

More on the Bible

I. What is the Bible?

- A. “Bible” from “biblios”, which means “book”
- B. 2 Peter 1:19-21 – The Bible was written by men who were moved by _____. This means that it is not merely a human production.
- C. 2 Timothy 3:16 – All scripture is _____
- What is scripture profitable for?
- D. Hebrews 4:11-12 – The word of God is _____ and _____ it is able to judge the thought and intentions of man. Therefore, it is not the same as reading philosophy, literature, etc.
- E. John 17:17 - God’s word is _____
- F. Ephesians 6:10, 17 - The word of God is the _____ of the Spirit. It is the only “offensive” part of our spiritual arsenal that we have.
- G. Hebrews 1:1-4 – God’s ultimate message in these last days is in his _____
- H. John 1:1-3; 1:14-18 – The word of God became _____. The only begotten has therefore _____ God. God’s ultimate message was “fleshed out” in Christ himself. God’s ultimate message was a person. Therefore, the life of Christ is not just a biography, but our example to follow.

II. Psalm 19 - Descriptions of God’s revelation.

This passage is a poetic song about God’s revelation. The first half of this song heralds God’s revelation in nature. The entire universe tells of the glory of God with unspoken language. People often call this kind of revelation “natural” revelation, since it is revealed through nature. However, since we are studying God’s spoken and written word, we will focus on the latter half of this song beginning with verse 7.

A note about the word “law:” In Hebrew, the word is “torah” and originally meant “instruction.” Hebrews did not view “torah” as a legal book of do’s and don’ts the way we as modern people do our own law books. Even those elements of dos and don’ts in Exodus through Deuteronomy are given in the context of a story, sermon, or event. They cannot be fully understood without the event. For instance, the first instructions concerning the Passover festival were given in Exodus 12-15 with the climax of the story being the Psalm in chapter 15. The instructions concerning the Passover are interspersed with the story of the Passover. So it is easy to see how the Hebrews view torah not as merely “law,” but instruction.

A. Section two of the Psalm (verses 7-9):

1. The _____ of the Lord is _____, restoring the _____.

The _____ of the Lord is _____, making _____ the _____.

2. The _____ of the Lord are _____, rejoicing in the heart.

The _____ of the Lord is _____, enlightening the _____.

3. The _____ of the Lord is _____, _____ forever.

The _____ of the Lord are _____, they are _____ altogether.

B. Notes on the Psalm:

1. Note on Hebrew poetry: Hebrew poetry does not employ the use of rhyme as modern poetry does. Most Hebrew words typically sounded alike anyway, so rhyme at the end of a line would have had no artistic impact. Instead, Hebrew poetry employed rhyme in “thought” by the use of parallelisms. This psalm employs synonymous parallelisms. In other words, a writer would start with a phrase, then use another phrase which says virtually the same thing but with different words. Look over this Psalm and notice how the writer does this.

2. Go over the blanks you filled in above. The first one on each line are synonymous ways of referring to the law.
3. The second blanks on each line give the descriptions of the law
4. The last part of each line tells of the benefits of the law

C. Read verses 10-14. What is the Psalmist’s reaction to the law of the Lord? Why do you think he reacts in this way?

D. How does the Psalmist’s reaction to the law compare to your own reaction in the past? Are there similarities or differences in your reaction compared to his? Why?

III. Why study the Bible?

- A. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - What benefits are there from studying God's word?
- B. Matthew 4:1-11 - What helped Jesus to overcome temptation?
- C. John 12:47-50 - What is the standard humans will ultimately be judged by?
- D. Galatians 1:6-10 - Is knowing God's word important? Why?
- E. 1 Pet 2:2 – What does “longing” for the pure milk of the word like a baby does suggest to you about what the nature of your attitude and relation should be to the scriptures?

IV. Overview of the Sections of the Bible

- A. Books of the Old Testament and their traditional Christian classifications:
 - 1. Books of Moses (The Pentateuch, or the “Torah”)
 - Genesis – The Creation, Flood, Call of Abraham, and Patriarchs
 - Exodus – Egyptian Bondage, Exodus, Building of the Tabernacle
 - Leviticus – The Levitical Law
 - Numbers – Wilderness Wanderings
 - Deuteronomy – Second giving of the Law, Death of Moses
 - 2. The Books of History
 - Joshua – Conquest of Israel
 - Judges – Failure of Israel to drive out the nations, unfaithfulness
 - Ruth – Story of Ruth
 - 1 & 2 Samuel – Samuel, Saul, David
 - 1 & 2 Kings – Kings of Judah and Israel, taken away to exile
 - 1 & 2 Chronicles – Kings of Judah and Israel, David and Worship
 - Ezra – Return from Exile of Babylon
 - Nehemiah – Rebuilding of Jerusalem
 - 3. Wisdom Books
 - Job – On the character of God and righteous suffering
 - Psalms – Inspired worship poetry and songs
 - Proverbs – Traditional wisdom teachings and sayings

