

Knowing the Bible 101: More Resources

Click on any of the topics below to get more information that will help you with your individual or small group study.

Part I: God's Message for You

[Nine reasons why the Bible is verbally inspired.](#) Some critics claim that the words of Scripture are not inspired by the Holy Spirit, but merely the thoughts. Here are nine reasons from noted biblical scholar Norman Geisler to support the verbal inspiration of the Bible:

Part II: The Old Testament

[The Nine Main Eras of the Old Testament.](#) Here are the main historic divisions of the Old Testament as listed by Max Anders in *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*.

[Nine key people in the Old Testament.](#) Here are nine key people that correspond to the nine main eras of the Old Testament.

Part III: The New Testament

Nine Reasons Why the Bible is Verbally Inspired

- The Bible claims this for itself (2 Timothy 3:16).
- The apostle Paul wrote: "We speak with words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths" (1 Corinthians 2:13).
- It is evident from the repeated formula, "It is *written*."
- Jesus said that that which was *written in the whole Old Testament spoke of Him* (Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Hebrews 10:7).
- The New Testament constantly equates the word of God with the Scripture (writings) of the Old Testament (2 Peter 3:16).
- Jesus said that not even the smallest part of a Hebrew word or letter could be broken (Matthew 5:18).
- The New Testament refers to the *written record as the "revelation of God"* (Romans 3:2).
- Occasionally the writers were told by God to "give them my entire message; include every word" (Jeremiah 26:2). John warned against adding "anything to what is written here" or removing "any of the words of this prophetic book" (Revelation 22:18-19).
- *The very words uttered by men in the Old Testament were considered to be God's words by the New Testament writers.*

The Nine Main Eras of the Old Testament

- Creation – Includes the *creation* of the world, humanity, and early events.
- Patriarch – The birth of the Hebrew people through a family of *patriarchs*, covering a period of 200 years.
- Exodus – The *exodus of the Hebrew people as they are delivered out of 400 years of slavery in Egypt*.
- Conquest – The *conquest of the Promised Land by the Hebrew people upon their return from Egypt*.
- Judges – A 400-year period during which Israel is governed by rulers called *judges*.
- Kingdom – An additional 400-year period during which Israel becomes a full-fledged nation ruled by a *monarchy*.
- Exile – A 70-year period during which Israel's leaders live in *exile, having been conquered by foreign countries*.
- Return – The *return of exiled Jews to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple*.
- Silence – A final 400-year period between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament.

Nine Key People in the Old Testament

Era	Key Person	Description
Creation	Adam	The first <i>man</i>
Patriarch	Abraham	The first <i>patriarch</i>
Exodus	Moses	The leader of the <i>exodus</i>
Conquest	Joshua	The leader of Israel's <i>army</i>
Judges	Samson	The most famous <i>judge</i>
Kingdom	David	The best-known Israelite <i>king</i>
Exile	Daniel	The major <i>exilic prophet</i>
Return	Ezra	The central <i>return</i> leader
Silence	Pharisees	The <i>religious</i> leaders

Key Provinces and Cities in the Gospels

The Province of Galilee – Galilee was located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Jesus considered Galilee to be His home province. Both Nazareth, His early home, and Capernaum, His later home, are in Galilee.

The Province of Samaria – Located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, Samaria was the home to the Samaritans, who were part Jewish and part Gentile.

The Province of Judea – Judea was located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. Jerusalem was located in Judea and was home to most of the Jews in the New Testament.

The Province of Perea – Located on the east bank of the Jordan River, this is where Jesus spent some time with His disciples near the end of His ministry.

The City of Nazareth – Here is where Joseph and Mary lived and Jesus grew up.

The City of Capernaum – Located at the top of the Sea of Galilee, this is where Jesus lived during His years of ministry.

The City of Jerusalem – Located in Judea near the top of the Dead Sea, this was the home of the temple and was the center of activity for Jews.

The City of Bethlehem – The birthplace of Jesus, located five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Key Countries and Cities in Acts

The Country of Galatia – Located in present-day Turkey, Galatia was the destination of the Paul's first missionary journey.

The Country of Greece – The destination of Paul's second missionary journey.

The Country of Asia – Also known as Asia Minor, located on the western coast of present-day Turkey. This was the destination of Paul's third missionary journey.

The City of Jerusalem – Beginning of the early Christian church.

The City of Damascus – Located in present-day Syria, this was the city Paul where was headed when He met Jesus and was converted.

The City of Caesarea – Located on the Mediterranean coast just south of the Sea of Galilee, this was the home of Cornelius and the city where Paul was tried before he sailed for Rome.

The City of Antioch – On the Mediterranean coast north of Israel, Antioch was the starting point for all three of Paul's missionary journeys. Antioch is where the believers were first called Christians.

The City of Rome – The city of Paul's final imprisonment and death.

Three Main Eras of the New Testament

- Gospels – The life of Jesus of Nazareth as told in the Gospels.
- Church – The formation of the Christian Church.
- Missions – The expansion of the Church into the Roman empire through missions.

Three Key People in the New Testament

<u>Era</u>	<u>Key Person</u>	<u>Description</u>
Gospels	Jesus	The predicted <i>Messiah</i>
Church	Peter	The <i>leader</i> of the early Church
Missions	Paul	The first Christian <i>missionary</i>

Major Groups Within First-Century Judaism

Pharisees – The Pharisees—or “separated ones”—originated shortly the Maccabean Revolt around 167 B.C. Pharisees made up the largest of Jewish religious sects. They scrupulously observed the rabbinic as well as the Mosaic laws.

Sadducees – Though fewer in number than the Pharisees, the Sadducees—or “righteous ones”—had more political influence because they controlled the priesthood. They accepted only the Mosaic law or Torah as fully authoritative and denied the resurrection.

Essenes – There were only about 4,000 Essenes at the time of Jesus. Some of the Essenes lived in monastic communities, such as the one at Qumram, which produced the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Roman Emperors During the New Testament Era

Emperor	Years in power	Significance
Augustus	27 B.C. – A.D. 14	Ruled at the time of Jesus’ birth
Tiberius	A.D. 14-37	Ruled at the time Jesus ministered and died
Caligula	A.D. 37-41	Demanded worship of himself, ordered his statue placed in the temple at Jerusalem, but died before the order was carried out
Claudius	A.D. 41-54	Expelled Jewish residents from Rome
Nero	A.D. 54-68	Persecuted Christians; martyred Peter and Paul
<u>Vespasian</u>	A.D. 69-79	His army destroyed Jerusalem and the temple A.D. 70
Titus	A.D. 79-81	May have been ruling at the time Revelation Was written
<u>Domitian</u>	A.D. 81-96	Some scholars think he persecuted the church and therefore provided the background for the book of Revelation.