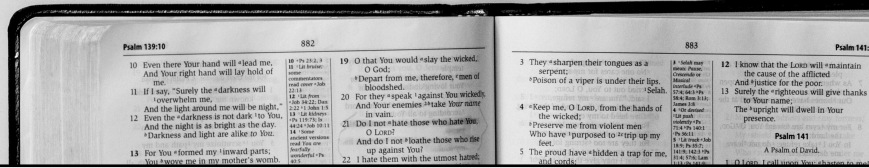


# DISCIPLESHIP CLASS

## HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

### WEEK 2



### VIDEO NOTES

- The Bible is in itself a small library of books, all of which emerged from the history of the people of ancient Israel.
- It is the most influential book in the history of Western and much of Eastern civilization.

## OLD TESTAMENT

# Ta Na K

### TORAH

#### “LAW”

GENESIS  
EXODUS  
LEVITICUS  
NUMBERS  
DEUTERONOMY

### NEVI'IM

#### “PROPHETS”

ISAIAH  
JEREMIAH  
LAMENTATIONS  
EZEKIEL  
DANIEL  
HOSEA  
JOEL  
AMOS  
OBADIAH  
JONAH  
MICAH  
NAHUM  
HABUKKUK

### KETUVIM

#### “WRITINGS”

PSALMS  
PROVERBS  
JOB  
RUTH  
1 & 2 SAMUEL  
1 & 2 KINGS  
1 & 2 CHRONICLES  
EZRA  
NEHEMIAH  
ESTER  
ECCLESIASTES  
THE SONG OF SOL.

- Written in ancient Hebrew and Aramaic over the span of more than 1000 years.
- The Old Testament (TaNaK) contains 39 books. The books emerge from the history of ancient Israel.
- They tell of their birth as a nation, their history in the land (called Israel-Palestine today), exile from it, return, and their eventual rebuilding around the city of Jerusalem.
- Furthermore, it is the story of Israel's origin as Abraham's family, how God promised to bless all nations through him via a messianic king-who one day would come (Jesus).
- 27 books emerged out of the movement started by Jesus of Nazareth.
- All of them were written in Greek by Jewish authors who had become Jesus' disciples.

# NEW TESTAMENT

## GOSPELS

MATTHEW  
MARK  
LUKE  
JOHN

Four tell the story of his life, death and resurrection

## EPISTLES

PAUL	13 Letters
PETER	2 Letters
JOHN	3 Letters
JAMES/JACOB	1 Letter
JUDE	1 Letter
ANONYMOUS	Hebrews

Twenty-one early letters are from the team of leaders Jesus appointed (apostles). They were addressed to communities all over the ancient Roman world, guiding them in their discipleship to Jesus.

## ACTS

One recounts the first couple decades of the movement

## REVELATION

One is an apocalypse addressed to 7 churches

## READING THE BIBLE AS A UNIFIED STORY

- The Bible is a really large book made up of the Old and New Testaments, which themselves are made up of many books.
- Despite this variety and diversity, the Bible shows a remarkable unity.
- Although the Bible is a diverse set of literature and may appear fragmented at first, it ultimately presents itself as a unified epic narrative that leads to Jesus.
- There is one main plot line weaving the different books and stories together.

<b>CREATION AND THE ROYAL TASK</b>	
Genesis 1 - 2	
<b>REBELLION AND THE FALLOUT</b>	
Genesis 3 - 11	
<b>GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL</b>	
Genesis 12 - 50, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalm, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	OLD TESTAMENT
<b>JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD</b>	
Matthew, Mark, Luke, John	
<b>THE SPREADING OF KINGDOM PEOPLE</b>	
Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude	NEW TESTAMENT
<b>THE RETURN OF THE KING</b>	
Revelation	

## HOW THE STORY WORKS

### • CREATION AND THE ROYAL TASK

God confronts chaos and out of it creates a wonderful, ordered world full of beauty and potential. He then appoints humans to oversee this world and multiply and create new communities. This opening story offers an ideal vision of the vocation of humans. Humans are to take this good world and develop all of its potential while living in harmony with God and each other.

