

What is the Bible All About?

Read 2 Timothy 3.16-17

The Bible is a book about salvation.

The Need for Salvation is in Genesis 1-7. Human beings are fallen and need to be saved, they are lost and need to be found and brought home.

The Preparation for Salvation occupies the rest of the Old Testament – God working through thousands of years to prepare for the coming of His Son, Jesus. The sum of the Old Testament is "A Saviour is coming".

The Coming of Salvation: In the Gospels in the life and death of Jesus, the Christ.

The Spread of Salvation: in the Acts of the Apostles (mainly 2 apostles, Peter and Paul). The Gospel spreads, beginning in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The Effect of Salvation is seen in the epistles – letters from Paul and others to the churches. We see groups of Christians, their life and joy, their difficulties and witness as they work out the life and purposes of Jesus in and through their lives and fellowship.

The Goal of Salvation: Summed up in Revelation with the close of history, the triumph of God and creation restored.

In it all is a strong undercurrent drawing us into the story in an encounter with Jesus Christ to become partners in His work and purpose today.

There are many great stories of God's use of the Bible to bring people to Jesus. One is of a Bible seller in Sicily who set out one day with a haversack of Bibles. He had to go through a forest and was held up by a bandit who demanded to know what he had in the bag. "Books" said the man. "We don't want books. Burn them" said the bandit pointing to his fire. The seller took out one Bible and said "There's a great story in this one. Let me read it to you". He read the story of the Good Samaritan. "That's a good book", said the bandit, "I'll have that one". The seller pulled out another Bible and read out the story of the Prodigal Son. "That's a good book", said the bandit, "I'll have that one". One by one the Bible seller took out a Bible and read a story; the bandit took it and finally sent the seller home. It was 2 years before the seller saw the bandit again. It was in a large square of a market town and the "bandit" was standing there on a box preaching about Jesus. His life had been totally changed by reading "that book".

Questions for discussion:

1. The Bible is nearly all about bygone times. What makes you think it has anything to say to us today?
2. Has there ever been a time when one text or part of the Bible has spoken to you or been very important in your life? Tell us about it.
3. Have you got a favourite Bible verse or passage? What is it? Why is it a favourite for you?