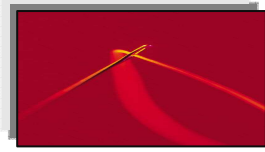


What is the Central Theme of the Bible?

The Scarlet Thread of Salvation



It began in the Garden of Eden. God cursed Adam with the penalty of death for his disobedience. At the same time God promised a redeemer (Gen. 3:14-19). Although the curse has been inherited throughout all generations, the people who love God have the hope of redemption, or salvation. A brief look at the genealogy of Jesus will reveal how God wove his scarlet thread of salvation through the generations.

The scarlet thread began with Adam's son, Seth (3874 -2962 B.C.), who was born after Cain and Abel.

Noah (2948-1998 B.C.), a descendant of Seth, was saved with his family from the great flood (Gen. 6:10-22). The thread passed through Noah's son Shem⁵ (Gen. 9:25-27). The generations of Shem would carry God's blessing because the Redeemer was to be a descendant of Shem. Prophecy also identifies Shem as the father of all the children of Eber⁶.

Through the generations we come to Abraham (1996-1881 B.C.) (Gen. 12:1-3). When Abraham was one hundred and Sarah was ninety years of age, Sarah gave birth to Isaac (1896-1716 B.C.), the son God promised to them (Gen. 17:19; 18:1-18; 21:1-9).

The thread then passed through Isaac to his son Jacob (1836-1689 B.C.) (Gen. 25:23). Jacob fathered eleven sons and Rachael was expecting his twelfth when God changed Jacob's name to Israel and blessed him (Gen. 35:9-12). Nearly two hundred years after Jacob died God made a covenant with the tribes of Israel and gave them the law (Exod. 20:1-26). Yet, despite all that God did for his chosen people, they repeatedly broke his covenant and called to God in anguish when their idolatry turned on them like a poisonous snake. Even so, and this is important to remember, he loved them as a father loves his children. And the scarlet thread of salvation continued.

Of the twelve sons of Israel (Jacob) God chose Judah (Gen. 49:8-12), also known as Zion (Ps. 78:68).

⁵ Descendants of Shem are called Semitic.

⁶ Names usually have a meaning that describes something about the name bearer. The seemingly unimportant mention of Shem as the father of all the children of Eber is not unimportant at all. Eber means *one who crosses over and the other side*. It was a prophecy indicating that all who believe and receive the Redeemer will be grafted into the blessing and cross over into the kingdom of God.

The next person to be chosen was a descendant of Judah, a shepherd named David (1085-1014 B.C.), whom God chose to be king over the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Sam. 16:1-13). When David was seventy years of age he chose his son, Solomon, to succeed him as king. However, God chose to continue the thread of salvation through Solomon's brother Nathan⁷ (2 Sam. 5:14; Zech. 12:12; Luke 3:31) to his descendant Mary, who became the virgin mother of Jesus. Mary bore the seed of the Son of God (Luke 1:1-80) fulfilling God's promise of a redeemer. The thread of salvation did not end with the birth of Jesus, nor did it end with his death. It is still being woven through all faithful believers in preparation for the Day of Redemption.

The fire of jealousy and wrath has burned in God's eyes ever since he closed the gates of Eden, and will still be burning at the Judgment seat of God.

How to Study the Bible

When I search for an answer I like to use the journalist's approach of who, what, when, where, why and how. In relation to the Bible the answers to these questions help me to better understand the context, therefore help me to keep interpretations simple and pure to the context of what the Bible says. How does the Bible answer these questions? As you read through the pages of this site (www.prophecybythebook.com) you will learn more about what the Bible says about the answers to these probing questions.

- Who the Savior is and his qualifications to be our Savior
- Where the Savior comes from
- Why we need a Savior
- What we need to be saved from
- When he will save us
- How he will save us
- How to apply all of this knowledge to our lives to protect ourselves against what we are being saved from **or**
- **Running the race to win and keeping our eye on the prize of resurrection and eternal life with Father and Son.**

Do you get the impression that the central theme of the Bible is about salvation *and* the person through whom it comes?

All of the answers to the above journalist type questions were first given in the prophecies of the Old Testament beginning in Genesis. The New Testament tells about the fulfillment of some of those prophecies and the ones yet to occur. The Bible states that Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy. He is

⁷ The genealogy in "Matthew" records the legal line of Jesus through Solomon to Joseph, and the genealogy in "Luke" records His blood line through Nathan to Mary.

the “who” of the Bible. That is the simple part. It’s the what, where, when, why and how of prophecy that people often misunderstand and make complicated.

Jesus Christ is the Spirit of Prophecy

Prophecy isn't just about future events. It is about what we do with that information right now. Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy and all the more reason the Body of Christ should agree on what the Bible says. The very fact that there are thousands of commentaries on Bible Prophecy that don't agree with one another proves there is need to re-evaluate. Most have added “human reasoning” with complicated explanations and, sadly, miss the mark. Very often mistakes are made by oversight of key Scriptures that would have kept them on track. Even the most educated theologian who has studied the Scriptures for many years can make mistakes in interpretation and often it is pride that prevents them from seeing or hearing the truth.

Years ago I praised the Lord for an understanding of a Scripture that I thought was correct. In the middle of my praises, I actually felt a hard thump on my forehead and was then directed to another Scripture that corrected me. Not exactly what most people would call a Holy Spirit action, but He got my attention in the way He knew would work. I learned to be more diligent in testing my *revelations* by seeking corroborative Scriptures and being careful of context.

You may have noticed that the writing style of the Bible often makes it difficult to determine the subject of sentences and paragraphs, especially in the King James Version. I believe choosing the wrong subject in a verse or chapter is the cause of many incorrect interpretations, but the greatest and primary cause is not carefully listening to our teacher, the Holy Spirit.

Keep It Simple—Keep It Pure

The Bible says, "Line upon line, here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:10). It's true. Knowledge doesn't come all at once. The point is to keep going because the answers to your questions or criticisms are waiting for you to discover what the Spirit of God wants you to learn little by little, line by line, precept by precept.

There are a few core rules on which any Bible student should keep in focus:

- Pray for God's understanding and wisdom. He is the true teacher.
- Maintain Bible context.
- Look for the true subject of sentences and paragraphs.
- Test everything by the Word, not just once, but several times. Due diligence pays off with great blessings.
- Test all doctrine by the Bible not denominational teaching. Set aside denominational teaching. Keep these questions in mind when studying the Bible: What does the Bible say? Does it match completely in context with denominational teaching? This is the most difficult task, since all denominations claim that what they teach is the truth. Your safety is in testing.

- Test all doctrine concerning Jesus Christ's return. The Hebrew people were chosen to bring forth our Savior. Their history and their future is important in the process of understanding prophecy.
- Always remember that anyone who adds to or takes away from any part of the prophecy of the Book of Revelation will never enter the holy city (Revelation 22:12-15). This true for the whole Bible, since the Book of Revelation is wholly based on Old Testament prophecy.

Years ago a friend told me how angry she was at me for stressing the testing process. She also thanked me because it helped her to understand the importance of being proactive in hearing and reading the Word. These core rules of study have proven very beneficial to me and my friend. I hope they will help you in your search for truth as well.

**What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know...
It's what we know for sure that just ain't so. *Mark Twain***

