

New Life Bible

God's plan for you . . . live it! Breathe it! Shout it!



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
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New Living
Translation®

SECOND EDITION

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What Is the Bible?

Do you have questions about life, friends, family, God, or your future? If so, the Bible is for you!

What is the Bible? It is the world's all-time best seller. It is the most read book in history! Many thousands of people just like you find their lives more meaningful because of the message in the Bible. People in all parts of the world turn to it to find answers.

You won't believe all the problems and questions the Bible can help you with. Things such as:

Does God really care about me?

What does God expect of me?

Could I really make a difference in the world?

Is it really possible to live forever?

Is there really a hell? Is heaven for real?

Does God really listen when we pray?

What should I do with my life?

But the Bible is more than an answer book to turn to when the pressures of life are overwhelming. It is really a library of books. It's filled with stories about real people. It has great poetry and beautiful songs. It has prophecies and promises. But most important, it is the true story of God's visiting our earth through his Son, Jesus Christ.

As you read about him, you will discover the most terrific friend you could ever have—someone who's around twenty-four hours a day, any time you need him! Read the Bible. It could be the most important and life-changing step you will ever take.

The Message of the Bible

The Bible begins by telling how the eternal God created the world and everything in it. He gave people a beautiful place to live and supplied everything they needed. Best of all, he was their friend.

That glorious beginning, however, was ruined when people disobeyed God and plunged into rebellion and sin. This broke humanity's relationship with God and brought judgment and death to the earth, its creatures, and humanity itself. Even so, God did not abandon his disobedient creatures; he set out to reclaim fallen people, much as a shepherd sets out to restore lost sheep to the fold.

The Old Testament provides many references to a special individual who would provide salvation for his people. That special individual, the Messiah, was not to be merely a man, however. The Messiah was to be "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14, page 586), which in Hebrew means "God is with us." The Messiah would be both God and man, and those prophecies were fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

When Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin, he also removed all guilt produced by that sin and restored the broken relationship between God and humanity. Further, he lives today and speaks continually to God on our behalf. "He is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him" (Hebrews 7:25, page 1034). He gives eternal life to all who trust in him (see "Salvation through Jesus Christ," page A85).

How to Read the Bible

Eventually, you will want to read every word of the Bible. However, you don't have to read straight through from the beginning. Since the Bible is a library of books, you can begin almost anywhere.

To help you begin, some of the subjects talked about in the Bible are listed on the following pages: Life, Relationships, Hot Topics, the Future, and Faith. Scan through these topics and find the questions or statements you're wondering about. There you'll find out how the Bible can help you.

You can also begin by following the Bible reading plan, which begins on page 1085. This approach will help you gain an understanding of the Bible's major themes and important lessons. Before you know it, you'll see the relevance of God's Word to your daily life.

Revelation

Prologue

1 This is a revelation from* Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon* take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John,² who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

³God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

John's Greeting to the Seven Churches

⁴This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia.*

Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit* before his throne;⁵ and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world.

All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us.⁶ He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

⁷ Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven.

And everyone will see him—
even those who pierced him.

And all the nations of the world
will mourn for him.

Yes! Amen!

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,"* says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One."

Vision of the Son of Man

⁹I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God's Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus.¹⁰ It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshipping in the Spirit.* Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a

trumpet blast.¹¹ It said, "Write in a book* everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

¹²When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands.¹³ And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man.* He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest.¹⁴ His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire.¹⁵ His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves.¹⁶ He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last."¹⁸ I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.*

¹⁹"Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen.*"²⁰ This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels* of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Message to the Church in Ephesus

2 "Write this letter to the angel* of the church in Ephesus. This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the one who walks among the seven gold lampstands:

²"I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don't tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars.

³You have patiently suffered for me without quitting.

⁴"But I have this complaint against you.

1:1a Or of. 1:1b Or suddenly, or quickly. 1:4a Asia was a Roman province in what is now western Turkey.

1:4b Greek the seven spirits. 1:8 Greek I am the Alpha and the Omega, referring to the first and last letters of the

Greek alphabet. 1:10 Or in spirit. 1:11 Or on a scroll. 1:13 Or like a son of man. See Dan 7:13. "Son of Man" is a title

Jesus used for himself. 1:18 Greek and Hades. 1:19 Or what you have seen and what they mean—the things that have already begun to happen. 1:20 Or the messengers. 2:1 Or the messenger; also in 2:8, 12, 18.

You don't love me or each other as you did at first!⁵ Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don't repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches. ⁶But this is in your favor: You hate the evil deeds of the Nicolaitans, just as I do.

⁷"Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God.

