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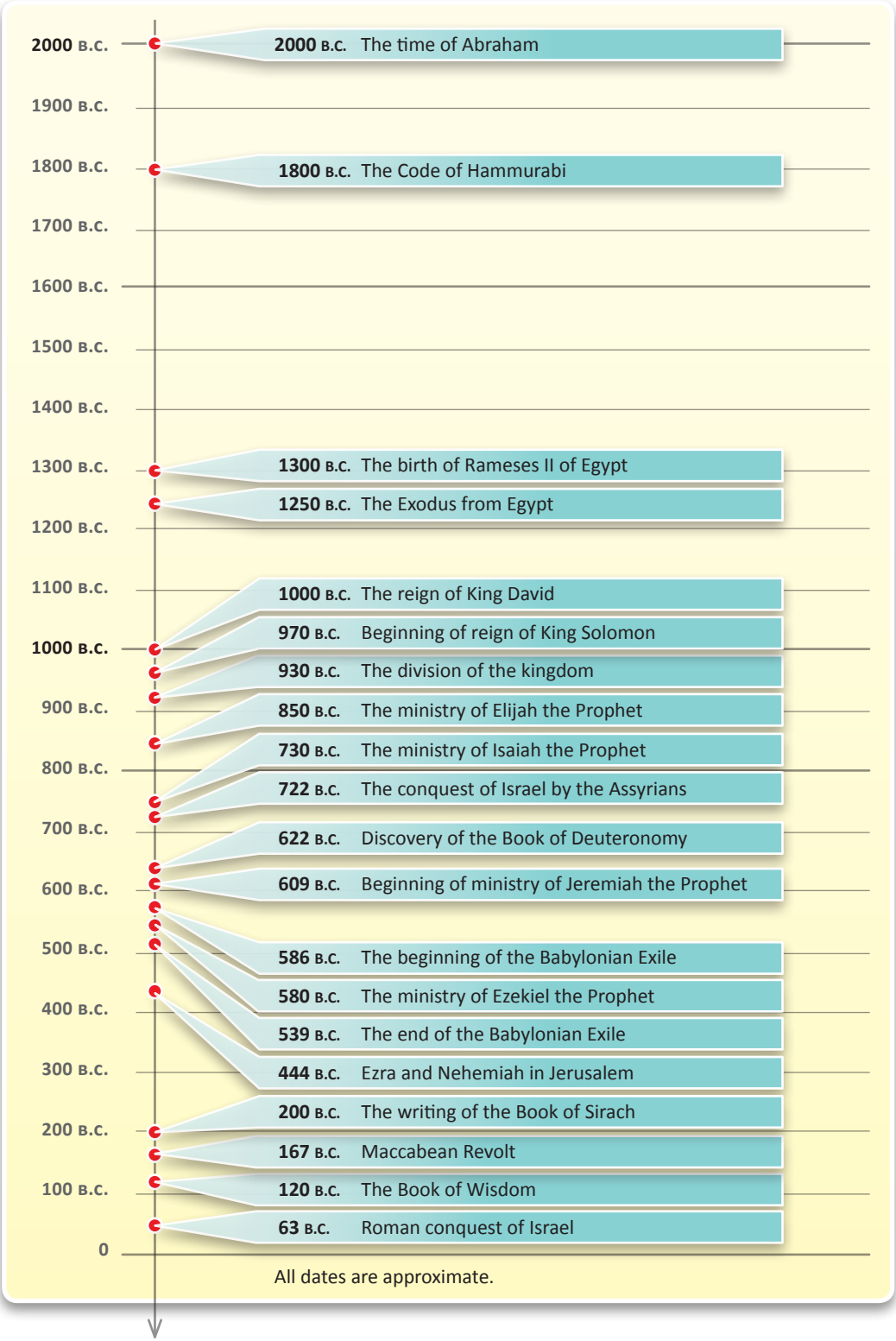
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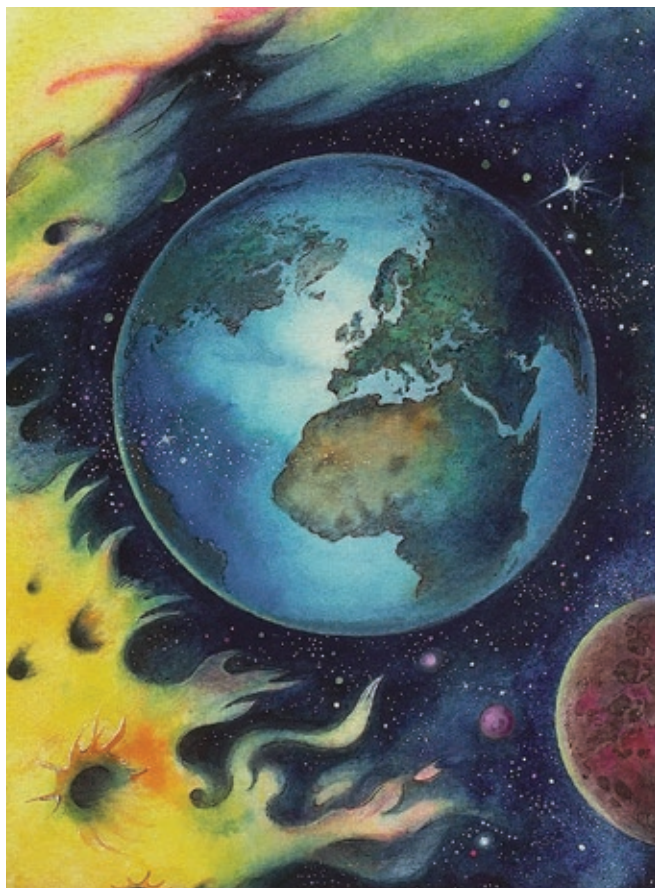
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Old Testament Timeline





