

Bible
Story Outline
in 35 steps

The First World

1. Before God creates the world and the heavens, Jesus exists and God chooses us to be blameless and holy.
2. God creates the world and everything in it, finally creating human beings in His own image.
3. The very first people, called Adam and Eve, choose to follow their own reasoning ability instead of God's guidance in the Garden of Eden. This is called

“**The Fall**”.

Because we are all descendants of these first

people, we have inherited this **Original Sin** too.



4. In anger at the people's lack of faith, God decides to wipe the slate clean with a flood and start over with the only faithful people, Noah and his family.

Age of the Patriarchs

5. God repopulates the world. But the people play at being God by trying to build a tower at Babel to reach up to God.

He will not allow them to pretend that they can be like Him. He confuses their speech so they can't even understand one another. This is where the word "babbling" comes from!

6. At this point the people are wandering tribes in the area of what today is Iraq. God gives these wandering tribes a fresh start by promising to be their God. He promises them a land to the west, called Canaan, which today is what we call Palestine.

7. Their first leader is Abraham. God tests his faith by seeing if he is willing to follow God's orders even to the point of sacrificing his only son, Isaac. God saves Isaac at the last second by providing a ram caught in some bushes!

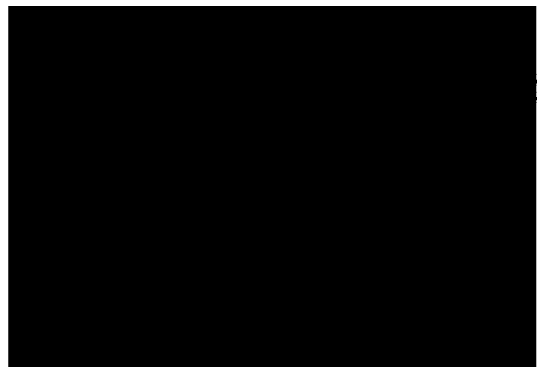
8. After Abraham dies, his son Isaac becomes the next leader. When Isaac gets old, his youngest son, Jacob becomes the next leader by stealing the leader position from his older twin brother, Esau. Jacob does this by tricking blind old Isaac into thinking he is really giving his blessing to Esau

2000 B.C.

9. In the next generation, Jacob has 12 sons. They become the beginning of the “twelve tribes of Israel.” The next to the youngest son is Joseph and he is his father’s favorite. This makes the other eleven jealous. So they try to get rid of Joseph. They sell him as a slave to a passing caravan on its way down to Egypt. The remaining eleven sons show their father Joseph’s coat of many colors, which they have covered with blood to make old Isaac think that Joseph was eaten by a wild animal.

10. The old father Jacob, his eleven remaining sons and all their tribes remain in Canaan, which today is called Palestine. But they are starving to death from a famine. So they travel to Egypt to buy grain. That is where they discover that long- lost Joseph has risen to become Pharaoh’s second-in-command!! Powerful Joseph can now punish his brothers for what they did to him long ago. But instead, Joseph forgives them all. He invites everyone to come down to live in Egypt where there is plenty of food. He tells them, “You meant to do me evil, but God meant it for good.”

11. After 400 years, the Hebrews (our Jewish ancestors) in Egypt are growing fast and doing well. The Pharaoh is afraid that these foreigners could become too powerful. So he reduces them all to slavery.



Before long he even tries to kill all the Hebrew baby boys. One baby named Moses survives when his mother hides him in a basket in the river. The baby is found and raised by none other than the Pharaoh's daughter!

12. Moses grows up in the court of Pharaoh. But he discovers that he is really a Hebrew, that he is related to the slaves. He hears God telling him to lead his enslaved Hebrew people to freedom. So, Moses tries to convince Pharaoh to "let my people go" by performing miracles like causing frogs to overrun the land. But Pharaoh never gives in. So, one night, God sends an angel of death to kill the oldest son in each Egyptian family. While the angel of death is striking the homes of the Egyptians, the Hebrew slave homes are safe. That is because God had told them to paint their doorposts with the blood of a lamb. This was the sign to the angel to "pass over" that house and not strike it. That is why Jewish people these days celebrate **Passover** around the time we're celebrating Easter. Then, with all the

Egyptian people in chaos, Moses leads the Hebrew people in an escape across the Red Sea. God parts the waters to let them all through and then closes the waters back over to drown the pursuing Egyptian army! This whole event is called **The Exodus**.