The Message to the Church in Smyrna

⁸"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna. This is the message from the one who is the First and the Last, who was dead but is now alive:

⁹"I know about your suffering and your poverty—but you are rich! I know the blasphemy of those opposing you. They say they are Jews, but they are not, because their synagogue belongs to Satan. ¹⁰Don't be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will suffer for ten days. But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹"Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. Whoever is victorious will not be harmed by the second death.

The Message to the Church in Pergamum

¹²"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Pergamum. This is the message from the one with the sharp two-edged sword:

¹³"I know that you live in the city where Satan has his throne, yet you have remained loyal to me. You refused to deny me even when Antipas, my faithful witness, was martyred among you there in Satan's city.

¹⁴"But I have a few complaints against you. You tolerate some among you whose teaching is like that of Balaam, who showed Balak how to trip up the people of Israel. He taught them to sin by eating food offered to idols and by committing sexual sin. ¹⁵In a similar way, you have some Nicolaitans among you who follow the same teaching. ¹⁶Repent of your sin,

or I will come to you suddenly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

¹⁷"Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give some of the manna that has been hidden away in heaven. And I will give to each one a white stone, and on the stone will be engraved a new name that no one understands except the one who receives it.

The Message to the Church in Thyatira

¹⁸"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira. This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes are like flames of fire, whose feet are like polished bronze:

¹⁹"I know all the things you do. I have seen your love, your faith, your service, and your patient endurance. And I can see your constant improvement in all these things.

²⁰"But I have this complaint against you. You are permitting that woman—that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet—to lead my servants astray. She teaches them to commit sexual sin and to eat food offered to idols. ²¹I gave her time to repent, but she does not want to turn away from her immorality.

²²"Therefore, I will throw her on a bed of suffering,* and those who commit adultery with her will suffer greatly unless they repent and turn away from her evil deeds. ²³I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out the thoughts and intentions of every person. And I will give to each of you whatever you deserve.

²⁴"But I also have a message for the rest of you in Thyatira who have not followed this false teaching ('deeper truths,' as they call them—depths of Satan, actually). I will ask nothing more of you ²⁵except that you hold tightly to what you have until I come. ²⁶To all who are victorious, who obey me to the very end,

To them I will give authority over all the nations.

²⁷ They will rule the nations with an iron rod and smash them like clay pots.*

²⁸ They will have the same authority I received from my Father, and I will also give them the morning star!

²⁹“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.

The Message to the Church in Sardis

3 “Write this letter to the angel* of the church in Sardis. This is the message from the one who has the sevenfold Spirit* of God and the seven stars:

“I know all the things you do, and that you have a reputation for being alive—but you are dead. ²Wake up! Strengthen what little remains, for even what is left is almost dead. I find that your actions do not meet the requirements of my God. ³Go back to what you heard and believed at first; hold to it firmly. Repent and turn to me again. If you don’t wake up, I will come to you suddenly, as unexpected as a thief.

⁴“Yet there are some in the church in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes with evil. They will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵All who are victorious will be clothed in white. I will never erase their names from the Book of Life, but I will announce before my Father and his angels that they are mine.

⁶“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.

The Message to the Church in Philadelphia

⁷“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Philadelphia.

This is the message from the one who is holy and true, the one who has the key of David. What he opens, no one can close; and what he closes, no one can open.*

⁸“I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close. You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me. ⁹Look, I will force those who belong to Satan’s synagogue—those liars who say they are Jews but are not—to come and bow down at your feet. They will acknowledge that you are the ones I love.

¹⁰“Because you have obeyed my command to persevere, I will protect you from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who belong to this world. ¹¹I am coming soon.* Hold on to what you have, so that

no one will take away your crown. ¹²All who are victorious will become pillars in the Temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. And I will write on them the name of my God, and they will be citizens in the city of my God—the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God. And I will also write on them my new name.

¹³“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.

The Message to the Church in Laodicea

¹⁴“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the beginning* of God’s new creation:

¹⁵“I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! ¹⁶But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth! ¹⁷You say, ‘I am rich. I have everything I want. I don’t need a thing!’ And you don’t realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. ¹⁸So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see. ¹⁹I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.

²⁰“Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends. ²¹Those who are victorious will sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat with my Father on his throne.

²²“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.”

Worship in Heaven

4 Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.” ²And instantly I was in the Spirit,* and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. ³The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gem-

3:1a Or the messenger; also in 3:7, 14. 3:1b Greek the seven spirits. 3:7 Isa 22:22. 3:11 Or suddenly, or quickly. 3:14 Or the ruler, or the source. 4:2 Or in spirit.

stones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow. ⁴Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. ⁵From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit* of God. ⁶In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal.