### • REBELLION AND THE FALLOUT

As the humans go about this task they've been given, they're faced with choices about what is good and evil. Will they trust God's wisdom, or will they seize autonomy and define good and evil for themselves?

Here a dark, mysterious character enters the story. It represents evil at its source, and it entices the humans to doubt God's generosity and rebel. This leads to disaster; humanity's relationship with God is fractured, and their relationships with themselves, their families, and the earth breakdown. This all leads to the rise of two cities (Enoch and Babylon) where pride and violence reign.

- **GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL**

The tension between the just and generous creator God and the rebellious nations who have given into evil develops the plot conflict that drives the storyline of the entire Bible. God's response sets in motion a plan to restore divine blessing to the whole world. He will do this through one family chosen from among the nations, the people of Abraham, who later become Israel. The story of God and Israel is the first main subplot of the Biblical story. It has three main movements.

**Movement One: God Chooses Israel to Bless the Nations** *Genesis 12- Deuteronomy*

God makes a covenant promise to Abraham's family to bring them into a land where they'll become a nation that brings God's blessing to the world. The family grows, but they become enslaved in Egypt. As a nation, Egypt embodies all that's gone wrong with humanity: idolatry, injustice, and giving into evil. God raises up Moses and defeats Egypt's evil, rescuing his people and bringing them to Mount Sinai. There he enters into a covenant partnership with Israel. Furthermore, he will personally live among them. They are invited to obey the terms of the covenant which start with the ten commandments, followed by hundreds more. By being faithful to these commands, they will become God's priestly representatives to the nations.

**Movement Two: Israel's Royal Failure** *Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings*

Israel enters the promised land, and they blow it—big time. They begin worshiping the gods of the nations around them, leading to corruption and injustice. Even their best kings, like David or Solomon, fail miserably. Eventually the leaders of Israel run the nation into the ground. Then the tribes of Israel are conquered by the superpower, Babylon. Most of the Israelites are then dragged into exile in Babylon. Now we see two big conflicts in the story. All of the nations have continued with their rebellion, ruining God's good world. Even God's own chosen people are doing the same!

### **Movement Three: Israel's Exile and the Prophetic Hope** *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea - Malachi*

Despite Israel's sin, all wasn't lost. Among Israel was a vocal minority called the prophets. They had previously warned of Israel's downfall, but they also made it clear that it wasn't the end of the story. God had promised to restore divine blessing to the world through this family, and even Israel's rebellion wouldn't stop him. Their hope was that after the exile God would return to live among his people once again and a great leader would come and lead Israel in faithfulness to their God. Moreover, it would be through this very leader that God would rescue the world. So the storyline of the Old Testament comes to a close, but with all of these tensions unresolved. We are left with a truly epic story waiting for the final ending.

#### **• Jesus and the Kingdom of God**

Enter Jesus of Nazareth who is sometimes called Immanuel, meaning God with us. The four Gospels in the New Testament present him as the resolution to all of the conflict of the Old Testament. They claimed he was the very love of God become human and the embodiment of divine mercy. They claimed Jesus was the kind of human we were all made to be, but perpetually fail to be. Furthermore, they claimed Jesus was the faithful Israelite who would fulfill God's promise to return divine blessing to all of the nations through Abraham. Here's how he'd do it. Humanity and Israel's embrace of evil had created a world of violence and death, but Jesus was a man of compassionate power. He proclaimed that he was bringing God's kingdom back over the earth and he would confront the tragic effects of evil. But Jesus' plan to defeat humanity's evil and sin was to let it defeat him. After dying for the sins of the world, his resurrection from death sealed his victory over all of our evil and death. He now offers up his own righteous life as a gift to those who would follow him.

#### **•The Spreading People of the Kingdom**

After his resurrection, Jesus' followers experienced the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling them with his presence in Jerusalem. Jesus appeared in the flesh many more times, sending his followers out as witnesses to share the incredible news of what he had done for Israel and all humanity. This Jesus movement became a multi-ethnic international movement that flourished especially among the poor. It was made up of small communities of mutual love and generosity called "churches." People would gather to celebrate their new way of life as redeemed humans enjoying an intimate covenant with God. They would eat together and worship Jesus while challenging each other to abide by his teachings. A large portion of the New Testament is made up of letters from Jesus' appointed leaders called "apostles."