13. Three months after the escape across the Red Sea, Moses goes up on Mt. Sinai. He receives the Ten Commandments where God shows the people how to live with Him and with each other. But while Moses is receiving these

Ten Commandments, the people have turned impatient and faithless. In their lack of faith they instead have set up a Golden Calf to worship. God punishes them by forcing them to wander in the desert for forty years until all the people in that generation had died.



Era of the Judges

14. While in the desert, the Hebrew (that is, “Jewish”) people hear God tell them to take back the land of Canaan (called “Palestine” today) which they had left in the famine 450 years earlier to go to Egypt. During that time other tribes had taken over the area of Canaan. So, the Hebrews organize armies under the military leadership of Joshua and then a sequence of heroes called “judges.” Military battles begin which continue to this day in Palestine.

15. After taking back part of Canaan, they begin their first national government. Against the advice of God, they come up with a whole string of kings.

16. Their first king was **Saul** who was still fighting tribes like the Philistines. Though he started out faithful to God, Saul eventually became greedy. God replaced him with a shepherd boy who gets Saul's attention by killing the giant Philistine soldier named **Goliath**. This shepherd boy was named David and a thousand years later one of his descendants would be Jesus.

Era of the Kings and the Prophets

17. The shepherd boy becomes **King David** whom God promises will always have descendants rule Israel forever. Though King David is sometimes faithful to God, he too sins against God. He sends one of his officers on a suicide mission to die so that he, King David, can have an affair with the officer's wife whose name was Bathsheba. David marries her and their first child dies.

1000 B.C.

18. One of David's and Bathsheba's sons is **Solomon** who becomes the third king. He is the one who builds the Temple (though he makes his own palace even nicer). He is extremely wealthy and he is known for his wisdom: once he offered to cut a baby in half to give each half to two arguing women to find out who was the real mother!



19. Like Saul and Solomon, almost all of the following kings over the next five hundred years (bringing us up to about 500 B.C. now) become faithless toward God. So, prophets like **Isaiah** and **Jeremiah** come on the scene. Their job is to warn these kings to repent. They warn these

kings to be faithful or else God would allow enemy nations to wipe them out as punishment.

20. One of those prophets was **Jonah**. His job was to warn the city of Nineveh to repent. But as a Hebrew he hated the Ninevites, so he tried to sneak away from his duty of warning them. Instead he gets on board a ship going the opposite direction. But soon he is tossed overboard in a storm only to be swallowed by a whale which reverses direction to spit him out right back on the coast toward Nineveh. He relents, makes his way to Nineveh and does his job of warning the town which is saved.

21. The kings, however, do not listen to the prophets. Trouble befalls the people. The nation of Israel splits in two in a civil war. The northern half is called Israel and the southern half is Judah. First the northern half gets conquered. Later the southern half is also destroyed by outside armies just the way the prophets had warned.

522 B.C.

The Exile and Return

22. In that southern half called Judah, the Temple is leveled in Jerusalem. Most of the people's leaders get hauled away into "exile" to the enemy capital city of Babylon where they live for two or three generations. This event is known as "**The Exile.**" Many of the sad Psalms were written there in Babylon.

23. One of those hauled off to Babylon was **Daniel**. He remains faithful to God by refusing to worship foreign gods even though he is in a foreign land. So as punishment, he is thrown into a pit of lions. But God protects him by keeping the lions' mouths shut.

24. After a couple generations, the Babylonians themselves get conquered. The Hebrew (Jewish) people whom they have been holding in Babylon are now freed to go back to Jerusalem. But most of them are just content to stay where they are. Only a few even want to go back.