GENESIS



“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (1:1).

Genesis is the book of beginnings.

It doesn't just go way back; it goes all the way back. It starts at the beginning of all beginnings. It starts at creation. It introduces us to the universe, to the earth, and to people. It introduces us to sin and to God's plans for the world. It explains what everything is and how everything began.

Genesis also introduces us to the nation of Israel. This is very important because in the Old Testament Israel is in the spotlight. God chose Israel to be His very own people. They play a part in each part of God's plans to save us from sin and win us to Himself. We can't understand the Bible without knowing about these people. Genesis lets us meet them for the first time.

By introducing us to all of that, Genesis introduces us to God. We learn Who God is and what He really wants from us. It is wondrous from start to finish.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is Genesis really true?

A: Yes, it is God's Word. Yet, that Word is expressed in different ways. Sometimes God's Word is expressed in historical accounts, and sometimes in parables and stories from which we can learn about God's will for us.

Q: Why did God ask Adam where he was and if he had eaten the forbidden fruit? Didn't God know?

A: God knows everything, but He wanted Adam to admit what he had done and repent.

Q: Why did God punish the world with a flood in the days of Noah?

A: There is an ancient saying: “As the sin, so the punishment.” Humans had brought chaos into the world with their sins. A flood is a type of chaos, so God was simply giving people what they had asked for when they sinned.

OUTLINE

Creation (1:1—2:3)

God creates the universe and everything in it. He makes people in His own image.

Adam and Eve (2:4—5:32)

Adam and Eve have all they need, but the serpent gets them to disobey God anyway. This brings sin into the world. Cain kills his brother Abel.

Noah, the flood, and the Tower of Babel (6:1—11:32)

The world becomes so evil that God floods the whole earth. Only Noah and those on the ark with him survive.

Abraham and Sarah (12:1—25:18)

God chooses Abraham and Sarah to be the ancestors of His own people. God promises to bless the whole earth through this new people of God.

Isaac and Rebekah (25:19—28:9)

The first generation of Abraham's descendants settle in Canaan, the land God has promised them. God renews His promise to Isaac. Jacob and Rebekah trick Isaac into giving Jacob Esau's firstborn blessing.