In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. ⁷The first of these living beings was like a lion; the second was like an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth was like an eagle in flight. ⁸Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God,
the Almighty—
the one who always was, who is, and
who is still to come.”

⁹Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say,

¹¹ “You are worthy, O Lord our God,
to receive glory and honor and power.
For you created all things,
and they exist because you created
what you pleased.”

The Lamb Opens the Scroll

5 Then I saw a scroll* in the right hand of the one who was sitting on the throne. There was writing on the inside and the outside of the scroll, and it was sealed with seven seals. ²And I saw a strong angel, who shouted with a loud voice: “Who is worthy to break the seals on this scroll and open it?” ³But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll and read it.

⁴Then I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll and read it. ⁵But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, “Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David’s throne,*

has won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit* of God that is sent out into every part of the earth. ⁷He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. ⁸And when he took the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they held gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. ⁹And they sang a new song with these words:

“You are worthy to take the scroll
and break its seals and open it.
For you were slaughtered, and your blood
has ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and
people and nation.

¹⁰ And you have caused them to become
a Kingdom of priests for our God.
And they will reign* on the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. ¹²And they sang in a mighty chorus:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was
slaughtered—
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and blessing.”

¹³And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They sang:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
belong to the one sitting on the throne
and to the Lamb forever and ever.”

¹⁴And the four living beings said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped the Lamb.

The Lamb Breaks the First Six Seals

6 As I watched, the Lamb broke the first of the seven seals on the scroll.* Then I heard one of the four living beings say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” ²I looked up and saw a white horse standing there. Its rider carried a bow, and a crown was placed on his

4:5 Greek *They are the seven spirits.* 5:1 Or *book*; also in 5:2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9. 5:5 Greek *the root of David*. See Isa 11:10.
5:6 Greek *which are the seven spirits.* 5:10 Some manuscripts read *they are reigning.* 6:1 Or *book*.

head. He rode out to win many battles and gain the victory.

³When the Lamb broke the second seal, I heard the second living being say, "Come!"
⁴Then another horse appeared, a red one. Its rider was given a mighty sword and the authority to take peace from the earth. And there was war and slaughter everywhere.

⁵When the Lamb broke the third seal, I heard the third living being say, "Come!" I looked up and saw a black horse, and its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶And I heard a voice from among the four living beings say, "A loaf of wheat bread or three loaves of barley will cost a day's pay.* And don't waste* the olive oil and wine."

⁷When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living being say, "Come!"⁸I looked up and saw a horse whose color was pale green. Its rider was named Death, and his companion was the Grave.* These two were given authority over one-fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword and famine and disease* and wild animals.

⁹When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and for being faithful in their testimony. ¹⁰They shouted to the Lord and said, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?"¹¹Then a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters*—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be martyred—had joined them.

¹²I watched as the Lamb broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as dark as black cloth, and the moon became as red as blood. ¹³Then the stars of the sky fell to the earth like green figs falling from a tree shaken by a strong wind. ¹⁴The sky was rolled up like a scroll, and all of the mountains and islands were moved from their places.

¹⁵Then everyone—the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, and every slave and free person—all hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. ¹⁷For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to survive?"

God's People Will Be Preserved

7 Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds so they did not blow on the earth or the sea, or even on any tree. ²And I saw another angel coming up from the east, carrying the seal of the living God. And he shouted to those four angels, who had been given power to harm land and sea. ³"Wait! Don't harm the land or the sea or the trees until we have placed the seal of God on the foreheads of his servants."

⁴And I heard how many were marked with the seal of God—144,000 were sealed from all the tribes of Israel:

- ⁵ from Judah 12,000
- from Reuben 12,000
- from Gad 12,000
- ⁶ from Asher 12,000
- from Naphtali 12,000
- from Manasseh 12,000
- ⁷ from Simeon 12,000
- from Levi 12,000
- from Issachar 12,000
- ⁸ from Zebulun 12,000
- from Joseph 12,000
- from Benjamin 12,000

Praise from the Great Crowd

⁹After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰And they were shouting with a mighty shout,

"Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. ¹²They sang,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen."

¹³Then one of the twenty-four elders asked me, "Who are these who are clothed in white? Where did they come from?"

6:6a Greek *A choenix* [1 quart or 1 liter] of wheat for a denarius, and 3 choenix of barley for a denarius. A denarius was equivalent to a laborer's full day's wage. 6:6b Or *harm*. 6:8a Greek *was Hades*. 6:8b Greek *death*. 6:11 Greek *their brothers*.