains 27 of the 66 books. The Old Testament is mostly about God's dealing with the people of Israel. Everything in the Old Testament happened before the time of Jesus Christ. The New Testament begins with Jesus Christ and tells about his life, death and resurrection. It then tells about the people who believed in him and who became part of the church after Jesus went into heaven. In the New Testament, Jesus tells additional things about what God is like and what God expects of human beings.

The overall story of the Bible is this: God created human beings to be in a special relationship with him. But because of human disobedience, sin entered the world and disrupted that special relationship. So God provided a way for sin to be overcome and the relationship restored. First, God gave laws to help people live right, but because no one could keep the laws completely, God then sent his Son Jesus into the world. People who believed in Jesus and followed him were restored to that special relationship with God.

Sometimes we call the Bible "Scripture" and sometimes we call it "God's Word." That's because as we read it, God speaks to us today. In one of the New Testament books, the Apostle Paul wrote to his friend Timothy about the Bible. Here's what he said: "... ever since you were a child, you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed." (Good News Bible)

**POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- Jesus is not mentioned in the Old Testament, but Jesus told his followers that the Old Testament bore testimony about him. See Luke 24:27: "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."
- The first-century Christians believed that Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. See Acts 8:30-35, especially verse 35: "Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus." Christians still believe Jesus is the fulfillment of those prophecies.
- The Scriptures are one way that God reaches us. Consider the testimony of the two men on the road to Emmaus: "They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while [Jesus] talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'" (Luke 24:32).

- The passage from 2 Timothy quoted in the lesson describes Scripture as "inspired." The NIV rightly translates that as "God-breathed." Peter adds to that testimony by saying, "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

**Outline**

- I. The Bible is a collection of 66 smaller books.
  - A. Some books are fairly long and others are very short.
  - B. These books were written by about 40 different authors over a period of 1,000 to 2,000 years.
- II. The books of the Bible include many different things, including history, prophecies, a love poem, songs of praise, stories about people, philosophy, law codes, letters, visions, dreams, the life of Jesus and announcements of God's good news.
- III. The Bible is divided into two main sections
  - A. The Old Testament:
    - i. contains 39 books.
    - ii. is mostly about God's dealing with the people of Israel.
    - iii. includes only what happened before the time of Jesus Christ.
  - B. The New Testament:
    - i. contains 27 books.
    - ii. begins with Jesus Christ and tells about his life, death and resurrection.
    - iii. tells about the people who believed in him and who became part of the church.
    - iv. records what Jesus said God is like and what God expects of human beings.
- IV. The overall story of the Bible.
  - A. God created human beings to be in a special relationship with him.
  - B. Because of human disobedience, sin entered the world and disrupted that special relationship.
  - C. God provided a way for sin to be overcome and the relationship restored.
    - i. First, God gave laws to help people live right
    - ii. Then, because no one could keep the laws completely, God sent his Son Jesus into the world. People who believed in Jesus and followed him were restored to that special relationship with God.
- V. Sometimes we call the Bible "Scripture" and sometimes we call it "God's Word."
  - A. As we read it, God speaks to us today.
  - B. Paul said: "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living ...."

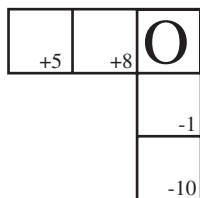
**ANSWER KEY:** TWO, ONE, OLD, GOD, ALL, LAW, SON, SIN BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, SCRIPTURE

**T**he Bible is made up of many different books and each book teaches us about God.

Find each three-letter answer by counting forward or backward in the alphabet from the letter that is given.  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

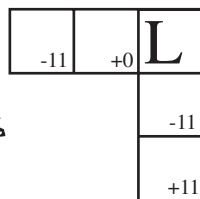


The Bible is divided into \_\_\_ o sections or testaments.

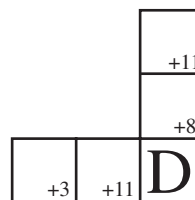


The Bible is 66 books combined into o \_\_\_ big book.

\_\_\_ l scripture is inspired by God.

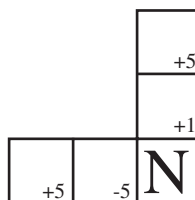


People found that they could not keep God's l \_\_\_.



The \_\_\_ d Testament is mostly about God's dealings with Israel.

\_\_\_ d created human beings to be in a special relationship with Him.



God sent His \_\_\_ n Jesus to save mankind and mend the broken relationship.

\_\_\_ n broke the relationship between God and human beings.

Starting at the arrow and following a spiral path to the center of the square, find these things that are in the Bible: history, instruction, laws, letters, poems, prophecy, rebuke, songs, truth.

