

Revive your interest in the Bible— *fascinating facts about prophecy, God and time, & and why it's like your favorite novel*

I want to start with a disclaimer—You obviously care about the Bible, or you wouldn't be listening to or watching this.

And another disclaimer before I get into the content.

This lesson will be a little longer and more complex than most from Bible805, but I feel the topic requires it.

Again, I don't want to beat up on you about not caring about the Bible, as stated, you do or you wouldn't be listening to or watching this. But your interest is very different than the view of many. Allow me to share some statistics:

1. American Worldview Inventory 2026 (AWVI 2026)

- **Source:** Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University **Lead researcher:** Dr. George Barna
- **Statistics about biblical worldview collapse**
- **68–82%** of U.S. adults lack biblical alignment in their world view which results in only **4%** of adults having a biblical worldview. It drops even more in younger generations with Millennials at **2%**, Gen Z at **1%** having a biblical world view.
- These findings came from the **American Worldview Inventory**, a long-running annual study (2020–2026).
- This is the result of a steep decline in people reading the Bible and obviously if you don't know what it says, you can't base your worldview on it.

Some statistics on daily Bible reading of both the general population or regular churchgoers:

- **General U.S. Adult Population:** Roughly **9% to 14%** of all U.S. adults read the Bible every day outside of a church setting.
- **U.S. Protestant Churchgoers (Attending monthly+):** About **31%** read the Bible daily on their own.
- **Bible Reading Frequency Among Churchgoers**
- **Every day:** 31%
- **A few times a week:** 30%
- **Once a week:** 14%
- **A few times a month:** 11%
- **Once a month or less / Rarely:** 14%
- *These figures come from ongoing research by organizations like Lifeway Research and the American Bible Society's State of the Bible reports.*

And in that reading few Christians have read the Bible all the way through, instead

- People pick and choose verses out of context that make them feel good and toss the whole Bible out if the “promises” they claimed don't deliver.
- Knowledge about key themes such as justice, mercy, and care for the least of these are either not known (because people don't read the whole Bible and see what a key theme it is) or are ignored in the name of political expediency.
- In higher religious institutions more often than not, “biblical” scholars quote

My Notes

one another more than they do the Bible itself when discussing Biblical issues.

Because of this, as Jesus said (*and I think with a broken heart*)

- *You are in error because you don't know the scriptures or the power of God. Matt. 22:29.*
- Because they did not know the Bible truly or deeply or combine it with a knowledge of God, their lives, though outwardly religious were seriously off-track.
- He said this to the religious leaders of His day, but it applies to all of us today.
- To correct that, to get you into God's Word and walking closely with Jesus is what our lesson today will be about.

**To do that, we'll look at evidence of one important fact—
that GOD is the author of the Bible**

- ***THINK of that—the Creator of all we see, of us, has given us a book about Himself and about ourselves—if we truly believed that, consider what that would mean in our focus on it and obedience to it and to help us know God as the Author of the Bible—***
- **We will look at these topics:**
- **The Structure of the Bible**
- **The view of God as He relates to the Bible**
- **The place of Prophecy and History in the Bible**
- **How our individual lives fit into the Story of the Bible**

On the structure of the Bible, a well-meaning, but misleading view

- ***Often, we read that the Bible is “one book, but really many books....”***
- And that is true on one level, but unintentionally what this common statement has done is to lead people to look at the Bible like a collection of short stories, written at various times, by various people, in scattered places, and only loosely related (“many books into one book”).
- I think that view is incorrect and misleading and that the Bible is much more like a novel with ONE author, God.
- Following is an infographic that summarizes both views.
- ***PLEASE NOTE: this and all the other infographics in all Bible805 lessons will be in the downloadable notes on www.Bible805.com and all the materials needed to teach this lesson are freely available on www.Bible805Academy.com.***
- We'll look at the implications of each one point in the contrasting views of the Bible and after that, I'll go into more detail on why the structure of the Bible is more like a novel than a collection of short stories

How the structure of the Bible follows the classical structure of a novel.

