

READ THE BIBLE AS ONE UNIFIED STORY

Thursday Bible Study
ACA Avadi Church
14 March 2024

Psalm 119:18 -

Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.

1 Corinthians 14:20 -

Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

READ TO UNDERSTAND

Ephesians 3:4 (T-5)

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4by which, **when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ**)

WITHOUT READING THE SCRIPTURES WELL THE SADDUCEES WERE MISTAKEN IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCRIPTURES AND THE POWER OF GOD

Matthew 22:23-32

29 Jesus answered and said to them, **"You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.**

WITHOUT READING THE SCRIPTURES WELL THE PHARISEES WERE FINDING FAULT WITH THE DISCIPLES

Matthew 12:1-5

1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.

WITHOUT READING THE SCRIPTURES WELL THE PHARISEES WERE TRYING TO TEST JESUS HIMSELF

Matthew 19:3-5

3 The Pharisees also came to Him, **testing Him**, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

1 Timothy 4:13

Till I come, **give attention to reading**, to exhortation, to doctrine.

All 66 books of the Bible, written by at least 40 different human authors over the course of millennia, are ultimately

- just one book
- inspired by one Author—God the Holy Spirit (**2 Tim. 3:16**)
- about one person, God the Son Incarnate, Jesus Christ (**Luke 16:31; 24:27, 44; John 5:46**).
- All together they tell one unified story
- The story of the one and only God who created humanity, humanity's rebellion against Him, and the ruins that were left in the wake of our rebellion.
- But the story continues, and Genesis through Revelation tell about God moving heaven and earth to re-create His world and make all things new.

Hebrews 1:1-4

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

• *consider the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.*

- If you asked the average church goer what the story is about, most would answer that it's about God's judgment against two cities for their sins.
- But it's also one of the greatest illustrations of God's grace in all of Scripture
- Scripture opens with the account in Genesis, **by introducing us to a beautiful mind, the author of all reality, a being called God.**
- And he has the power to take the dark chaos of the uncreated world and bring about **order and beauty and a garden full of life.**
- And to crown this accomplishment, **God appoints these creatures called humanity.**
- **they're commissioned to rule this beautiful world on God's behalf** by harnessing all of its potential and creating even more beauty and order.
- They were given the choice to **Partner with God and find freedom by trusting in his knowledge** of good and evil.
- **Or seize power and define good and evil on their own**, which God warns will kill them.
- They hear the voice of the Devil who deceives them with falsehood that it will give them power and freedom to rule the world on their own terms.
- **Genesis 11: ultimately a whole civilization, Babylon, that has redefined evil as good.**

- And so God scatters this corrupted human project.
- Here the story of the Bible takes an important turn.
- Our focus is turned to look into the story of a man and a woman who come out of Babylon, Abraham and Sarah.

Genesis 11:31

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.

- God promises that from them will come a new people, a nation that has another chance to make the right choice.
- And if they succeed, it will open up this new way forward for the rest of humanity.
- Despite **God's personal guidance, Abraham's family gives in to that same temptation to redefine good and evil on their own terms apart from God.**
- Later, even when their best people were in charge, rulers who loved God's guidance and had divine wisdom, even they gave in.
- And so Israel was warned by their own prophets that **these choices would lead them back to Babylon, this time as conquered captives living in exile.**

ISAIAH TO HEZEKIAH

2 Kings 20:

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: 17 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord. 18 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will [f]descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.' "

- So even with God's personal guidance, Israel fails. Who can succeed?
- Well the prophets said that the story wasn't over.
- God's going to send a new leader to Israel to cover for their failures and to transform the people's hearts and minds so that they can make the right choice.
- And then the biblical story continues into the New Testament.
- We're introduced to a man who comes from the line of Israel's kings, Jesus of Nazareth.
- And he said that he was bringing all these promises to their completion.
- He confronted, resisted and took ultimate victory over the Devil by His obedience until His death on the cross

- One helpful way of describing how the Bible is organized is commonly called the four-chapter gospel: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration.
- Creation explains **the way things were**
- The Fall explains **the way things are**
- Redemption shows **the way things could be**
- Restoration shows **the way things will be**

Creation (Chapter 1)

- In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth (**Genesis 1:1**).
- God is the creator of both the natural and supernatural world.
- God has always existed in perfect love (**Ephesians 1:1**)
- has always been one, yet distinct in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God spoke and out of nothing the world came into being.
- He created man and woman in his image (**Genesis 1:28**)
- God dwelt among his creation without separation or void.

Fall (Chapter 2)

- Yet, despite all the wonders of creation, our first parents disobeyed God and exchanged the glory of God, for their own glory (**Genesis 3**).
- They were removed from the Garden of Eden, death entered the world, the relationship between Creator and creation was severed, and humanity no longer enjoyed God by glorifying him.
- Since then, not a single person has avoided sin, but rather all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:10, 23**).
- Paradise was lost.
- The wages of sin was death (**Romans 6:23**).
- Hell, along with eternal punishment, destruction, and banishment are the result (**Revelation 19-20**).
- now all of creation groans inwardly longing for some sort of redemption (**Romans 8**).

Redemption (Chapter 3)

- But God being rich in mercy and because of his great love, poured out his grace by bringing good news to those who have fallen (**Ephesians 2**).
- God has provided a way of salvation through the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- The perfect Son, the perfect solution, the perfect man would die a gruesome and humiliating death on a cross in order to redeem that which was lost (**John 3:16; Col. 2:9; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21**).
- Christ has paid our debt, he took our punishment as our substitute, and he became our blood sacrifice washing us clean.
- The snake crusher crushed the head of Satan (**Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:18-20**) and bought at the price of his own blood his chosen people.

Consummation (Chapter 4)

- The ultimate gift of such a redemption is the promise that we get God back.
- We are reconciled to God (**Colossians 1:21-22**).
- In the near future, all of heaven and earth will sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy. Worthy is the Lamb who was Slain!" All of God's people from every tribe, language, nation, and country will stand together in worship to their great God (**Revelation 7**).
- And God will wipe away every tear, make all enemies his footstool, and create a new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21-22).
- Best of all, we will dwell with him again and we will see his face.

THE BENEFITS OF READING THE BIBLE AS ONE UNIFIED STORY:

1. It gives meaning to all people, places, and things.
2. It answers the questions that plague our hearts: Why am I here? What is God's purpose for my life? Why is the world so broken?
3. It enables us to understand our identity as God's people and identify our role in his story.
4. It helps explain why we are called to these areas and how we can live out our response to them in light of our love for God.