

The Theme or Message of the Bible

The Old Testament (Genesis through Malachi)

Someone is coming!—that’s the message of the Old Testament. Prophecies of His coming are scattered throughout the Old Testament, starting in Genesis 3:15, after Adam and Eve sinned. A key passage in the Old Testament is Genesis 12:3, where Abraham receives three promises. 1) His descendants will form a great nation (Israel). 2) This nation would be given a land (Canaan). 3) Through Abraham’s seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. This “seed,” or descendant, through whom all nations of the earth would be blessed, is Jesus—a fact made abundantly clear in the New Testament (see Galatians 3:16; Acts 3:24-26).

The First Four Books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

Christ has come!—that’s the message of these books. Galatians 4:4 says, “When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son...” These books tell the story of His birth, His life, His death and resurrection, and finally, His ascension back to heaven. These books also reveal the reason He came—to save us from our sins (Luke 19:10; Matthew 26:28). If you’re new to the Bible, take one of these books and read it from beginning to end. Read with a humble heart, and you will be impressed with Jesus, impressed enough to devote your life to Him.

The Remainder of the New Testament: Acts through Revelation

Christ is coming again!—that’s the message of the remaining books. “This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11, NASV). This is just one of many references to His second coming in these books. We need to read these books carefully, because they tell us how to be prepared for His second coming, and for the judgment that will follow (Acts 17:30-31; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10). Don’t miss the key point—He is coming again, and He will judge us by the words He has spoken (John 12:48; Romans 2:16).

Summing Up

He is coming; He has come; He is coming again—that is the Bible in a nutshell. Why did He come, and why did He have to die on the cross? Because we are all sinners (Romans 3:23), and the penalty for sin is death—eternal death (Romans 1:18; 6:23). God loved us too much to let that happen, so He sent His Son to stand in our place, to bear our sins, to take the punishment that we should have received (Isaiah 53:3-6; 1 Peter 2:24). He was qualified to do that because He was without sin, a “lamb without blemish” (1 Peter 1:19; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Now that He has fully paid the penalty for sin, those who trust in Him—those who submit to His conditions of salvation—can be completely forgiven of their sins (Romans 3:21-26), and receive the hope of eternal life. This is what God meant when He said to Abraham: Through your seed (Christ), all nations of the earth will be blessed.