

A HELICOPTER VIEW OF THE BIBLE *(in 1100 words...)*

“Nonsense!” I hear you say. “How can anyone describe the entire Bible in only 1100 words?”

Quite right, you won't understand every aspect and nuance of the Bible from these 1100 words. But if you're anything like me, this insight gained from a talk by David Asscherick will give you a unique overview of the Bible that I have found both refreshing and invaluable.

So lets start:

First, take your Bible in your right hand and hold it upright with the spine pointing away from you. The front cover of the Bible is now facing to your left, yes?

That places Genesis to the left and Revelation to the right of your Bible, and like two book-ends they 'support' or 'contain' all the other books in God's Word (kind of like the Alpha and the Omega...).

Now notice this:

The first two chapters of Genesis describe 'Eden created', where several times God calls His creation 'good', until finally He declares to be 'very good':

(Gen 1:31) God saw all that he had made, and it was very good...

... and the last two chapters of the Bible, Revelation 21 and 22, describe 'Eden restored':

(Rev 21:1) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

(Rev 21:2) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband... (what a glorious vision!)

In each case we find a perfect God, in perfect communion, with a perfect people, in a perfect environment. In Genesis as we were originally created, and in Revelation as we have been restored.

Back to the beginning again: the third chapter in the Bible describes the Fall:

(Gen 3:1) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

(Gen 3:2) The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

(Gen 3:3) but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

(Gen 3:4) "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

(Gen 3:5) "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

(Gen 3:6) When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

(Gen 3:7) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves...

...and the rest, sadly, is history.

Fast forward to the third last chapter in the Bible, Revelation 20, which describes Satan's judgement:

(Rev 20:10) And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

And everything in between records God's plan and actions to restore us into a relationship with Him:

- **The Old Testament** records God's interaction with His people and points gloriously forward to the coming of Jesus:
 - Almighty God in Gen 3:15 "...And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." predicting Jesus' defeat of Satan on the cross.
 - David in Psalm 22 - 1000 years before Jesus;
 - Isaiah in his writings, particularly chapter 53 - 700 years before Jesus;
 - Micah 5:2 predicting the place of His birth, Bethlehem - 400 years before He was born;To name but four of the more than 300 prophesies which foretold with remarkable (supernatural?) accuracy Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension.
- **The four Gospels** record the events of Jesus' birth, His life, His death, His triumphant resurrection and His glorious ascension;
- **The Book of Acts** by Doctor Luke describes the establishment of Jesus' Church, "against which the Gates of Hades will not stand";
- And finally, **the letters of Paul, Peter, James, John and Jude** tell us how to take hold of the ultimate gift of God's Grace and proof of His love for us: Eternal salvation in Jesus' Name.

In conclusion consider this, Jesus speaking:

(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

(John 3:17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

(John 3:18) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

also:

(John 14:6) Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (my emphasis added)

... and finally, the 5th last verse in the Bible:

(Rev 22:17) The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. (my emphasis added)

What a promise! What a gift!

But there is a condition attached to this gift. It is tucked away in the last five verses of Revelation chapter 20, right after Satan receives his just desserts and immediately before Eden is finally restored:

(Rev 20:11) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

(Rev 20:12) And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

(Rev 20:13) The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

(Rev 20:14) Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

(Rev 20:15) If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Coincidence? I think not. Nothing is 'coincidence' with Almighty God. So if the words of Jesus in John 3:16-18 and 14:6 above don't make us take Jesus' Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) seriously, then these last five verses most certainly should:

Starting with ourselves...and then moving on to our lost brothers and sisters in this hurting world.

* 'the book of life' is God's list of all those people who are/were true seekers after Him and/or who have acknowledged and accepted His Son Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.