

Before you read this book...

“In the Old Testament the New is concealed, in the New the Old is revealed.”

—St. Augustine

While in place from the beginning, God’s redemptive plan for mankind was revealed over the course of time. It is in that light that the stories in this book are presented. The reader will get a small glimpse into the lives, times, and cultures of the people whose stories are told, some of whom lived thousands of years before Jesus — long before an understanding of His life and purpose were fully understood. So as you engage with this story, keep in mind that the narrative builds to a climax, just as it does in the Bible.


The stories have been paraphrased by the author. However, direct Scripture quotes are often used, having been included for the clarity and authority of God’s Word. These are italicized, with biblical references, throughout the book.

This is not an exhaustive retelling or commentary on the Bible in its entirety, but rather a selection of stories from God’s Word that highlight His redemptive plan for a fallen world.

Special Features:

- » Section summaries entitled *Threads of Hope* are included to help tie the story together
- » Helpful definitions at the end of each section
- » Designed for families and individuals of all ages; includes simple summaries for younger readers
- » Beautiful illustrations and maps.
- » Scripture references for each story

It is the author’s hope that this book will remind you of God’s goodness, faithfulness, and His sacrifice for us. May you, your family, and your faith be blessed by *God’s Story*.



Look for the summaries for younger readers. Quick and easy to read, they present each story in a simple way to engage a child’s interest.

Preface

We live in a world of wonder and beauty. Full of stars and planets, animals and people, flowers, trees, oceans, and so much more! But as amazing as these things are, none have the power to create themselves out of nothing. You see, in time past, the universe as we know it did not exist. It all began when God chose to create. With power and creativity, He spoke the natural world into existence.

It is hard for us to comprehend that kind of power.

God is a supernatural being. He is eternal, not created, having no beginning or end. God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They co-exist and work together as one and are known as the Trinity. The prophet Isaiah had a vision (Isaiah 6:1–3) that gives us a tiny glimpse of God’s greatness:

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

To be holy is to be absolutely good and pure. God does not choose to act in a way that is good and pure — His very being is good and sinless. He cannot think or act or be anything other than good. This is what sets Him apart from everything else that exists. And this is also why He must stand against that which is not good.

Mankind is unable to fully understand God, but thankfully the Bible teaches us enough about Him to understand what we need to know. The word **Bible** comes from the Greek word *biblia*, which means “books.” The Bible is a collection of many different books, similar to a library. This collection includes different genres, such as history, poetry, and prophecy. The words in these books were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God (2 Timothy 3:16), which explains why the Bible is known as *God’s Word*. When put together, all these books tell **God’s Story**.

The best way to understand the Bible is to read and study the whole collection again and again over your lifetime. It is the best-selling book of all time. It has been printed in hundreds of languages and is loved the world over. While the Bible may be ancient, it never gets old! Its words are as true and powerful today as they were a thousand years ago.

This book is just a small sample of the Bible’s riches. It highlights the big story of the Bible — God’s redemptive plan in response to the sin and fall of mankind.

Redemption is the main theme that weaves its way throughout this story, from the Garden of Eden to the Cross of Christ. This has often been referred to as the *scarlet thread of redemption*.

We hope you enjoy this miraculous, true story.

Part One: Of Darkness and Light

A battle wages on the earth today, at least as old as the ground upon which we walk. It began when an angelic being challenged the one true God.

This being is commonly referred to as Satan in the Bible. However, there are many passages that assign other names to him. The evil one, the devil, the father of lies, the adversary, dragon, serpent, and ruler of the world are a few of them. These names give an apt description of his character. He is evil.

Satan was created by God and was a high-ranking guardian cherub. He was uniquely beautiful. But his heart became proud, and he fancied himself God's equal. He turned on his Creator and began the very long war against God.

Satan has a certain amount of power and uses it in an attempt to turn people away from God. Satan is clever and often works in the shadows. But he is also a master of disguise and can pretend to be an angel of light. Thankfully, he is not as powerful as God.

God has chosen to allow Satan to have influence over this world for a time. We may not understand God's reasons for this, but we can trust in His wisdom. At the very least, by allowing Satan to influence the earth, people will have the opportunity to understand for themselves the true nature of God and His enemy, of good and of evil.

As you read *God's Story*, you will learn that Satan's fate has already been decided. One day in the future he will be destroyed for good, and evil will no longer exist. Until then, we would do well to remember that he is an enemy of God and mankind.

Satan entices people to sin but cannot force anyone to do anything. God has given people free will to make their own decisions. Thankfully, God also understands our human weaknesses and has made forgiveness and restoration possible. Much will be said about this as you read through this redemptive story, which culminates on a cross outside of Jerusalem.

The contrast between God and Satan, between darkness and light, could not be more clear. One seeks to give life and abundance, and the other to bring death and destruction (John 10:10).