The story of Jacob and Esau (28:10—36:43)

Jacob leaves home, and God promises to take care of him and bless him, just as He did Abraham and Isaac.

The story of Joseph (37:1—50:26)

Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt. God, however, watches over him and soon Joseph is ruler of all Egypt, under Pharaoh. Through Joseph, God saves His people from famine as Jacob's entire family moves to Egypt.



The Ziggurat of Nanna at Ur. Ziggurats are massive temples found in Mesopotamia. The builders of the tower of Babel were probably attempting to build a structure of this kind.

KEY EVENTS

Abraham Leaves Ur



1. Ur

Ur of the Chaldeans was a thriving city with businesses and a large library. Abraham was a semi-nomadic herdsman there. When God called him to leave Ur, he had to leave all the comforts of home (11:27–32).

2. Haran

Abraham, his father, Terah, his wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot, set out from Ur. They followed the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and stopped in Haran. After Terah died, Abraham continued his journey (12:1–5).

3. Canaan

From Haran, Abraham and his family journeyed to Shechem. God told Abraham He would give Canaan to Abraham's children. Abraham built an altar to God between Bethel and Ai, then he continued to the Negeb (12:6–9).

4. Egypt, Bethel

Because of a famine in Canaan, Abraham went to Egypt. Later he returned to Bethel with his wife and nephew. He had become very wealthy. Abraham and Lot now went separate ways: Lot chose the plain of Jordan and Abraham settled in Canaan (12:10–13:18).

Jacob Settles in Canaan



1. Beersheba

Jacob grew up in Beersheba but ran away from home after tricking his father, Isaac, and making Esau furious (27:42–45).

2. Bethel

Jacob stopped in Bethel, where he dreamed of angels going up and down a ladder (or staircase) to heaven. God promised him Canaan for his descendants (28:10–22). Jesus spoke of this when He promised Nathanael that he would see angels ascend and descend upon the Son of Man (John 1:51).

3. Haran

In Haran, Jacob's uncle, Laban, tricked Jacob into marrying his elder daughter, Leah. Jacob worked seven extra years before he could marry Laban's younger daughter, Rachel. After twenty years' hard work, Jacob returned to Canaan (31:36–42).

4. Canaan

Jacob was afraid of Esau and sent gifts to him. God wrestled with Jacob and changed his name to Israel. Jacob journeyed to Shechem, where he bought a piece of property and set up an altar to worship God (32:3–33:20).

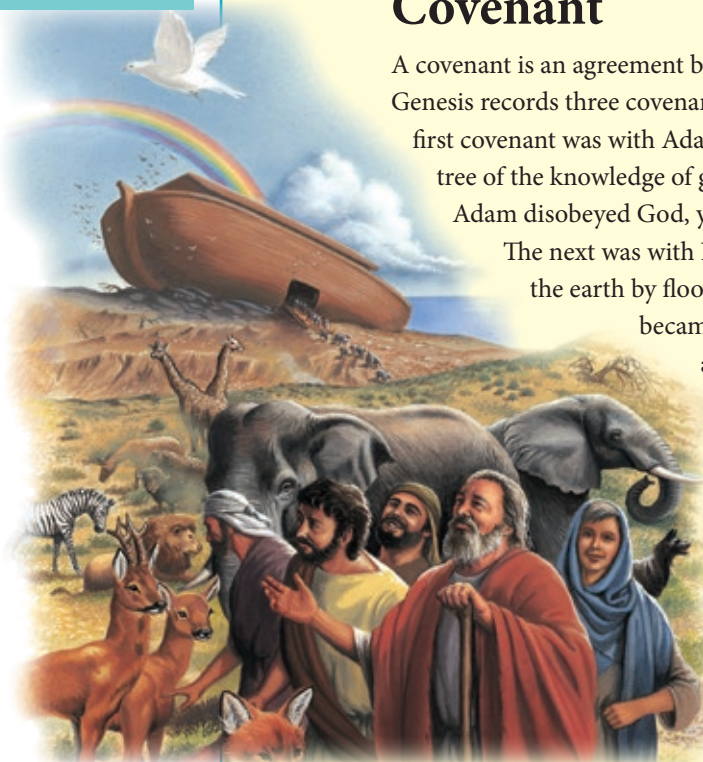
Covenant

A covenant is an agreement between two nations or two people. Genesis records three covenants that God made with people. God's first covenant was with Adam. God told him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or else he would die.

