

50 Bible Verses Everybody Should Know By Heart

The Central, “Redemptive Story” of the Bible

The Verse we’re dealing with in this lesson is just one sentence of less than thirty words; but in this verse, we encounter the *entire* storyboard of the Bible as this verse summarizes four plot elements woven into its one Big Story. What is this amazing “Cliff Notes” version of the whole storyline of the Bible? As you hide this verse in your heart, remember: YOU are part of the Grand Narrative God is telling through its sixty-six books. ***Know this story backwards and forwards!***

Here’s the Verse: REVELATION 21:1, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.”

Here are the four plot elements of the Bible.

1. “. . . the first heaven and the first earth . . . ” refers to CREATION.

What does this plot element reveal to us? The starting point of God’s Redemptive Story as revealed in the Bible; the original state of the world. Creation was created in a state of “Shalom,” with mankind in harmony and at peace with God, within himself (no psychological / emotional baggage), with others (no relational problems), and with the environment (no ecological problems). Nowadays, we LONG for this to be restored!

2. “. . . there was no longer any sea . . . ” refers to the FALL.

What?!? No oceans and beaches?!? In the Bible, the “sea” symbolized chaos, evil, and opposition to the Kingdom of God, i.e. the historical reality and trajectory of the fall. One man made the tragic choice of determining good and evil for himself, apart from God’s Revelation (Gen. 3:5), and now Shalom is shattered with “religion” taking the place of intimacy with God, Psychological problems (shame and hiding), disharmony between people (marital, familial, world-wide), and environmental issues (due to exploitation of nature for selfish purposes). We need restoration, but Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall, and now everybody is broken and scrambled eggs!

3. “. . . the first heaven and first earth had passed away . . . ” refers to REDEMPTION.

This is the beginning of a glorious ending that never ends! “Redemption” refers to a historical event, and centers on a Person, Jesus Christ – His life, death, and resurrection; His ascension. The whole Bible references Jesus in some way; and because of Jesus, what was lost can be recovered. Healing begins, and so does Shalom, as God and mankind are reconciled through Christ, we are progressively healed emotionally, our relationships are healed and restored, and we see the world and beautiful and a place to wisely steward. We have a restored identity, security, psychology, and ecology.

4. “. . . I saw a new heaven and an new earth . . . ” refers to the CONSUMMATION.

This is element #1 on steroids! “God doesn’t make junk and He will not junk what He has made!” – Albert Wolters. Creation will be better than the “good ole days” of creation. Consummation is the perfect future world Jesus has won for us through His life, death, and resurrection. It’s that future world where sin, evil, death, and brokenness will be gone forever; and everything will be transformed, made new and better. The revised version of creation will not be back to Eden but forward to the New Eden!

Here’s a helpful visual.

