

I. Introduction to the Bible Survey Course

A. Course Goals:

- i. To survey Genesis through Revelation in a broad expositional fashion, and greatly familiarize ourselves with God's word.
- ii. To grasp the theme and major emphasis of each Bible book and show its relationship to other parts of Scripture.
- iii. To observe the unfolding of God's revealed, redemptive history into its historical setting.
- iv. To offer solutions to certain selected key problems in passages.
- v. To grow in the knowledge of God, fellowship with God, and personal godliness by applying the spiritual lessons about God and His covenant purposes to our own personal, practical walk with Him.

B. Course Assignments

- i. Attend Entrust by God's grace
- ii. End of the year project privilege (May):
 1. Survey presentation of an OT book
 - a. Choose one of the OT books we cover
 - b. Give a 15-20 min presentation on the book (purpose, themes, outline, how the book is useful for godliness, etc.)
 2. Teach an OT passage
 - a. Choose a manageable size passage from an OT book that we cover

¹ Notes prepared with help of The Master's Seminary BI 501 Bible Survey syllabus.

b. Give a 15-20 min sermon on the passage (include introduction, background, outline - explanation, illustration, application)

- When it comes to knowing God, there is no substitute to reading Scripture

C. What is Bible Survey?

- i. An examination of the Bible from a “forest” viewpoint as opposed to a “tree” viewpoint.
- ii. An endeavor to know God through his divine revelation.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus says the Lord, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the Lord.

- A.W. Tozer:

"Majesty unspeakable, my soul desires to behold Thee. I cry to Thee from the dust. Yet when I inquire after Thy name it is secret. Thou art hidden in the light which no man can approach unto. What Thou art cannot be thought or uttered, for Thy glory is ineffable.

Still, prophet and psalmist, apostle and saint have encouraged me to believe that I may in some measure know Thee. Therefore, I pray, whatever of Thyself Thou hast been pleased to disclose, help me to search out as treasure more precious than rubies or the merchandise of fine gold: for with Thee shall I live when the stars of the twilight are no more and the heavens have vanished away and only Thou remainest. Amen."

- "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt 5).
- Intro to Bible survey: the goal of this and theology is not to know more about the Bible only, but to know more about God. More importantly, to know God; to have fellowship with God, through Jesus Christ. We labor to know the Bible b/c we want to know God; Jer 9:23. The purpose of these assignments is to know God.

- A.W. Tozer: "...For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most [significant] fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like..."

- Hosea 6:3 "Let us press on to know the Lord"
 - To press in to know God, we must press in to know Scripture.
 - This is the great need for all humanity: to know God. Press in to Scripture so as to press in to God.
 - If we would hear the voice of God out loud, let us open the Bible and read it out loud

- Above all, every book of the Bible is about God. It tells us something of the true God who has revealed himself.
 - To obey the command of Jer 9:23-24 and Hos 6:3, we must dive into Scripture.
 - We can no more rightly know God in truth; and know the saving plan of Christ apart from the 66 books of Scripture than a man with no sense of sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing can know truth about his world.
 - The great difference between the Bible, the 66 inspired, inerrant books, and all others is this: the Bible reveals the God who is; who is external to us. That is to say, it reveals the God who is; the true God. That is what sets the Bible apart from all other books.

- Second, every book of the Bible is about fallen man.
 - In Scripture, man is always portrayed as he is in truth; in relation to God.
 - Man's natural state in Scripture is not good. Scripture teaches man as created by God, not evolved; as dependent upon God, not independent; as sinful before God, not upright; as damaged before God, not well; as rebellious against God, not obedient; as condemned before God, not innocent.