Adam disobeyed God, yet God promised the Messiah (3:15).

The next was with Noah: God promised not to destroy the earth by flood ever again (9:8–17). The rainbow became a sign of this covenant, which is still at work today.

God also made a very important covenant with Abram (Abraham). God promised to bless Abram by making him the father of a great nation (12:1–3; 15:18–21). God would give land to this nation and bless the whole world through its people. God renewed this promise to Abraham's son Isaac (26:2–5) and to his grandson Jacob (28:13–15).



Look out for...

As you read Genesis, look out for...

God's messages to people. God speaks and appears to people several times at this important time in history. Notice what He says.

Abraham. He's a very important person in the stories of Genesis. God chooses to bless the whole world through him. Abraham's name comes up again and again in the Bible.

Promises to Abraham. God promises Abraham the land and many descendants.

Joseph. All of his difficulties are a way by which God saves His people.

Study Questions

- How did people become rulers of the earth? (1:26–28)
- Why did Adam and Eve have to leave the Garden of Eden? (3:22–23)
- What did God promise Noah? (8:22)
- Why did Abram leave home and go to Canaan? (12:1–3)
- Why did God allow Joseph to suffer? (50:20)



KEY EVENTS

Jesus' travels

1. Bethlehem and Nazareth

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. His parents took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. Later, they fled to Egypt to escape King Herod's anger. When it was safe, they returned to Nazareth, where Jesus grew up. At the age of twelve, He went with His family to Jerusalem for Passover and debated with the religious leaders (Matthew 2:13–15; Luke 2:3–7; 22–24; 39–50).

2. River Jordan

Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan by His cousin John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit then led Jesus to the desert, where Satan tempted Him after forty days. Jesus answered the devil with Scripture and resisted His temptations. Jesus was ready for His life's work (Matthew 3:13–17; 4:1–11; Luke 3:21–22; 4:1–13).

3. Capernaum

Jesus spent the last three years of His life showing people signs of the Kingdom of God. He made His headquarters in Capernaum and journeyed through Israel, preaching, teaching, and healing the sick (Matthew 9:35). He called several of His disciples from their fishing nets on the Sea of Galilee. Near Capernaum, Jesus gave His Sermon on the Mount, including the Beatitudes (Matthew 5–7).

4. Nazareth

In His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus did not perform many miracles because people did not believe in Him (Matthew 13:53–58).

5. Sea of Galilee

By the Sea of Galilee, Jesus fed more than 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread and two fish (Matthew 14:13–21).



Restored remains of the third-century A.D. synagogue at Capernaum, which almost certainly stands on the site of the synagogue where Jesus taught

6. Tyre

In Tyre, a Gentile woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter. Jesus was amazed at her faith and did as she asked (Matthew 15:21–28).

7. Caesarea Philippi

At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus' disciple Peter first declared that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (Matthew 16:13–20).

8. Jericho

The tax collector Zacchaeus lived in Jericho. Jesus went to his house to bring him salvation (Luke 19:1–10).

9. Bethany

In Bethany, Jesus brought his friend Lazarus back to life (John 11:1–44).

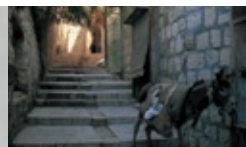
10. Jerusalem

In Jerusalem, Jesus gave His life for the sin of the world, was buried, and was raised from the dead (John 18–21).

The Holy Land in the Time of Jesus



LUKE



The devout elderly man Simeon greets Baby Jesus as the Lord's Messiah in Jerusalem (2:22–35).



Angels, shepherds, a stable, and a Baby—what could these things mean but Christmas? This best-known and most-loved Bible story comes from the Gospel of Luke.

