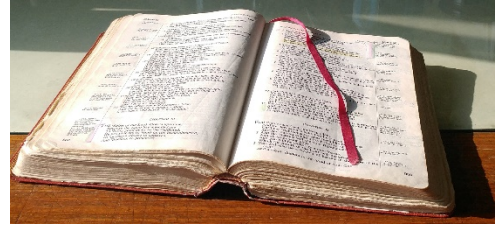


# Shale Fragments™

a division of Flower Girl Greetings, LLC  
writings by Beth Ann Phifer



## The Wooing God

A Brief Summary of the Bible  
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God created the heavens and the earth and all they contain. He created man and woman for relationship with Himself. He expressed His love to them with His presence and an earth full of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and pleasures to enjoy with Him and with each other.

The Bible contains the stories of God working in the lives of the people He created, beginning with Adam and through the generations to Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the rest. God chose them, not because they were smarter or more important than everyone else, but to communicate His love through them to all nations. The overarching message of the Bible is God's desire to love and redeem people so they could enjoy the fullest intimacy with Him, resulting in joy and freedom.

God created human beings with the ability to choose His way or their own way, to receive Him or reject Him. From the beginning, they drank from the empty wells of selfishness rather than from Him, The Fountain of Living Water. But some turned toward Him and reflected His ways of love.

## The Prophets

God spoke his heart through His prophets in the Old Testament. He spoke words of comfort and hope, as well as words of warning, sadness, and hatred for the way they cruelly treated one another. The prophets also foretold the events of Jesus' life hundreds of years before His birth.

## Jesus the Messiah

*Christ* is the ancient Greek word meaning *anointed*. *Messiah* is the Hebrew word for *anointed*. Jesus is the Anointed One. His Name in Hebrew is *Yeshua*. The Apostle John called Him the *Only Begotten of the Father* meaning *one substance with the Father*. The mystery of the incarnation is that God came to earth to reach us, heal us, teach us, and take upon Himself the penalty for our waywardness and sin – past, present, and future.

Jesus is the Sacrificial Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world! The animal sacrifices the Jewish people made on the altars to atone for their rebellion against God were shadows of the final sacrifice God offered through Jesus. Jesus delivers us by His love and grace, not by our own efforts or good works (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:4-7). He offers redemption that transforms our hearts to love Him by the Holy Spirit Who expresses His life through our unique personalities.

Jesus is God Himself in the flesh (John 1:1-3). This is not a contradiction simply because our finite minds cannot grasp it. (For more on this relationship, please see the writing [The Trinity](#) at ShaleFragments.com.)

## The Old and New Testaments

The Old and New Testaments are two Covenants of God with His people. The prophet Joel foretold, "It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will

prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.” (Joel 2:28-29)

At the last supper (a Passover meal), Jesus ushered in the new covenant. He spoke to His disciples, “When He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth...He will glorify Me, because He will take of Mine and disclose it to you.” (John 16:13-14)

## How to Understand the Bible

### Revelation

The Bible contains spiritual words that can only be understood as we rely on revelation from the Holy Spirit. We must receive Jesus and ask God to reveal Himself to us.

### Humility

Humility unlocks spiritual understanding. The Psalmist David wrote, “He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way.”

### Genre

Genre is the literary type of each book. Some portions of the Old Testament are narratives (accounts of what actually happened). The people are not always models to emulate but are examples of how God worked through ordinary people to speak to them about Himself. Other genres include the law, songs, poetry, bits of profound wisdom, prophecy, and letters from the Apostles containing instruction and encouragement for the believers. For a complete list of Bible genres, please see our Learning Tool called [Understanding Bible Genres](#).

### Context

Each sentence in the Bible should be understood within the larger context of the paragraph, chapter, and book surrounding it, as well as within its culture and history. We must also seek to understand what the original author intended to say to the original audience. Then, we can understand how to apply the words to our own lives.

### God Meets Us

Throughout history, God has revealed truth to people according to their ability to grasp it. He used aspects of the various cultures to help the people understand eternal truths.

God still meets us where we are and speaks truth to us in the way we are able to understand it. All we need are sincere, receiving, humble hearts that are open to hear His truth, and time to spend reading His Word and asking Him for understanding.

[Lord, reveal Yourself to us in Your Word! Your words are life!](#)

(A longer version of this writing is on the incredible Learning Tool called [A Bible Overview](#) found at [Flower Girl Greetings](#) – [flowergirlgreetings.com/shop/learning-tools](http://flowergirlgreetings.com/shop/learning-tools))