25. The nation of Israel never really gets it together (until a few years ago in the late 1940's). From about 300 BC on, they get conquered, first by the Greeks and then by the



Romans. Every now and then Jewish guerrilla fighters unsuccessfully try to gain independence (which is what a lot of people mistakenly would think Jesus was trying to do later on). This three hundred year period is called the **Inter-Testamental Period** which is covered by a group of books called the **Apocrypha**, books which are included in Jewish and Catholic bibles, but not those read by most Protestants.

300 B.C.

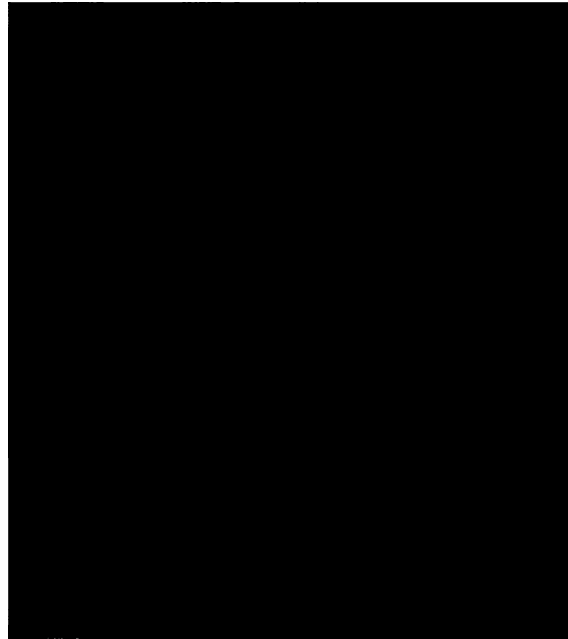
26. As their land was being taken over by one nation after another, the Hebrew (Jewish) people were remembering a promise made by the prophets a while back. Prophets like Isaiah had said that after the punishment, someday God would send someone to SAVE them - a "savior." They were waiting for God to fulfill that promise when something very unusual happened around 4 B.C.

The Promise Fulfilled in the New Testament

27. Around 4 B.C., according to the witnesses of the New Testament, the promise of a savior is fulfilled when several things happen just like the prophets

had said. These were some of the predictions that came true in Jesus:

- the stars were in just the right position when He arrived (remember the Star of Bethlehem?)
- a child was born in the City of David (that is, Bethlehem)
- the savior would be a direct descendent of King David (Mary and Joseph were both direct descendents of King David)
- the savior would be born to a young woman (Mary was about fifteen)
- the savior would come out of Egypt (He had to escape there as a child in order to avoid being killed by King Herod)
- the savior would be called a Nazarene (Jesus' home town would be Nazareth)
- the savior would be a suffering servant (Jesus was arrested and tortured)



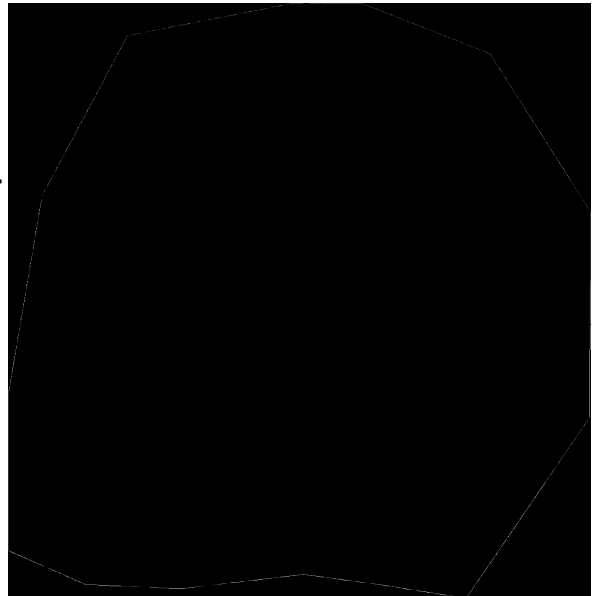
- the savior would die on a tree and would have no broken bones (Jesus was crucified on a wooden cross, but they did not break his legs like they usually did with such prisoners)
- the savior would free the people from all that oppresses them (Jesus overcame death and evil and accomplished forgiveness of sins for us all)

His given name was “Jesus” which means “savior.” Later His followers would claim that this Jesus was “the Christ,” which means “the one chosen of God.”

