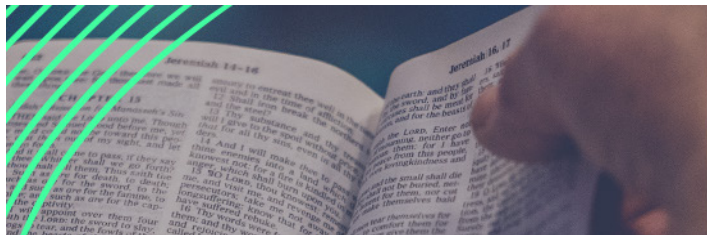


**CORE
CLASS**



Family Night

HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

The Bible is God's inspired Word: living, active, authoritative, inerrant, sufficient and true. God's Word progressively reveals His person, His purposes and His plan for the world. Every Christian is on a journey of reading, understanding, teaching, preaching, and living out God's Word in his/her life.

The Bible is under constant attack from:

- The enemy
- Culture
- Our misconceptions

The Goal - To highlight and understand the danger and destructive nature of misusing the Bible and provide a way to carefully interpret, understand, and apply the Bible as God intended.

1 A Struggle: Misusing Verses

We reference a verse, but we don't connect it to what comes before it and what comes after it. We pull a verse out of its context and use it however we would like.

- "Do not cut yourselves or make a bald spot on your head on behalf of the dead."¹
- "Do not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."²
- "I can do anything through Christ Jesus who gives me strength."³

Example: **Matthew 7**



We misunderstand the nature and intention of the text:

- We would never use a car manual to learn how to improve our romantic life just like we wouldn't use a sci-fi book to help us fix our car.
- When is the Bible **describing** what happened and when is it **prescribing** what should happen?
 - » Should we be handling snakes (**Mark 16:18**)?
 - » Should we baptize people for the dead (**1 Corinthians 15:29**)?
 - » Should we still have a counsel of elders in Jerusalem (**Acts 15**)?
- We treat wise sayings and proverbs as promises, and then question God's faithfulness.
- When is the Bible speaking literally or figuratively?
 - » Will there literally be a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head and a great fiery red dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns with 7 crowns (**Revelation 12:1-3**)?
 - » Or are we to understand this as figurative, pointing to something else?
- We treat hyperbolic (embellished, extreme to make a point) language as actionable commands (poke your eye out⁴).
- We treat a parable like a historical story with actual people as characters, drawing life lessons from the characters of the parable instead of the main point of the parable.
- We turn historical Old Testament (OT) figures into heroes or examples of how to live.



2

A Truth: The Bible is a Divine Book

with authors, 66 individual books, audiences, genre, story, imagery, sentence structure, historical context, relational context...

God designed us to use verbal and written language and then, in His wisdom, used that form of communication to reveal Himself to us.

God used the rules and methods of written language to speak to us.

Each book of the Bible has a **historical** and a **literary context** that must be understood in order to correctly interpret and apply the book. Without context, things don't make sense...

"If you'll be my bodyguard
I can be your long lost pal.
I can call you Betty
And Betty, when you call me, you can call me Al."

1. **Historical Context:** Author, Audience, and Occasion

2. **Literary Context:**

- Purpose and theme of the whole Bible and of the individual book
- Genre / style of literature
- Outline of thoughts
- Paragraphs / sentences / words

3 *A Better Way: Correctly Understanding Old Testament Narrative and Law*

OT Narrative

Misuses

We treat OT narratives as a place to look for gold—deeply hidden spiritual treasures.

We view its stories as life lessons (The Fleece⁵, the Prayer of Jabez⁶)...

- We shouldn't try to fight a giant with a sling, build an ark in our backyard, or raise our hands beside the Kanawha River and expect it to part... (That's not the point!)

We view the people in the stories as the heroes of the story. We leave Sunday school talking about how awesome the people of the OT are, we name our children after people in the OT, and we use them as examples for how to live our lives.

Rightly Understanding OT Narrative

God is the hero!

Bible Story

The Ark⁷

Abraham and Isaac⁸

The Exodus⁹

The Crossing of the Red Sea¹⁰

The Promised Land¹¹

Israel's Multiple Exiles and Returns¹²

The Big Picture

Only God can save from the consequences of sin.

Only God can provide a substitute.

Only God can redeem His people from slavery

God can do anything to save His people.