Luke, the man who wrote this Gospel, was a Greek doctor. He provides many details about Jesus' birth and childhood not given by any of the other Gospels. His Gospel shows how Jesus was the perfect Man. It's clear that Jesus is God's Son because of the angel's announcement to Mary, but Luke also calls Jesus the Son of Man.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels. Synoptic, from the Greek, means "to see together." All three tell about Jesus, but each from a slightly different angle.

Luke has some details that the other Gospels do not have. For example, Luke records several joyful songs of praise. One of these is Mary's song, known as the *Magnificat*, which praises God for what He was going to do for her and through her.

Several parables of Jesus are found only in Luke. They give a clear picture of God's love for the lost. The Gospel of Luke also shows Jesus' tender care for women, who were often mistreated. We learn much about Jesus from the Gospel of Luke that would be unknown without it.

Luke, author of Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, was a physician.





A nighttime view of Bethlehem, David's city, and the birthplace of Jesus

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is it important that Jesus was a man?

A: He needed to be a perfect and sinless person to pay for the sins of all people. He faced temptation, just as we do, and He showed us what God is like and how God wants us to live.

Q: What did the angel tell Mary?

A: God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary she was to conceive and bear a Son. He, however, would not be an ordinary Baby born in an ordinary way. The Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of God would overshadow her. Furthermore, Mary would remain a virgin.

OUTLINE

Jesus' birth, childhood, and roots (1—3)

Luke gives us information about the young Jesus that we cannot find elsewhere.

Jesus teaches and heals in Galilee (4—9)

Jesus teaches and heals around His hometown of Nazareth.

Jesus goes to Jerusalem (10—21)

Jesus leaves His home for Jerusalem, the religious capital for His people. The rest of His life is spent there.

Jesus dies on the Cross (22—24)

Jesus gives up His life and God raises Him from the dead, just as Jesus said He would.



Cleopas and his companion recognize the risen Christ as He breaks bread at supper in the village of Emmaus, outside Jerusalem (24:13–35).

The humanity of Christ

Jesus was God, but He also was one hundred percent human. This is hard for us to understand, which is why we call God's humanity a mystery. Luke's Gospel points out repeatedly that Jesus is human.

Luke tells about Jesus' early years, when He grew up as all humans do. Luke shows us Jesus' loving care for people as He healed the sick.

Jesus experienced life as do all humans, with happiness and sadness. He also was God, and He gave His life to redeem us.

Look out for...

As you read Luke, look out for...

Women. Luke mentions more women than any other Gospel-writer (Evangelist).

The poor. Luke records many of Jesus' words concerning the poor.

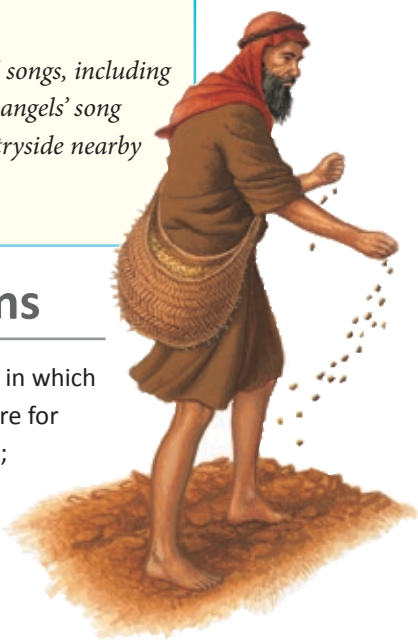
Prayers. Several prayers are included in the Gospel of Luke.

Songs. Luke includes several songs, including Mary's, Zechariah's, and the angels' song to the shepherds in the countryside nearby Bethlehem.

In a parable, Jesus used the familiar activity of sowing seed to teach His followers (8:4–15).