- What follows is based on the classic analysis of the structure of a novel from 1863, where Gustav Freytag, a German writer, who advocated a [plot-story-line] model based upon Aristotle's theory of tragedy. . . . which divides a drama or novel into five parts.
- Without getting too philosophical, it seems that the structure of stories from the classics of Greek drama to modern novels and movies all follow a pattern somehow written into the core of our minds and hearts.
- Something inside us says, “this is how a story should be structured” and if these parts aren't there and in order, something seems off.
- At the same time, we so expect them, we are not even aware of them as we

experience the stories, from the Bible to popular bestsellers, to the plots of TV programs and movies.

- Let's now look the 5 parts and see how the Bible lines up with them. The initial definitions are from Freytag and then my comments on how the Bible content fits that part.

The 5 structural parts of a Novel, ONE STORY structure

- They are:
- **Exposition**
- **Rising action**
- **Climax**
- **Falling action**
- **Denouement**
- I'll next define each part from Freytag's definitions and then how the story line of the Bible fits that part.

Exposition

- **Exposition defined:** *The first phase . . . introduces the characters, especially the main character, also known as the protagonist. It shows how the characters relate to one another, their goals and motivations, as well as their moral character. During the exposition, the protagonist learns their main goal and what is at stake.*
- **Exposition in the Bible:** Our Triune God (Father, Son, & Holy Spirit) is the primary protagonist in all the Bible. All other characters are subordinate to God, though their actions are meaningful. In the opening of Genesis, God created a world and placed the humanity created in His Image into a perfect garden. He met them there and walked with them.

Rising action, pt 1

- **Definition of Rising Action:** *it starts with a conflict. . . . an event that catalyzes the protagonist to take action. Rising action initiates the progression of events until the climax.*
- *In this phase, the secondary protagonist characters understand the goal that will resolve the conflict and begin to work toward it. Smaller problems thwart their initial success and their progress is directed primarily against these secondary obstacles. This phase demonstrates how the protagonist overcomes these obstacles.*
- **Rising action in the Bible:** The catalyzing conflict in the Biblical story is when the human couple God created for a relationship with Himself, turns their back on Him and does the one thing He told them not to do—to eat the forbidden fruit. They chose to believe the enemy of God, Satan, rather than God. The consequence is death. First temporal, physical death and finally eternal death or separation from God.
- The only solution to the eternal death of his created characters is for God Himself to enter the broken world and by a sacrificial death repair the breach and accomplish redemption for fallen humanity.

Rising action, continued

- **The Rising Action continues:** The Old Testament story-line is the progression of events about God's preparation for this work of redemption.
- Through the lives of a chosen people and the messages of his prophets, God illustrates and explains who God is what He expects, and what He will do to accomplish the promised redemption.
- He can no longer walk with them, so He communicates through his Word

spoken through the prophets, and through the written scriptures that become our Bible, which is the record of events in the lives of a chosen people and His chosen messengers.

- Just as the rising action makes up the bulk of a novel, the rising action told in the Old Testament makes up the majority of our Bibles and much of human history.
- Like any careful story-teller, God is not in a hurry, He takes His time to tell the story and prepare the world for...

Climax

- **Climax defined:** *The climax is the turning point or highest point of the story. The protagonist makes the single big decision that defines not only the outcome of the story, but also who they are as a person.*
- **The climax in the Bible: consists of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.** In that, humanity sees in Jesus the perfect Man, how they were designed to live and obey God and in contrast, how they are not able to do that.
- Then that perfect Man, Jesus, by an act of his free will takes his life and offers it in the place of His creation as a sacrifice for their sins.
- God the Father accepts the sacrifice, and the enemy, Satan and death are defeated, the breach is healed, the redemption price is paid.

Falling action

- **Falling action defined:** *The climax is not the ending, but it determines the ending. The falling action phase consists of events that lead to the ending. Depending on the complexity of the story, there are often multiple secondary plot lines yet to be worked out.*
- **The Falling action in the Bible,** comes after death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus back to heaven. His disciples are charged with the task of sharing the message of salvation with the world. The secondary plot lines involve the establishment of the church and how his disciples are to live out the work of reconciling the world to God that is now possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- The New Testament tells the story of the falling action not only of the characters when it was first written, but it invites us to join in and become part of the story in our lives as followers of Jesus.

