

# GNITN

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## Banned and Beloved: The Strange Power of the Bible

### In The Beginning

There is no book like the Bible. It is the most read, most distributed, most debated, and most banned book in human history. Men have tried to burn it, bury it, mock it, outlaw it, and explain it away. And yet it remains. It still speaks. It still convicts. It still reveals. It still saves. And that is because the Bible is not merely a book written by man about God. It is a book breathed by God through men. It is divine in origin, yet human in writing. It is made up of sixty-six books written over many centuries, through many human authors, and yet it tells one unified story with a depth, coherence, and majesty that no merely human work can match. The Bible begins where no other story begins: before time, before stars, before oceans, before kings, before nations, before mankind:

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ([Gen 1:1, NKJV](#))*

Before anything else existed, God was. He did not come into being. He did not evolve. He did not emerge from chaos. He is eternal, self-existent, all-powerful, holy, and uncreated. He stands outside of time, and yet He is the Author of time. He created all things, and nothing exists apart from His will. But the Bible also reveals that reality is bigger than the material world. Before man ever sinned, there was already rebellion in the unseen realm. God created angels, glorious ministering spirits, servants of His throne. Yet one of them, lifted up in pride, sought what belonged to God alone. Satan fell, and other heavenly beings joined his rebellion. So the Bible opens the curtain and shows us something the modern world tries to deny: there is an invisible war behind the visible world. There are angels. There are demons. There is deception. There is darkness. And there is a real enemy who hates God and hates the image of God in man.

### Then Comes Creation

God speaks light into darkness. He forms the heavens and the earth. He fills sea and sky and land with life. Then He does something astonishing. He forms man from the dust of the earth and breathes into him the breath of life. Think of the majesty of that. Dust yet dignified. Created, yet crowned. Earthborn, yet bearing the image of God. God places mankind in a perfect environment. Eden had no death, no curse, no shame, no corruption, no violence, no sorrow. It was peace, order, abundance, beauty, and fellowship with God. But God did not create robots. He gave man free will. Love must be freely given. Obedience must be real to mean anything. And because man had freedom, rebellion was possible. Into that perfect world came the serpent. Not openly. Not honestly. Not in a form that screamed destruction. He came as a deceiver. He twisted God's words. He questioned God's goodness. He sold disobedience as enlightenment. That is the pattern of evil from the very beginning. Darkness rarely introduces itself as darkness. Satan does not always appear terrifying. Scripture says he can appear as an angel of light. The demonic often comes clothed in false beauty, false wisdom, false spirituality, and false peace. Adam and Eve sinned, and the fall shattered the world. Innocence turned to shame. Peace turned to hiding. Trust turned to blame. Life turned toward death. Sin entered the human race, and with it came the curse. Pain, sorrow, toil, corruption, decay, and death spread through creation. Every grave, every war, every betrayal, every tear bears witness to the catastrophe of man's rebellion against God. But this is where the Bible shows its glory.

### **The Story Didn't End With Genesis 3**

In the middle of judgment, He spoke a promise: the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. There it was, right at the dawn of the fall, the first whisper of redemption. The first hint that a Deliverer would come. The first sign that the story of the Bible would not merely be the story of man's ruin, but the story of God's rescue. From that point on, the Bible becomes the unfolding account of redemption through history. Humanity spirals downward. Cain kills Abel. Violence fills the earth. God judges the world by flood yet saves Noah through the ark. Men unite in proud rebellion at Babel, and God scatters them. Again and again, mankind proves the same truth: left to himself, man does not rise toward God. He rebels against God. Then God calls Abraham. One man. One family. One covenant line. Through Abraham, God begins to narrow the promise. Through his descendants He will bless the nations. Through Israel He will reveal His holiness, His law, His covenant, and the line through which the Messiah will come. And what follows is one of the greatest narratives ever recorded. Israel in Egypt. Moses before Pharaoh. The Red Sea split in two. Fire on Sinai. Manna from heaven. The tabernacle filled with glory. Joshua leading conquest. Judges cycling through chaos and deliverance. David facing Goliath. Prophets confronting kings. Empires rising and falling. Jerusalem judged. Exile and return. The Bible contains battles, kings, betrayals, songs, miracles, tears, prophetic warnings, and breathtaking acts of divine power. It contains beauty and terror, tenderness and judgment, poetry and bloodshed, humor and heartbreak. And yet through all of it, the Bible never flatters its human characters. Warts And All. Noah gets drunk. Abraham lies. Jacob schemes. Moses disobeys. Samson is ruled by lust. David commits adultery and murder. Solomon descends into compromise. Elijah falls into despair. Jonah runs from God. Peter denies Christ. Why would a book present its central human figures so honestly? Because the Bible is not trying to glorify man. It is exposing man. It is showing us that even the best of men are still fallen men. No prophet, no priest, no judge, and no king could finally save the human race.