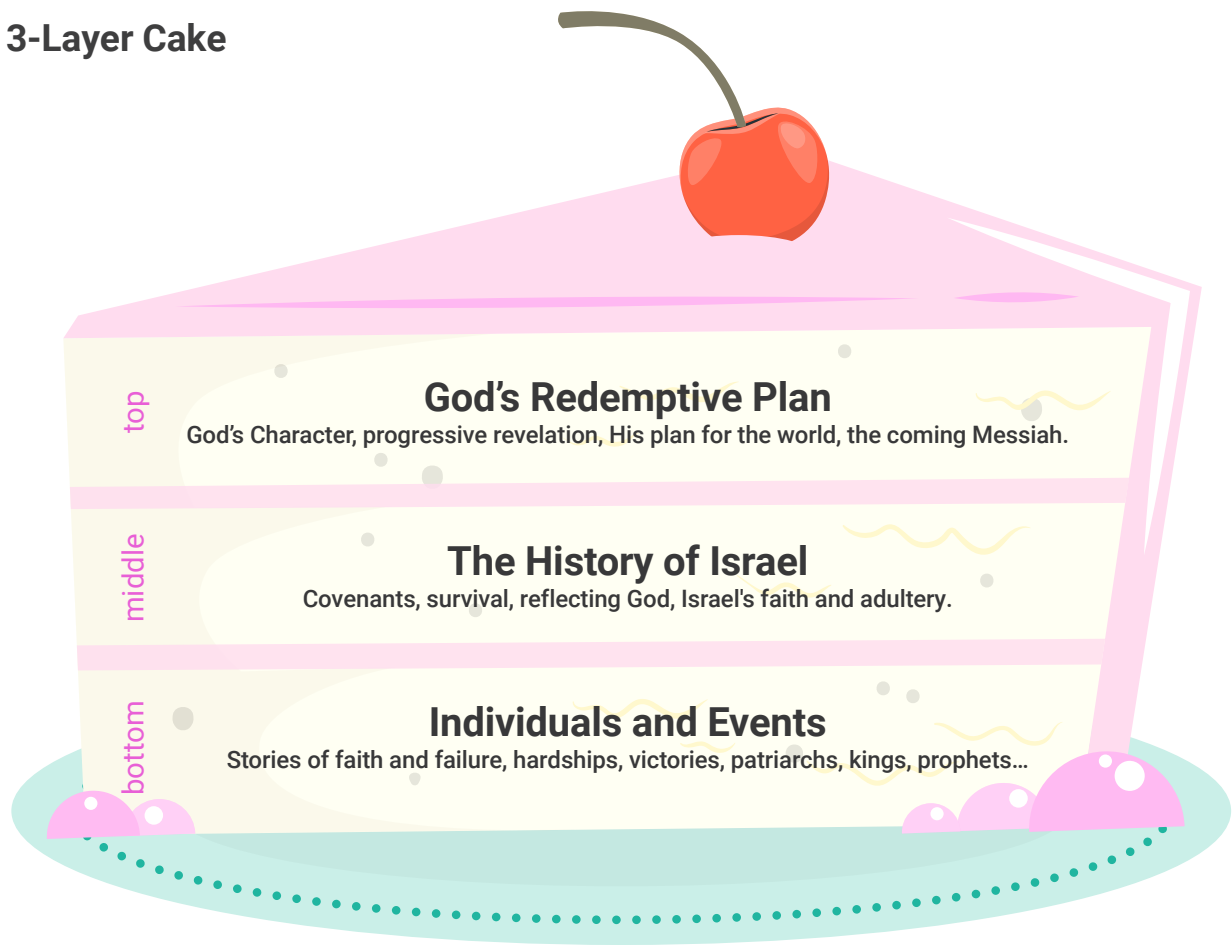
A foretaste of what heaven will truly be.

God's love is beyond measure and His people can't wander

Narratives record what happened, not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to have happened.

The actions of the people in the OT are not necessarily good examples for us (1 Corinthians 10). Narratives are not written to answer all of our theological questions.

A 3-Layer Cake



The Law – Covenant Stipulations

Are you faithfully living out these laws?

Deuteronomy 19 – If you accidentally commit murder, will you run to a “city of refuge?”

Deuteronomy 20 – Justice = an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, hand for a hand, and a life for a life.

Deuteronomy 21 – If a murder victim is found...

3 Types of Laws: Civic, Cultic, & Moral Laws

1. **Civic Laws** – In this “come-and-see” period of time when God selected a singular nation to represent Him among all the nations, He had a particular way He wanted them to dress, act, and eat. Many of the laws dictated how Israel was to act in specific civic situations. (Over 600 of these are found in the OT). Many of these have little to no present applicability.
2. **Cultic Laws** – These dictated how Israel would approach the Lord. The priesthood, the tabernacle, the sacrificial system - all of these instructions gave God’s Old Covenant expectations for His people.
3. **Moral Laws** – These are based upon God’s holy nature. The Ten Commandments¹³ are expanded and internalized by Jesus Himself. Jesus moves us from an external, pharisaical obedience to a heart obedience (**Matthew 5:17-18; Galatians 3:23-25; Deuteronomy 6:4-6 / Mark 12:30-31**).

*Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the Law. He ushers in the New Covenant in which we now “go and tell” as everyday missionaries¹⁴. It is in Jesus that we no longer approach a temple, but we now **are** the living temple of God. He renews the moral law and presents the internal, heart-based nature of God’s expectations.*

¹ Deuteronomy 14:1

² Exodus 23:19b

³ Philippians 4:13

⁴ Mark 9:47

⁵ Judges 6:36-40

⁶ 1 Chronicles 4:10

⁷ Genesis 6:5-9:17

⁸ Genesis 22:1-18 and
John 1:29

⁹ Exodus 1-13

¹⁰ Exodus 14-15

¹¹ Genesis 12:1-7 & other
passages throughout Bible

¹² 2 Kings 15 to Nehemiah

¹³ Exodus 20:1-17

¹⁴ Matthew 28:19