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Reading: 2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 10-17.
Key verse: v16.

The Bible is God's revelation to man of His redemptive purposes. It gives us the history of salvation, a history that is rooted in real world history.

The Bible is a whole. Its author is God, and 2 Timothy 3v16 tells us that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness". Although God used and inspired human authors who physically penned the Bible, His is the mind behind it.

The God of the Old Testament is also the God of the New Testament. The revelation of the old covenant was glorious, but its glory dims in the light of the revelation of the new covenant.

We cannot understand the mind of God, and as we read the Bible we have many questions about why God did things the way He did, questions we cannot possibly answer this side of Heaven.

A large number of books and overviews and schemes have been written for understanding the Bible, some by very learned theologians, and

The Bible

"We present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively oracles of God". - Spoken by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the coronation of an English monarch.

"Paradise lost in Genesis, becomes Paradise regained in Revelation. Between them lies the fascinating story of the promise of, and preparation for redemption - the work of Christ - and the progress of the redeeming work from Pentecost to the coming of Christ" - T.C. Hammond

all are useful for trying to get a grasp of the big picture. But none can fully explain God's purposes to us, as He has only revealed to us what we need to know this side of eternity.

As I have read the Bible through again and again I have become more and more excited by, and gripped by, the wonder of salvation history. So I wrote this overview partly to try to grasp this amazing revelation a bit more myself. I also wrote it to try to pass this sense of excitement at God's amazing plan on to others.

So this gives you my own personal understanding of the overview of the Bible, which I hope will be helpful, but which is certainly not complete, and cannot begin to even scratch the surface of the wisdom and purposes of God.

When we get to the Heavenly City, and we finally have a full understanding of all that

God has done, we are going to be so amazed that we will spend all of eternity praising and worshipping Him and we will only just have begun.

Each of us needs to read the Bible through for ourselves, again and again, with and without study aids, to help us begin to grasp the wonder of it for ourselves. We need to ask the Father as we do this to help us understand, by the power of the Holy Spirit, what His word is saying to us. We ask this of the Father in the Name of the Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and the only mediator between God and man.

We should come to the Bible with hearts dedicated to serving and pleasing our God. As we come to it we will find that it is totally contrary to the secular culture in which we live, and that to be a child of God is to be a stranger to this world. But the Heavenly City is our home, and in this we rejoice (see Hebrews 11).