Cross out those letters and use the letters that remain to find three names for God's special book.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_,
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_

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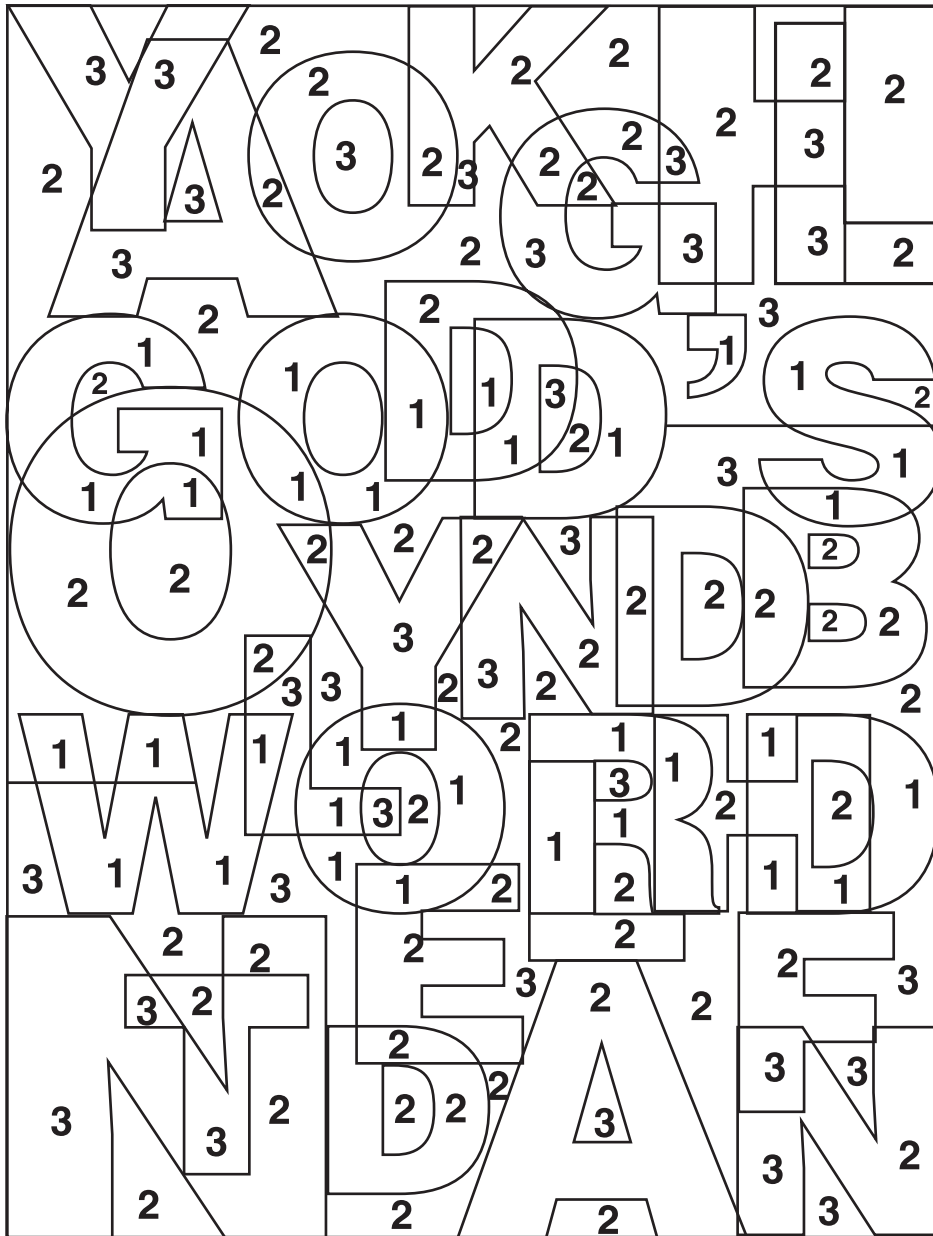
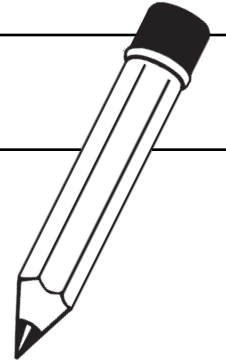
Y	C	E	H	P	O	R	P
B	S	R	O	W	S	R	E
I	O	D	R	T	E	R	T
N	N	L	U	K	U	U	Y
S	G	A	T	E	B	T	E
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R	G	S	S	C	R	I	S
U	O	D	S	P	O	E	M
C	T	I	O	N	I	B	H

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**T**hrough the Bible God speaks to us.



What do we call the Bible?  
 Shade in the **1**'s.



Name \_\_\_\_\_