28. The promised one is baptized (when He is thirty years old) by his cousin John in the Jordan River. Then He is confronted by the religious leaders. They see Him as a challenge to their way of doing things.

29. Jesus shows his power over things like hunger by doing miracles like feeding thousands with only a couple fish and a couple loaves of bread.

30. Jesus then shows his power over death by doing things like raising His friend Lazarus from the dead.



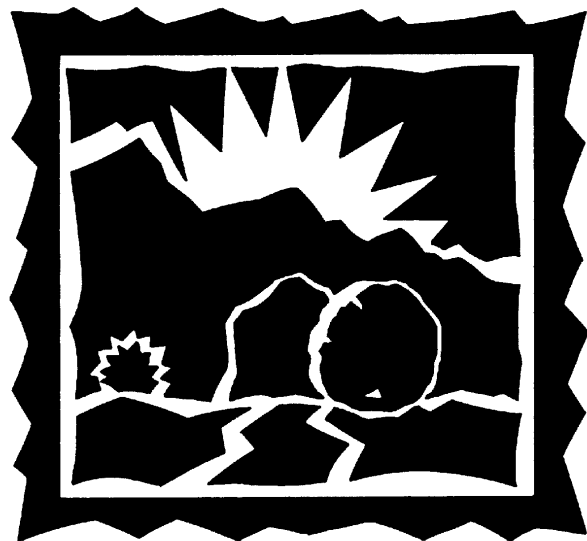
31. Many people misunderstand what Jesus is all about.



Some are afraid that He is going to be a rabble rouser trying to lead the people to revolt. Others are disappointed when He does NOT do this. So, on the request of many Jewish leaders and some of the crowds, the Roman occupation troops under the governor Pontius Pilate execute Jesus. This is what we remember on **Good Friday**.

32. But Jesus had already told His followers three times that He would have to be arrested, tortured and executed and on the third day rise from the dead. On the third day after He is executed, His body is missing from where it was laid in a cave tomb. The authorities had already figured that Jesus' followers would try to steal the body, and now they think that this is just exactly what has happened. But His followers report that Jesus has instead risen from the dead (this is the

Resurrection that we celebrate on **Easter**). The risen Jesus appears to His followers many times over the next forty days and proves to them that He is not a ghost but is truly alive!



All of the books of the New Testament are written thirty to sixty years after Jesus' time. None of these were written by Jesus himself, and most of these probably were not written by His apostles either, even though some of the books bear their names. These accounts were written by people who had been told by others who had been told by others who had been there.



33. The next part is told in the history book of the Christian church - the book called Acts. Forty days later His followers report seeing Jesus rise into the sky to go to His Father in heaven to prepare a place for the rest of us who are joined to Jesus in baptism and belief. This event is called the **Ascension**. As they meet for prayer, the Holy Spirit descends upon them like flames

resting on their heads. This is what we celebrate on **Pentecost**.

From that day forward, huge numbers of people come together to worship the Risen Christ.

These followers then are harassed by the authorities and Jewish leaders. But one of these persecutors named Saul finds himself confronted by the Risen Jesus. Saul's attitude changes. From that point on the Bible uses the Greek form of his name, Paul. He organizes the first churches throughout Greece and his letters to them make up most of the New Testament - that portion called the **Epistles** (meaning 'letters') like Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, etc.

50 - 90 A.D.

34. The last living of the Twelve Apostles, John, gets thrown into a prison on an island off Greece called

Patmos. There he has a dream where Jesus appears to him to say that He will come again (this is called the **Second Coming**). At the end of time the world as we know it will end and be and replaced by another, when some people will be saved and others will perish (this event is called **The Tribulation**). This dream is told in the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelations.



35. And here we are today, trying to do Jesus' work while we await His Second Coming!