Denouement

- **Denouement defined:** *In this phase the protagonist and antagonist have solved their problems and either the protagonist or antagonist wins the conflict. The conflict officially ends. Some stories show what happens to the characters after the conflict ends and/or they show what happens to the characters in the future.*
- **The Denouement in the Bible** is Christ's return to earth, the casting of Satan into the Lake of Fire, and the creation of the New Heaven and New Earth where God once again, physically, tangibly walks with His people forever.
- Paradise lost has become paradise regained.
- C.S. Lewis' description of the denouement at the end of the *Last Battle* can describe our coming denouement of human history also, as he says--
- *"The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning. . . . the beginning of the real story. All their life and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth*

has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."

Summary of the 5-part structure

- I found the way the Bible fits the structure of a novel to be very exciting when I first discovered it—I hope you do too.
- It not only fits the structure of how it is written but recognizing that the Bible is ONE coherent story with ONE author resonates with something deeply inside us that "this is how things ought to be."
- It is the greatest of Novels written by One divine Author.
- It is not a scattered collection of short stories written by faceless writers who could have never collaborated independently to produce this **ONE** storyline over the centuries the Bible was written.

Clarification of the Bible as "STORY"

- ***The term, "Story" refers to its narrative structure, the whole of how it is written.***
- ***It does not mean it is fictional.***
- It does not mean it took place, "far, far away."
- And here is where history fits in—bear with me, it is a little convoluted at first, but I think ultimately very useful as it also informs about God's inspiration of the Bible.

It starts with how we view Biblical "INSPIRATION"

- At its most basic level this is where we believe that God "inspired" or spoke through the writers of scripture, so that though they did not lose their personality or individual style (easy to see how Peter's writing style is very different than Isaiah's) the content is God's.
- The verse most often cited in support of this is:
- *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16,17*
- OK....so what does that mean?
- At its most basic level, it means we believe God is the one behind the Bible—but what does that mean?
- Did He just give ideas? Or the words themselves? Or what?

This is important to discern because a limited view of God's inspiration limits our view of God

- It seems much current debate on inspiration deals with the details of how even the most minute word choice was inspired by God and though there is truth to that, we limit God if we stop there.
- ***In correction to it, I'd offer a greatly expanded view of inspiration, beyond just the words (while not denying that they are important)--***
- Let's consider God's inspiration in His weaving together the strands of the great themes of the Bible throughout all its creation and culmination.
- We see this through both predictive prophecy and progressive revelation as verified by history—which I'll be illustrating shortly.
- And this is possible only because God, the ultimate author of the Bible is outside of time, outside of history.
- Again....bear with this somewhat complex explanation.

The foundational importance of understanding that God is outside of time

- And that means that existing outside time, and God sees the past, present,

and future simultaneously and is thus able to give us true prophecy and to weave themes throughout the Bible using progressive revelation—which we'll go into more detail on shortly.

- Here is God's view of time--

How History fits in

- This is what Eugene Peterson says on the importance of true history in his introduction to the Historical Books in the Bible in *the Message* translation.
- *These books[referring to the historical books of the Old Testament] immerse us in dates and events, in persons and circumstances—in history.....History is the medium in which God works salvation, just as paint and canvas is the medium in which Rembrandt made created works of art.This deeply pervasive sense of history—the dignity of this place in history, the presence of God in history—accounts for the way in which the Hebrew people talked and wrote. They did not as was the fashion in the ancient world [and I would say today] make up and embellish fanciful [spiritual] stories.*
- *The Bible events [in contrast] take place in identifiable times with identifiable people.*
- NOTE: Bible805 has a series of lessons on the difference in the writings of other religions in various lessons on the Bible805.com website.

The Bible and true history

- Throughout the Bible, it sites specific historical anchors to confirm it takes place during specific historical times.
- It was written from the earliest days of human writing (approx. 2000 BC) down to the era of the Roman world in approximately 70 AD.
- There are SIX identifiable periods of time during this span, the following slide illustrates them, and a copy of the time periods is in the notes for this lesson.
- During each era of time there are clearly identified human authors, who tie what they wrote about their current situation with verifiable people and events also taking place at that time.
- ***This dating of events and the people who wrote during this time is confirmed by Christian, Jewish, and secular history.*** There may be minor dating controversies, but the overall times and events are clear.
- You do not have to believe in any divine authorship or intervention to accept the history of WHEN an event was prophesied and when it took place.
- You can attribute it to magic or coincidence or time-travel (and all have been put forth as explanations), but you cannot with intellectual honesty ignore the order of when various Biblical events took place.

