

# HOW TO READ THE BIBLE



## WHY THIS SERIES?

- ▶ This superficial use of the Scriptures is actually destructive because those who practice it operate under the illusion that they are engaging the Bible when they are not. -Glenn Paauw, *Saving the Bible from Ourselves* (p. 16)
- ▶ Two Key Questions:
  - ▶ What is the Bible?
  - ▶ What are we supposed to do with it?

## WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

- ▶ Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration
- ▶ Hermeneutics (Pronounced "Her-Men-Knew-Ticks") >> how to interpret the Bible
- ▶ Things to Avoid
  - ▶ The Bible is not a "how-to" book
  - ▶ Proof texting >> using parts of the Bible out of context to make a point
  - ▶ Not every description is a prescription >> Pay attention to the genre
  - ▶ You are not the main character. It all points to Jesus.

## GENESIS

**Genre: History • Written by Moses between 1450-1410 BC**

- ▶ God is the God of Promise
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Genesis 1:1 | 1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
- ▶ Two sections:
  - ▶ Genesis 1-11 >> Focuses on God's design & man's corruption of that design
  - ▶ Genesis 12-50 >> Reveals God's response to the corruption of that design by making promises to Abraham.

## EXODUS

**Genre: History • Written by Moses between 1445-1404 BC**

- ▶ God is the God of Power
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Exodus 3:13-14 | Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"
- ▶ 300 years separates Exodus from Genesis. The book covers the period from the arrival of Jacob in Egypt (1875 BC) to the building of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness about 431 years later (1445 BC).
- ▶ While Israel was in Egypt, it became a world power. There were about 3-4 million Hebrews in Egypt at the time of the Exodus.
- ▶ Transition Verse >> Exodus 40:34-35 | Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

# LEVITICUS

**Genre: Law • Written by Moses between 1445-1444 BC**

- ▶ God is the God of Purity
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Leviticus 11:45 | For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”
- ▶ The Israelites are at the base of Mt. Sinai when this book is written. Therefore, it is God’s guidebook for a newly redeemed people. It shows the Israelites: 1) how to worship God, 2) how to serve God, & 3) how to obey God.
- ▶ The purpose of Leviticus is to:
  - ▶ Teach Israel about the holiness of God (Leviticus 17:11).
  - ▶ To remind Israel that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
  - ▶ To create an understanding for:
    - ▶ Imputation >> Guilt & sin are transferred to a sacrifice
    - ▶ Atonement >> The blood of an innocent sacrifice is substituted for the life of a guilty offender.

# NUMBERS

**Genre: Narrative & Law • Written by Moses between 1450-1410 BC**

- ▶ God is the God of Perseverance
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Numbers 14:20-23 | Then the LORD said, “I have pardoned, according to your word. But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it.
- ▶ The name of the book is derived from the two numberings contained within it (Numbers 1 & 36).
- ▶ Because of the rebellion at Kadesh Barnea in accepting the report of 10 of the 12 spies while rejecting the reports of Joshua & Caleb, the generation of the exodus would not be the generation of the conquest.

# DEUTERONOMY

**Genre: Sermon & Law • Written by Moses between 1407-1406 BC**

- ▶ God is the God of Perseverance
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Deuteronomy 6:4-12 | “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart...10 “And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant —and when you eat and are full, 12 then take care lest you forget the LORD,
- ▶ The title Deuteronomy means “second law” in Greek, which is not to say that Moses gives a separate law. Rather, this book is an adaptation & expansion of the original Law given on Mt. Sinai.