Ecclesiastes – Wisdom of Qohelet, the exploration of meaning
 Song of Solomon – Love poetry

4. Major Prophets - Prophecies of Judgment and Restoration
 - Isaiah – 8th century prophet, Assyrian crisis, Messianic
 - Jeremiah – Prophet before & during the exile
 - Lamentations – Laments related to the exile
 - Ezekiel – Prophet of the exile, promise of restoration
 - Daniel – Prophet of the exile, narrative and apocalyptic

5. Minor Prophets - Prophecies of Judgment and Restoration
 - Hosea – 8th century prophet. God's love for Israel.
 - Joel – Locust plague, coming of the Spirit
 - Amos – 8th century prophet. Social Justice.
 - Obadiah - Doom of Edom
 - Jonah - Mercy to Ninevah
 - Micah – 8th century prophet, Doom of Israel and Judah
 - Nahum - Prophecy against Ninevah
 - Habbakuk - Pre-Exile, Invasion of Chaldeans
 - Zephaniah - Pre-Exile, Day of Wrath, Pure language
 - Haggai - Post Exile, Rebuilding the Temple, The coming Temple
 - Zechariah- Post Exile, Rebuilding Temple, The Coming Messiah
 - Malachi - Post Exile, Neglect for honoring God

C. Outline of Biblical History:

This period	Started with this event	Books
1. Pre-Flood	Creation	Gen 1-3
2. Post-Flood	The Flood	Gen 6-11
3. Patriarchal	Call of Abraham	Gen 12
4. Egyptian Bondage (400 yrs)	Move to Egypt	Exodus
5. Wilderness Wandering (40 yrs)	Crossing the Red Sea	Exodus-Deuteronomy
6. Conquest of Canaan	Entrance into Canaan	Joshua
7. Period of the Judges	Death of Joshua	Judges, Ruth
8. The United Kingdom	Crowing of Saul	1 & 2 Sam,1 Chron
9. The Divided Kingdom	Death of Solomon	1 & 2 Kings,2 Chron
10. Judah Alone	Fall of Samaria	2 Kings
11. Babylonian Captivity	Fall of Jerusalem	2 Kings, Daniel, Esther
12. Post Exilic Period	Return under Zerubbabel	Ezra, Nehemiah
13. Intertestamental Period	Close of Old Testament	
14. Life/ Ministry of Jesus	Birth of Jesus	Matt, Mark, Luke, John
15. Christian Period	Ascent of Jesus	Acts
16. Kingdom in Heaven	Judgment	Revelation

D. Time Period Classifications of the Prophets

1. Prophets before the Babylonian Exile:
 - a. To Israel: Amos, Hosea
 - b. To Judah: Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk
 - c. To others: Jonah & Nahum to Ninevah; Obadiah to Edom
2. Prophets to Jews in Babylonian exile: Daniel & Ezekiel
3. Prophets to the Remnant who returned after the exile: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

IV. Helpful Bible Study Tools.

(Note: If the following tools are available, do the associated exercise)

(Note: For a list of some Bible Study tools, see the annotated bibliography at the end of this chapter)

A. Bible Concordance. When you buy a concordance, you should get one that is from the same translation you study from. If you use NIV, you should get an NIV concordance. An exhaustive concordance is better because it will contain ALL the words in your Bible.

1. Find the passage that says:
“The joy of the Lord is your strength” _____
2. Find the passage that says:
“Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit” _____

B. Topical Index. If you are looking for a verse on a particular topic, a concordance may only be a limited use. Some passages may have something to do with your topic, such as “death,” but the passage may not use the word “death.” A topical index will have passages that deal with that subject even if the passage does not contain that word.

1. Find a passage that deals with death _____
2. Find a passage that deals with Heaven _____

C. Bible Handbook. A Bible handbook gives a brief overview and introductory material on each book of the Bible as well as historical and cultural backgrounds of the various period of biblical history.

1. How many years does the book of Acts cover? _____
2. When and where did Paul probably write I Corinthians? _____

D. Bible Atlas. A good Bible atlas is a handy tool to have. Not only do they give maps, but they often give archaeological data, geological data, and other helpful information.

1. Where did the Philistines live?
2. Find the supposed route of the Exodus
3. Find Thessalonica

E. Bible Dictionary. A bible dictionary can be a single volume or multiple volume.

1. What is “Behemoth”?
2. Psalm 51:9 - What is “Rahab?”
3. What does “Hades” mean?

F. Bible Backgrounds. A Bible Backgrounds tool usually contains cultural, social, economic, geographical, and other background information related to the world of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

G. Commentaries. A word of caution on commentaries: Commentaries often have a theological bias. The best types of commentaries are ones that begin with the meaning of the text for the original readers, attending to the historical, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of the text. Some commentaries deal only with these, and some deal with these and then move on to practical application for contemporary times.

NOTE: For information on various popular Bible reference works, see the appendix.