This is very important because without a grounding in TRUE history, predictive prophecy is meaningless—

- If all the prophetic books were written after the fact of their events, they have no significant meaning.
- But with the grounding of a prophecy made hundreds of years before it was confirmed—prophecy becomes very powerful—
- Because it moves the story of the Bible from being an interesting story about ancient people to—
- An intentional PLAN worked out by loving God, over Millennia for the redemption of His people.
- Here is how it works out.

Predictive Prophecy explained

- The popular conception of “prophecy” is that it is all about scary, end-time events.
- That isn’t what the majority of Biblical prophecy is all about—though truly it does have some rather scary things to say about the wrapping up of this world and the final fate of humanity—which might be a time to consider your eternal relationship with Jesus.
- Back to this lesson—

There are two primary categories of OT Prophecy

- First, predictive prophecy about specific events that would take place.
- In your notes are more detailed examples of this.
- A primary one is the constant warnings of the prophets throughout the Old Testament of what would happen if Israel turned away from God.
- They did and His judgement, the destruction of Israel and exile to Babylon happened precisely as prophesied.
- In addition, the restoration and return to the land was also prophesied in specific detail 150 years before it happened, when the prophet Isaiah predicted that a king named Cyrus would allow the people to return to the land.
- This was before Babylon conquered and exiled them and before the Medes and Persians were even a power able to do that.
- All of which of course necessitates exact dating and true history and for the specifics of that, see the Bible805.com lessons on Isaiah.

Web A.I. Summary

- About 10–15% of Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled within Old Testament history, depending on how scholars classify “prophecy” and “fulfillment.” This percentage comes from comparing the roughly 300–400 prophetic statements in the OT with those that clearly came to pass before the close of the OT canon. ***Most prophecies point forward to the Messiah or future judgment, but a significant cluster deals with geopolitical events, kings, and national destinies that unfolded during OT times.***
- Below is a structured, evidence-based list of major Old Testament prophecies fulfilled before the New Testament era, grounded in the search results above.
- ★ **Key Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in Old Testament Times**
- **NOTE:** prior to all these specifics on how it would happen, many years of warnings that this would happen because Israel broke their covenant with God, agreed to when they were freed from Egypt. God said at that time these things would happen when they disobeyed and again and again prophets reminded them that this would happen.
- **1. Destruction of Nineveh (Nahum 1–3; Zephaniah 2:13–15)**
- Prophecy: Nineveh, capital of Assyria, would be utterly destroyed for its violence and idolatry.
- Fulfillment: In 612 BCE, Nineveh fell to a coalition of Babylonians, Medes, and Scythians.
- Notes: The destruction was so complete that the city disappeared for centuries until rediscovered in the 19th century.
- **2. Rise of Babylon and 70 Years of Domination (Jeremiah 25:11–12)**
- Prophecy: Judah would serve Babylon for 70 years, after which Babylon itself would be punished.

- Fulfillment: Babylon conquered Assyria and took control of Judah beginning 609–586 BCE.
- Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 BCE, ending its domination.
- The Temple was destroyed in 586 BCE and rebuilt/consecrated in 516 BCE—a 70-year span.

Web A.I. Summary

- **3. Fall of Babylon (Isaiah 13; Jeremiah 51)**
- Prophecy: Babylon would be conquered and eventually left desolate.
- Fulfillment: Conquered by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus in 539 BCE. Over centuries, Babylon declined into ruins, matching prophetic descriptions of desolation.
- **4. Cyrus Named as Future Deliverer (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1–4)**
- Prophecy: Isaiah names Cyrus—150+ years before his birth—as the ruler who would restore Jerusalem and allow the Temple to be rebuilt.
- Fulfillment: In 538 BCE, Cyrus issued a decree permitting Jewish exiles to return and rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:1–4).
- The Cyrus Cylinder corroborates his policy of repatriating displaced peoples.
- **5. Babylon's Gates Open for Cyrus (Isaiah 45:1)**
- Prophecy: God would “open the gates” of Babylon for Cyrus.
- Fulfillment: Cyrus diverted the Euphrates River, lowering the water level and enabling troops to enter the city through river gates.
- Babylon fell without a major battle in 539 BCE.
- **★ Other Old Testament–Era Fulfillments (brief examples)**
- These are widely recognized but not included in the search results above, so they are listed without citations:
- Destruction of Samaria (Hosea 13:16; fulfilled 722 BCE).
- Judgment on Moab, Ammon, Edom (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel; fulfilled through successive conquests).
- Rise of Persia after Babylon (Daniel 8; fulfilled 539 BCE).
- **Return from exile (Jeremiah 29:10; fulfilled 538 BCE).**