Study Questions

- What are some of the ways in which Jesus showed His special care for women? (7:11–15; 7:36–50; 13:10–17)
- How did Jesus treat children? (18:15–17)



Promises in the Bible

Promises made to believers



*A rainbow,
reminding us
of God's promise
to Noah*

- **A crown of life**
Revelation 2:10
- **Answered prayer**
1 John 5:15
- **A place in heaven**
John 14:1–3
- **Cleansing**
John 15:3
- **Comfort**
Isaiah 51:3
- **Confidence for the future**
2 Timothy 1:12
- **Eternal life**
John 3:16
- **Gifts of the Spirit**
1 Corinthians 12
- **God's guidance**
Isaiah 42:16
- **Grace to the humble**
1 Peter 5:6–7
- **Growth in the Christian life**
Ephesians 4:11–15
- **Hope**
Hebrews 6:18–19
- **Joy**
Isaiah 35:10
- **Life in abundance**
John 10:10
- **Peace**
John 14:27
- **Rescue by God**
2 Timothy 4:18
- **Rest**
Hebrews 4:9, 11
- **Resurrection**
Romans 8:11
- **Spiritual light**
John 12:46
- **Strength**
Philippians 4:13
- **Understanding**
Psalms 111:10
- **Victory**
1 John 5:4
- **Wisdom**
James 1:5

Fifty Very Important Passages

50 PASSAGES

The Bible is a lengthy book. Here are some of its most important passages.

- **Creation**
Genesis 1, 2
- **The first sin**
Genesis 3
- **Noah and the flood**
Genesis 6—9:17
- **The tower of Babel**
Genesis 11:1–9
- **Abraham and Isaac**
Genesis 22:1–19
- **Esau and Jacob**
Genesis 25:19–34; 27
- **The story of Joseph**
Genesis 37–50
- **Baby Moses**
Exodus 2:1–10
- **The Exodus**
Exodus 7–14
- **The Ten Commandments**
Exodus 20
- **Jericho is captured**
Joshua 6:15–21
- **Gideon's little army**
Judges 7:15–23
- **The story of Samson**
Judges 13–16
- **The story of Ruth**
Book of Ruth
- **The boy Samuel**
1 Samuel 1–3
- **David kills Goliath**
1 Samuel 17
- **The Good Shepherd psalm**
Psalms 23
- **The fiery furnace**
Daniel 3
- **Daniel in the lions' den**
Daniel 6
- **The story of Jonah**
Book of Jonah
- **The birth of Jesus**
Luke 2
- **John the Baptist preaches**
Matthew 3:1–12
- **Young Jesus in the Temple**
Luke 2:41–52
- **The Baptism of Jesus**
Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:31–34
- **Jesus is tempted**
Matthew 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13
- **The Sermon on the Mount**
Matthew 5–7
- **The Lord's Prayer**
Matthew 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4
- **The woman at the well**
John 4:1–30; 39–42
- **Becoming fishers of men**
Matthew 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–11
- **A centurion's faith**
Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10
- **The story of the sower**
Matthew 13:3–8, 18–23; Mark 4:3–8, 13–20; Luke 8:5–8, 11–15
- **The true vine**
John 15
- **The prodigal son**
Luke 15:11–32
- **Jesus is transfigured**
Matthew 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36
- **Mary and Martha**
Luke 10:38–42
- **Zacchaeus**
Luke 19:1–10
- **The anointing at Bethany**
Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–8
- **The Last Supper**
Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22: 7–23
- **Jesus is betrayed**
Matthew 26:14–16; Mark 14:10–11; Luke 22:1–6; John 18:1–11
- **Death and Resurrection of Jesus**
Matthew 27–28; Mark 15–16; Luke 23–24:12; John 19:16–20:10
- **The risen Christ**
Luke 24:35–49; John 20:19–23
- **Doubting Thomas**
John 20:24–29
- **The Great Commission**
Matthew 28:16–20
- **The Holy Spirit comes**
Acts 2:1–4
- **Conversion of Saul**
Acts 9:1–19
- **Peter is rescued from prison**
Acts 12:6–10
- **Paul's missionary travels**
Acts 13–21
- **Living for God**
Romans 12
- **Love**
1 Corinthians 13
- **The future**
Revelation 21:1–8