II. Introduction to Bible Survey

A. General Themes of Scripture

i. The revelation of **the character of God**

John MacArthur: “In Scripture, the person of God and the word of God are everywhere interrelated, so much so that whatever is true about the character of God is true about the nature of God’s word. God is true, impeccable, and reliable; therefore, so is his word. What a person thinks about God’s word, in reality, reflects what a person thinks about God.”²

ii. The revelation **God’s judgment for humanity’s sin and disobedience**

iii. The revelation of **divine blessing for faith and obedience**

iv. The revelation of **the Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice for sin**

v. The revelation of **the kingdom and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ**

B. Breakdown of the Bible Books

- The inspired canon of God’s inerrant word contains 66 books. These 66 books are the very words of God.
- Other books (e.g. The Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Gospel of Thomas, etc.), are not the result of God’s inspiration (2 Pet 1:19-21) and therefore cannot be considered the word of God, and thus are excluded from the canon.
- There are 39 books in the OT and 27 in the NT.
- The inspiration of the 66 books seems to have begun ca. 1400 B.C. and concluded ca. A.D. 95, thus spanning approximately 1500 years.
- The first OT books (The Torah) were inspired and given ca. 1400 B.C. and the last sometime ca. 430 B.C. (Malachi).

² MacArthur Study Bible, p. xiv.

- The first NT book inspired (likely James) occurred sometime between A.D. 44-49 and the last (Revelation) around A.D. 95.

i. The Old Testament

1. The Law/Torah (Pentateuch): 1 human author (Moses), 1 text-literary whole

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

2. The Prophets

(1) The Former Prophets

- Joshua
- Judges
- 1 & 2 Samuel
- 1 & 2 Kings

(2) The Latter Prophets

- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Ezekiel
- The Twelve (minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)

3. The Writings

- Psalms (Wisdom Literature)
- Job (Wisdom Literature)
- Proverbs (Wisdom Literature)
- Song of Solomon (Wisdom Literature)
- Ruth
- Lamentations
- Ecclesiastes
- Esther

- Daniel
- Ezra & Nehemiah
- 1 & 2 Chronicles

ii. The New Testament

1. The Historical Books

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts

2. The Epistles

(1) Pauline

- Romans
- 1 & 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 & 2 Thessalonians
- 1 & 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

(2) Non-Pauline

- Hebrews
- James
- 1 & 2 Peter
- 1, 2, 3 John
- Jude

c) The Apocalypse

- Revelation

C. Bible Breakdown: Purpose, Themes, and Literary Structure

- i. Purpose: The reason why the book was written, often in a sentence (Proverbs 1:4-6, Luke 1:1-4, John 20:31-32, for example, state the purposes of the individual books).

Examples:

John 20:30–31 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Nahum 1:7–8 The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him. ⁸ But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, and will pursue His enemies into darkness.

Proverbs 1:4–6 To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, ⁵ A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel, ⁶ To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.

Romans 1:16–17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

- ii. Themes: Terms, persons, places, events, and/or ideas used repeatedly in a book.
- iii. Literary Structure (or, Compositional Shape): The comprehensive plan in the textual fabric of the book by means of which it exhibits meaningful cohesion and thoughtful direction reflective of an authored strategy.

D. Interpretation: Determining the Meaning of the Biblical Text Using the Historical-Grammatical Method

III. Introduction to the Torah

A. The Designations

- i. Jewish: *Torah* – “direction, instruction, law.” Gives guidance.
- ii. Greek: *Pentateuch* – from penta (five) and teuchos (volume), a “five-volumed book.” This term is not used among Jews.
- iii. References to the Torah in Scripture
 1. The Law (Josh 8:34 “Then afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law”; Ezra 10:3; Matt 12:5; John 7:19). Book names (e.g. Gen, Ex) are not used. Referred to as *The Law*.
 2. The Book of the Law (Josh 1:8; Neh 8:3; Gal 3:10).
 3. The Book of the Law of Moses (Josh 8:31; 2 Kin 14:6). The Bible identifies what the Law is and who wrote it.
 4. The Book of Moses (Ezra 6:18; Mark 12:26).
 5. The Law of Moses (Dan 9:11; Mal 4:4; Luke 2:22; John 7:23)
 6. The Law of the Lord (Ezra 7:10; Luke 2:23, 24)
 7. The Law of God (Neh 10:28, 29)
 8. The Book of the Law of God (Josh 24:26; Neh 8:18)
 9. The Book of the Law of the Lord (2 Chr 17:9; Neh 9:3)

B. The Importance

- i. Foundation of Spiritual Insight and Wisdom (Deut 31:9-13; Josh 1:7-8; Ps 1:2). Deut 31:12 “Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may **hear and learn and fear the Lord your God**, and be careful to observe all the words of this law,” “hear and learn and **fear...**”

ii. Pointing to Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:29).