Even more fascinating, and evidence of God's authorship, though not as obvious, is—

Progressive Revelation

- Progressive Revelation is the term we use, to explain the reality that, from the start, the seed of all key doctrines of the Bible—sin, redemption, grace and many more are introduced in Genesis and Job—and then carried through the writings of the different authors in the Bible for over 1500 years while the entire Bible was written.
- NOTE: it is not as the Mormon church defines it as the ability to change previous teachings to whatever is currently desired.
- **One example of true progressive revelation is in the continuing plot line that a sinless sacrifice was needed for pay for humanities rebellion against their Creator.**
- Early in Genesis when Adam and Eve sinned, God covered them with animal skins, when Abel made his offering pleasing to God, it was an animal sacrifice;
- Job offered animal sacrifices, so did Abraham, all prior to Levitical laws;
- The sacrifices (type, purpose, procedure) were clarified in the Levitical Laws after the Exodus and became tied to the idea of a coming Messiah in Isaiah and other prophetic writings.

AND THAT is why.....

- It was extraordinarily meaningful when John the Baptist saw Jesus (and to his audience which had the history thousands of years of sacrifice) and he said, ***“Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the World”***
- That introduced Jesus ministry and finally, all the previous teaching about sacrifices were fulfilled with Jesus’s death on the cross and confirmed in his uniqueness as the final, satisfactory sacrifice by his resurrection.
- These events, the later New Testament writers expand on and clarify until in the book of Revelation John has a vision of Jesus as both Lion and Lamb.
- The plot line of a needed sacrifice for sin of an innocent winds through the entire Bible, through the centuries and the voices of many, but its truth progressively revealed by the one Author—God—behind it all.

Here is Jesus’ commentary on progressive revelation about his life and ministry

- He said, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”* John 5:39
- [And spoken on the Road to Emmaus, after His resurrection] *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.* Luke 24:27
- Not only Jesus, but other New Testament authors refer to and confirm progressive revelation of OT teaching further revealed or fulfilled as the OT is quoted over 200 times in NT, always as part of progressive revelation, not a contradiction or declaration that previous teachings were wrong or false.
- Paul does this extensively in his writings and in his recorded way of teaching, where it talks about how he would go into a synagogue and show them how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Messiah they were looking for.
- The book of Hebrews is also primary example of this as it begins: *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,* Heb. 1:1,2

Conclusion about Progressive Revelation

- From Progressive Revelation, one can conclude that our Bible has ONE author, God, who worked through human authors, but it was God, the primary Author who kept in mind the whole plot, the storyline of salvation—
- Outside of time God carefully planned and though it took many centuries to tell it all, the basic plot lines, the key themes do not change but expand as the books of the Bible unfold.
- The Bible in this way is more like a coherent novel with ONE author than a collection of short stories, loosely related by various authors.
- But you must read the ENTIRE BIBLE to see this.
- ***ALSO IMPORTANT: this consistency of Progressive Revelation is a unique Characteristic of the Bible.***
- Other religions totally change doctrines, ignore blatant contradictions, define “progressive revelation” as the option to change their mind about important topics or upfront admit that they change it however and whenever they want, but the Christian Bible and faith do not do that.
- HOWEVER, this brings up a troubling question:

What's my part in the Great Story?

- If God has determined from eternity the plot of the Bible, we can't help but ask the question: what about Me? Is my life a predetermined part of the plot plan?
- The balance of God's sovereign will over time and history vs human choice is the core question here and this illustration helped me understand it—it's very simple, but I think it makes sense—
- **Human history (the big picture, the plot of the entire salvation story) is like an ocean liner—the direction is certain; the route is set.**
- The Captain is in charge.
- It's his ship, HIS word is law. And the passengers have a copy of his law, his guidelines, his manual (the Bible obviously) for them to get the most out of the journey.
- ***But within the ship the passengers given quite a bit of freedom—***

Christianity has a linear view of time and history—it wouldn't be progressive revelation if it wasn't progressing toward something—a discernable end point

- In contrast, many religions believe in a cyclical view of time—Eastern religions, reincarnation, all of time going round and round *"samsara—the indefinitely repeated cycles of birth, misery, and death caused by karma"*
- Christianity is quite different.
- It teaches a personal Creator started it all, not eternal impersonal matter, not karma.
- Genesis teaches creation "ex nihilo" (out of nothing) and with that our universe began.
- *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."*
Rev. 1:8
- In addition to a clear beginning, Revelation 21 (and many other places) teaches us that a time will come when there will be an end to our present universe and New Heaven and a New Earth.
- Remember the earlier illustration. God created time, rules over all that happens in it and will bring it to an end when He sees fit.

Important applications because the Christian faith presents time as linear

- There is no reincarnation, no "do overs"
- Though God is clearly in control of the ship of human history, and He wrote the guidebook (our Bible) for how to live it—He won't force us to read it, but we do best on the journey if we do.
- ***The Guidebook also clearly tells each person they must choose where they want to disembark.*** Everyone is offered the chance to live with the Captain in what he promises is a forever, extraordinary, solid and lasting home far different than the pitching seas, the storms, and sickness that have plagued the ship.
- If they don't want that, the Captain warns them that there isn't any other land. They will drown in darkness.

Their ultimate destination isn't the only decision they must make

- For those who have trusted the Captain, who want to join Him in His forever home, the Guidebook, the Story given to all, tells them they are accountable for their time on the ship and how they use the resources they are given no matter where they found themselves, in First Class or working in the galley, as a passenger only or one entrusted with greater responsibilities.

- But again, they aren't forced to read it or forced to obey it.
- It's up to each passenger (especially to those given first-class passage) to realize that it isn't a pleasure ship, a cruise to simply try to live a best life now as if the ship is the only reality.
- There is work to be done.
- And one day the journey will be over and as we leave this earthly ship, each passenger will meet the Captain.
- C.S. Lewis puts it this way.....

C.S. Lewis uses the metaphor of a play, but it is the same idea—that of a finite end to the Christian linear view of time.

Precisely because we cannot predict the moment, we must be ready at all moments. . . the curtain may be rung down at any moment. . . .We do not know the play. . . the Author knows [and]. . . We are led to expect the Author will have something to say to each of us on the part that each of us has played. The playing it well is what matters infinitely.

C.S. Lewis, *the World's Last Night*

Bible805 is committed to helping you play your part, infinitely well

- I hope that from these lessons, through looking at God's view of Time, History, and Progressive Revelation you have been convinced that God, not just a collection of inspired humanity, is the author of the Bible and that the Bible is truly the book *which teaches all that is necessary for faith and life, for living and dying and serving God forever.*
- And that it should be an essential priority in your life to know it well and to live obediently.
- That is what Bible805 will help you do, through podcasts, videos, print, and whatever I can, I want to help you on your journey to be an obedient disciple of Jesus and to meet your Captain, your Lord, your Savior at the end of your journey with joy.

Do check out www.Bible805.com and www.Bible805Academy.com for many resources that will help you know, trust, apply, and teach the Bible.

In addition, on the Bible805 Academy site are the source files so any church, teacher, pastor, anywhere in the world (and people have downloaded them from all over the world) can teach the lessons.

DISCUSSION GUIDE for Revive Your Interest in the Bible

Brief Lesson Summary

This lesson challenges us to see the Bible not as a scattered collection of loosely related writings, but as one coherent story with God as its primary Author. Its structure follows the movement of a great story—from creation and humanity’s rebellion, through God’s preparation for redemption, to the climax of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and finally to Christ’s return and the New Heaven and New Earth. The lesson also explores how true history, predictive prophecy, and progressive revelation support the unity of the Bible. Because God is outside of time, He can reveal His plan across centuries while working through many human writers. The lesson concludes by asking where each of us fits in God’s great story and urges us to know the Bible well, obey it, and faithfully live the part God has given us.

Ice-breaker Question

Think of a novel, movie, or television story that held your attention from beginning to end. What made you want to keep following the story, and how did knowing that everything was moving toward an ending affect the way you understood the earlier parts?

Discussion Questions for a Group; Journal Questions for Individual Study

1. The lesson compares two ways of viewing the Bible: as a collection of many loosely related books or as one coherent story with one divine Author. How does seeing the Bible as one story change the way you approach reading it?
 2. The five-part structure discussed in the lesson is Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement. Which part of the Bible’s story helps you most clearly understand God’s plan of redemption, and why?
 3. Why is the Bible’s connection to identifiable people, places, dates, and historical events important to the lesson’s argument about predictive prophecy and God’s authorship?
 4. Progressive revelation means that key truths are introduced and then clarified and expanded as the Bible unfolds. How does the lesson’s example of sacrifice—from Genesis through Jesus as the Lamb of God—help you see the unity of the Bible?
 5. The lesson uses an ocean liner to illustrate God’s sovereignty over history and human freedom within it. What does this illustration help you understand about God’s control of the larger story and your responsibility for the choices you make?
 6. Jesus said, “You are in error because you don’t know the scriptures or the power of God” (Matthew 22:29). In light of this lesson, what are some ways a shallow or incomplete knowledge of the Bible can affect a person’s beliefs, decisions, and relationship with God?
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Life Application Suggestions, consider and respond

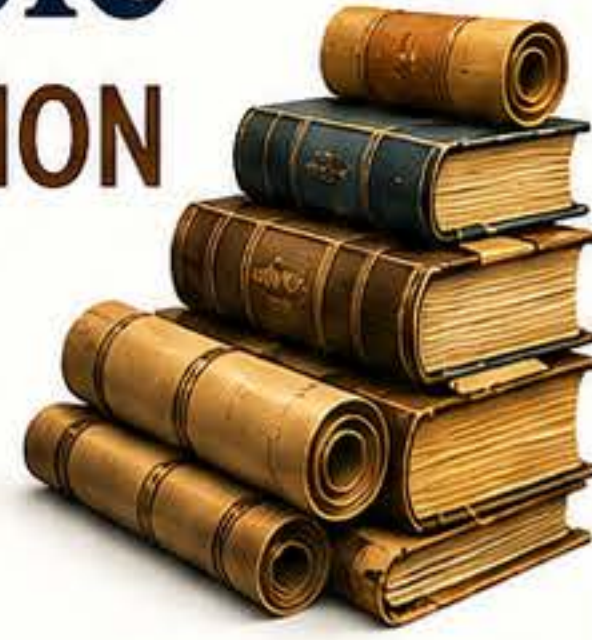
1. Make reading the entire Bible—not only favorite verses or isolated passages—a deliberate priority so you can see its complete storyline and major themes.
 2. As you read, look for themes that develop across the Bible, such as sin, sacrifice, redemption, grace, judgment, and restoration. Note where a truth is introduced and how it becomes clearer later.
 3. Treat the Bible as God’s guidebook for your journey. Identify one area where you know what the Bible teaches but need to respond with more consistent obedience.
 4. Consider the part God has given you to play in His story. Ask how you are using your present time, opportunities, responsibilities, and resources to serve Him faithfully.
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Prayer Focus

Ask God to renew your desire to know the Bible deeply and to help you see it as His unified story of creation, redemption, and restoration. Thank Him for revealing Himself through the Bible and through Jesus. Pray for wisdom to understand His Word, humility to obey it, and faithfulness to use your time and responsibilities well so that you may live your part in His story in a way that honors Him.

Two Views of the Bible

NOVEL vs. SHORT STORY COLLECTION



Each view is an often unspoken presupposition about the Bible that we have before we open a page of it. Each has an incredibly important impact on how we read it, respond to it, and order our lives according to it.

Bible805 believes it is imperative for our eternal salvation and ordering our lives correctly that we see the Bible as a Novel, written by one Author, our God.

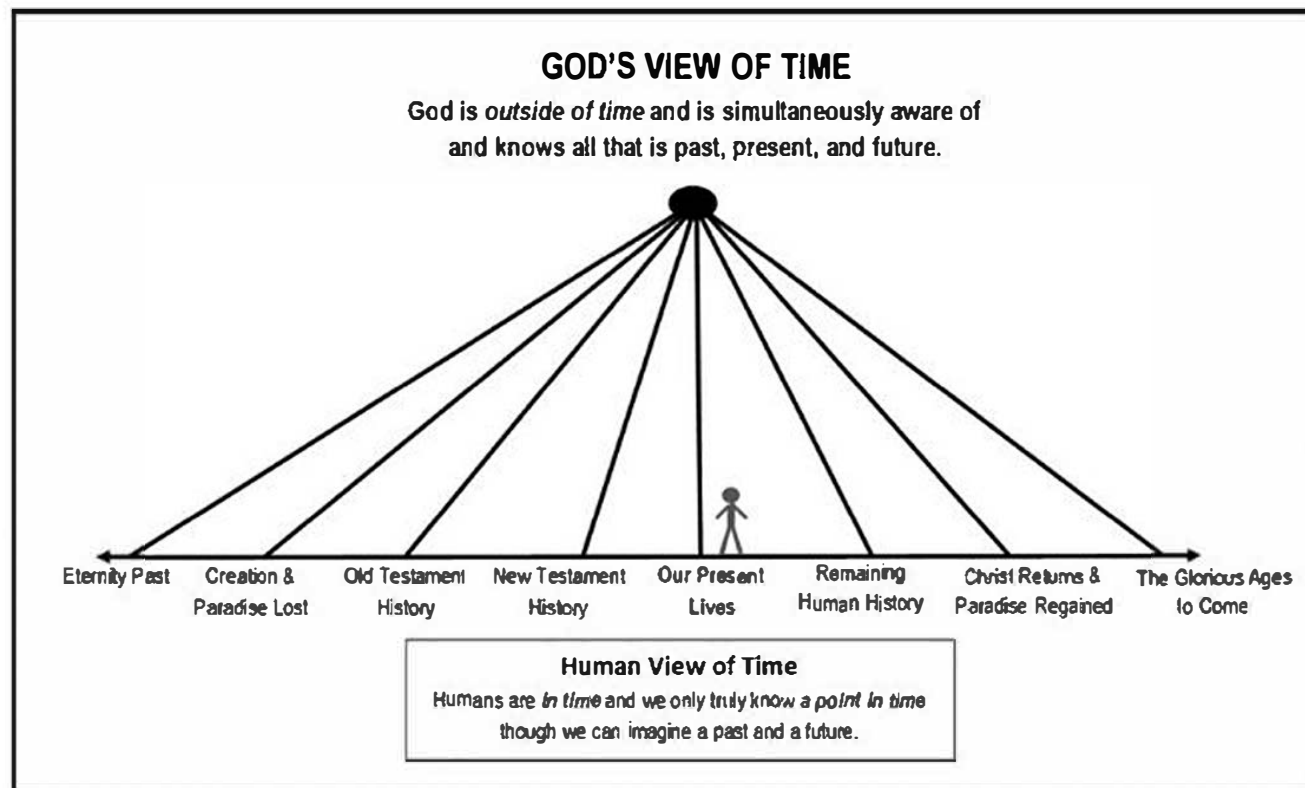
Please go to www.Bible805.com for the lesson, *The Bible, Novel or Short Story Collection and why it matters*, for an in-depth study on the topic.

BIBLE AS NOVEL <i>One Story, One Author, One Purpose</i>	BIBLE AS SHORT STORY COLLECTION <i>Many Stories, Many Authors, Many Voices</i>
 One story, one coherent plot line	 Many stories that are loosely tied together
 One Author – God Infallible, true Outside of time	 Multiple human authors, editors, and redactors, fallible and a product of their times
 Inspired human authors in the supernatural sense of God speaking through them	 Human authors inspired by God in a non-supernatural sense as anyone is inspired by lofty subject
 The Word of God	 Contains some words of God, human reason needed to decide
 Supernatural, miracles and events accepted as reported	 Seemingly supernatural events have natural explanations
 Problems in understanding require prayer and patience	 Problems in understanding allow human judgement
 Application imperative	 Application optional

An Illustration of God's View of Time

This illustration shows how God is simultaneously aware of and knows all of time, past, present, and future and in contrast how we humans only experience one particular point of time.

This illustrates also how God can tell us in the Bible what will happen because He knows all of it in advance of us encountering it on our timeline.



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