### **There Is Hope**

But all through the Old Testament, expectation builds. A coming King. A suffering Servant. A righteous Branch. A Son of David. A child born. A Son given. One who would bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. One who would be wounded for our transgressions. One who would bring peace through His suffering. Then comes the turning point of history. The Creator enters His creation. The Word becomes flesh. The One who formed Adam from the dust takes on human nature Himself. The One worshiped by angels is laid in a manger. The eternal Son steps into time. The holy God walks among sinners. The Author of life enters a dying world. Jesus Christ is the blazing center of the Bible. Every promise bends toward Him. Every sacrifice points to Him. Every office is fulfilled in Him. Every shadow finds substance in Him. He is the true Prophet, the true Priest, the true King, the true Lamb, the true Temple, the true Deliverer. And He does what no one else could do. He lives the sinless life man failed to live. He heals the sick, opens blind eyes, raises the dead, casts out demons, calms storms, forgives sins, and proclaims the kingdom of God. He is full of grace and truth. He is gentle to the broken and fierce against hypocrisy. He is holiness wrapped in humanity. And yet the world rejects Him. He is betrayed by one of His own. Denied by another. Condemned by religious leaders. Rejected by the crowds. Mocked, scourged, humiliated, and nailed to a cross. And here the greatest love story ever told reaches its burning center.

## **He Brings Redemption**

The Creator takes on the form of His creation so He can die for His fallen creation. The spotless Lamb bears the sins of the guilty. The righteous stands in the place of rebels. The Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. That scarlet thread running through Scripture becomes a river at Calvary. The sacrifices pointed here. The Passover pointed here. The promises pointed here. The prophets pointed here. At the cross, justice and mercy meet. Sin is judged. Wrath is poured out. The debt is paid. The way is opened. Jesus dies, is buried, and on the third day rises again. Not as a symbol. Not as a legend. Not as a poetic idea. But bodily, historically, triumphantly. The resurrection is heaven's declaration that death has been broken, sin has been answered, Satan has been defeated, and Christ has won. And then the message is spread. From there the gospel goes into the nations. Weak men become bold witnesses. Cowards become martyrs. The church is born. The message spreads. Persecution rises. False teaching spreads. Darkness resists. But the gospel keeps moving because the risen Christ is building His church.

## **The Future Is Revealed**

And the Bible does not leave history unresolved. It takes us all the way to the end. Christ will return. The kingdoms of this world will not stand forever. Evil will not reign forever. Satan will not deceive forever. There is a final judgment coming. The ancient serpent will face everlasting defeat. Death itself will be swallowed up. Hell will be judged. Rebellion will end. Then comes the restoration of all things. A new heaven. A new earth. No more curse. No more pain. No more sorrow. No more crying. No more death. God dwelling with His people forever. So the Bible begins in eternity with God, moves through creation, rebellion, promise, covenant, prophecy, incarnation, cross, resurrection, gospel, judgment, and glory, and ends in eternity again with redeemed people living forever in the presence of their Creator. That is why this book is unlike any other. It has the scale of the greatest epic. The depth of the greatest tragedy. The wonder of the greatest supernatural account. The beauty of the greatest love story. The truth of divine revelation. It is the stuff of legends, and yet it is no legend. It is real. It tells us why the world is broken. Why evil is so deceptive. Why humanity cannot save itself. Why blood runs through redemption. Why Jesus Christ is the center of history. Why the war between light and darkness is real. And why the hope of man is not in himself, but in the God who came to save him.

## **It Is Real**

Why Hollywood doesn't sink its teeth into the Bible is beyond me. In its pages there are stories that are the stuff of legends. Films have come and gone, actors have won awards, writers have been given their due as part of narratives entirely made from whole cloth, fiction that never happened in real life. Yet if these creative minds would just plumb the stories found in the Bible they would sell more tickets than ever before. Why? The Bible still stands because it is true. It still cuts because it is living. It still endures because it is breathed out by God. And it still changes lives because its central message is the greatest news this fallen world has ever heard. The holy God has made a way for sinful man to be redeemed and brought home through Jesus Christ. The Bible is not just a book to admire from a distance. It is a message to believe, a truth to submit to, and a Savior to receive. From eternity past to eternity future, it declares that Jesus Christ is the center of the story and the only hope for fallen man. And that is why the Bible remains the greatest true story ever told.