- Luke 24:25-27 And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

24, ‘Scripture’ = that which is written. In fulfilling the Law flawlessly, in his humanity, Christ was a man of the Law.

Jesus here refers to the OT in a 3-fold division- Moses, Prophets, and Psalms, all which declare Christ.

- John 1:29 “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

“The Lamb of God” references back to the Torah, which commanded the offering of flawless sin-bearing, substitutionary, atoning lambs by OT worshipers in the place of the worshiper, to restore fellowship with Yahweh after sin was committed. Christ is the actual Lamb of God.

C. The Major Themes of the Torah

i. God

1. The Creator (Gen 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14; Ex. 20, 31; Deut 32)
2. The Powerful One (Gen 6-9; Ex 7-11, 14, 16, 17). Egyptian army was the most feared and powerful at that time on the earth.
3. The Faithful One (Gen 8:1; 19:29; Ex 2:24; 6:5; Lev 26:42, 45).
 - a. God remembered Noah and the waters obeyed Him. God of the Flood, the One who can restrain the waters, the God of boundaries.
 - b. Gen 19, God delivered the only righteous man in the city.
 - c. Israel cried out and God remembered them (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

- d. The Torah is not only about the past, Lev 26. In the future, God will remember what He in the Torah, to keep Israel and His covenant.
 - e. In the Torah, every person fails, but God is faithful.
 - f. Men come and go in the Bible, but God remains forever. God is the continuing hero in the Bible.
4. The Sovereign One (Ex 19-Num 10)
- ii. Covenant: a relationship between two parties formalized by a binding agreement with a sworn oath.
 1. Secular (Gen 21:27, 32; 26:28; 31:44)
 2. Theocratic
 - a. Noahic (Gen 6:18; 8:21-22; 9:8-17): God's covenant to never again destroy the earth with a global flood, in order to maintain a relatively stable earth for the carrying out of redemptive history
 - b. Abrahamic (Gen 12:1-3; 15:18; 17:1-21; Ex 2:24; 6:4-8; Lev 26:40-45): the unilateral promise to bless Israel and the world through Israel
 - c. Mosaic (Ex 19:5; 24:7, 8; Lev 26:15, 25; Deut 4:3; 5:6-22; 31:24-29): God's covenant with Israel, promising blessing if they obey, and cursing if they rebel
 - d. Priestly (Num 25:10-13): God declares that Phinehas' descendants will occupy the priesthood (Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas)
 - iii. Sin (Gen 3, 6, 11; Ex. 32; Lev 10; Num 14, 20, 25; Deut 1)
 1. Moses introduces a rich vocabulary labeling sin
 - a. פְּשָׁע - "transgression" (rebelliousness)
 - b. עֲוֹן - "iniquity" (moral failing, guilt)
 - c. חַטָּאת - "sin" (miss the mark)

2. There are several narrative events showing sinfulness: Gen. 3 (has God said? – God gives a direct command and they directly disobey)
 3. Gen 6 - ubiquitous sin, non-stop (Gen 6:5 “the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart only evil continually”)
 4. Gen 11 - multiply and spread throughout the earth, but, “let us make a name for ourselves lest we be scattered...”
 5. Ex 32 - within a few weeks of seeing the hand of God & receiving His commands → gold calf.
 6. Num 14, 20, 25 - (Israelites fail to fear Yahweh → intermingle with pagans not for the purpose of being a light → sexual immorality → Baal worship) chapter 25-1st time Baal mentioned)
- iv. Election & Predestination (Gen 11-12, 25, 49; Deut 7)
1. Gen 49: the kingly line will not be through the firstborn son of Jacob (Reuben). Instead, it will be through Judah

Gen 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet”
 2. Deut 7: Israel not chosen b/c of merit, but by God’s electing, sovereign grace.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
- v. The Redemption/Exodus out of Egypt (Gen 15, 50; Ex 12-15, 19, 20; Deut. 5) → Gen 15:13 - foreshadow of enslavement in and exodus from Egypt.