Written to all kinds of different churches, these letters showed the recipients what it meant to participate in Jesus' kingdom in the first century world. Moreover, the entire New Testament presents Jesus as the way forward for humanity itself. In Jesus, God's brand new world is inaugurated. His followers continue to look to the day when he will return to finish what he started: conquering evil completely while fully establishing his kingdom on earth with us forever.

### •The Return of the King

All disciples of Jesus, the apostles, and Jesus himself have set their future hope in God's covenant promises to completely redeem our world and set all things right. This hope is focused on the return of Jesus to consummate the kingdom he inaugurated through his life, death, and resurrection. On that day, he will return to fully confront and deal with evil in all of its manifestations, removing it completely from his good world. He will make all things new, and people from all nations who submit to his love and justice will be invited into this new creation. It is here, and at an unfathomable degree, that the great human vocation of ruling as caretakers in the presence and goodness of God will be carried forward.

## TEACHING NOTES

### REVIEW WEEK 1

#### Definitions

- Exegesis – to carefully study the Bible to determine its intended meaning to the original audience.
- Hermeneutics – taking the intended message for the original audience and translating it to today's audience (you).

## WEEK 2

### What are the Testaments?

- Testament – the word “testament” has changed meaning since it was first used.
- The best word is probably, “covenant”
- Covenant – agreement, contract, or alliance.

### Meaning of “Old Testament” With Scriptural support:

- The Old Testament is God’s revealed relationship with His people prior to Christ.
- The Old Testament is the “Old Covenant” and was made between God and Israel at Mt. Sinai (see Exodus 24:8).

### Meaning of “New Testament” with Scriptural support:

- The New Testament is God’s revealed relationship with His people after Christ came.
- The New Testament is the “New Covenant” and was prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and referenced by Christ at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:28, 1 Cor. 11:23-25).



## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. Why did God choose to reveal Himself through history, struggles, and meditations of one particular people situated in one particular concern of the earth.
2. How do the diverse genres (poetry, letters, law texts and wisdom writings, & narrative texts) point to the overarching story? Do you find any of these genres easier or harder to read? What is your favorite?
3. Does this story continue on in Christian believers today? If so, how? If not, what is fundamentally different between the story of the Bible and the story of the Church as lived out today?

## **SMALL GROUP APPLICATION**

### **READ:**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Matthew 4:1- 4 (\*Deuteronomy 8:3)

### **ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:**

- What is the author trying to convey to the original audience( exegesis)?
  - who is the author, who is the original audience
- How can I translate it to today's audience (hermeneutics)?
- What does this say about God?
- What does this say about people?
- How can I apply it to my life?
- Does it point forward to the New Testament?
- Does it point back to the Old Testament?

## SMALL GROUP NOTES

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Author: Jeremiah, a prophet

Audience: people of Judah and Jerusalem

Even though they have sinned against Him, God will restore the covenant he made with the ancestors of Judah and Israel. This restored covenant will be unlike the first, with this new covenant they will personally know God for themselves - his laws, his teachings and his forgiveness.

This shows God as redeeming and forgiving. Although the people did not follow through on their end of the deal, he's making an even better promise. This shows grace and mercy.

People are broken sinners, even with all of the help from God, they continued to disobey.

They are in need of redemption and guidance.

This points towards the coming of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 4:4

Author: Matthew was one of the tax collectors that Jesus redeemed. When called by Jesus, Matthew quickly left his position to follow Jesus as an apostle. He gave up his riches and position of security for roaming, adversity, and ultimate martyrdom; living a new life with Jesus

Audience: Jewish Christian community that was encountering persecution

Matthew is telling the Jewish Christians about the temptation of Jesus in the desert. Jesus had been fasting for 40 days and was extremely hungry. The devil tempts him with bread.

Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy, saying that the bread of life is more beneficial than any physical bread.