- vi. Law (Ex 20-23; Lev 1-7, 11-15, 17-27; Num 5-6, 18-19, 28-30; Deut 5-26)
 - 1. A large amount of Law/statutes/commandments
- vii. Tabernacle/Priesthood/Sacrifice (Ex 25-Lev 16)
 - 1. God is graciously initiating relationship with sinful humanity.
 - 2. The many details for the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices are God's directives for how sinful humanity will appropriately worship him, relate to him, and remain in fellowship with him.
- viii. The Geographical Land of Israel (Gen 10:19; 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:7-21; Ex 3:8; Num 13:17-33; 34:1-12; Deut 1:7-8)
 - 1. Gen 10-12-to the seed I will give this land.
- ix. Adam (Gen 1-5); Noah (Gen 5-11); Abram/Abraham (Gen 11-25); Jacob/Israel (Gen 25-50); Moses (Ex 2 - Deut 34)
 - 1. From the narrative perspective, the Torah **is the story of 5 men** (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses).
 - 2. Torah: on the human level-written and produced by Moses.
 - 3. Genealogies used as historical summary, showing familial relationships, and the long line of humanity whom God was patiently sustaining for his glory.

A. The Purpose of the Torah

- 1. **The Promise/Fulfillment Understanding:** The partial fulfillment of God's promise to the Patriarchs of the seed (many Israelites from Abraham), divine relationship (God relates to Israel & to the world through Israel), and land (geographical territory of Israel which He gave to them) which is both the divine initiative in a world where human initiatives always lead to disaster and a reaffirmation of the primal divine intentions for man. (Gen 12:1-3)
 - Not every promise is fulfilled by the end of the Torah
 - It is not within the Torah that the land is conquered

2. **The Kingdom Understanding:** God chose Israel as the seed of Abraham to be the priestly nation that would restore mankind to its proper role as rulers for God over His created earth. (Gen 1:26-28; Ex 19:4-6)³

- In the end, the Torah is about God's relationship w/ Israel

3. **The Faith/Failure Understanding:** The importance of faith toward God seen before the Mosaic Covenant made at Mt. Sinai and the failure of Israel under the Covenant because of a lack of faith pointing to a future King and a New Covenant. (Gen 15:6 - Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.)⁴

B. The Literary Structure of the Torah

1a. Traditional: Five Books

1b. Promise/Fulfillment

a. The Need for Abraham (Gen 1-11)

b. The Outworking of the Promise to Abraham (Gen 12 - Deut 34)

1) The Giving of a Seed [Descendants] (Gen 12-50)

1) The Giving of the Law [Relationship] (Ex 1 - Lev 27)

2) The Giving of the Land (Num 1 - Deut 34)

1. Kingdom

a. The Primeval History (Gen 1-11)

b. The Patriarchal History (Gen 12-50)

c. The Beginning of the History of the Nation of Israel (Ex 1 - Deut 34)

2. Faith & Failure

a. The Faith and Failure of the Patriarchs (Gen 1-50) (including Adam, Noah)

³ Merrill, in Zuck, ed., A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament

⁴ Sailhamer

- b. The Faith and Failure of the Sons of Israel (Ex 1 - Num 25)
- c. The Future Failure of Israel in the Land and the Future Repentance and Restoration of Israel to the Land (Num 26 - Deut 34)

Final Notes:

- When Torah ends God has set himself on a tremendous task; to soften the hearts of the Israelites. Israel in the Torah reflects other nations.
 - In 1 Cor 10/Rom 11- Paul confronts the arrogance of the Gentiles who are reaping the fruit of the Israelites.
- Be careful of becoming a critic of Israel in the Torah. They are only a reflection of *our* attitudes. Learn from their mistakes. The grace of Israel's Messiah has been extended past Israel to Gentiles (cf. Rom 11).
- To correctly understand Torah, keep authorial intent in mind. It was originally addressed to Israel.
- Israel's heart has not changed today, nor had it by the end of Torah. That is the thrust of Stephen's sermon in Acts 7. However, God has not rejected His people (Rom 11).

C. Bibliography

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2. The Old Testament: Keil & Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament. 10 vols. [KD]-Evangelical OT exegesis classic set for the past 100 years. 19th cent. German Scholars-foundational exegetical (from original Hebrew), however BEFORE the archaeological revolution, therefore surprising how well they interpreted OT w/ less tools we have today=> don't necessarily need archaeology to grasp.
3. The Pentateuch: Alexander and Baker, eds., Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch.