

The Bible's Big Story (Cyprus Training 1, session 4)

Overview in 7 Parts

1. **God Creates a Perfect World** (Gen.1-2)
2. **The Great Rebellion: Sin Spoils Everything** (Gen.3-11)
3. **Story of Israel** (Gen.12 to Malachi)
4. **Jesus Christ** (The Gospels)
5. **Story of the Church** (Acts to Jude; church history)
6. **Day of Reckoning: Sin Judged & Banished** (Rev.20)
7. **The Age to Come: A Perfect World** (Rev.21-22)

Some Observations

- A. The world can only be understood in the light of #1+2.
- B. God's plan is to restore of all things (#1→#7)
- C. There is a strong 'corporate' element in God's plan (#3+5)
- D. If we are to understand the Bible, we need to understand the role played by Israel.
- E. The Return of Christ (#6) is a vital part of the Bible's story
- F. Jesus is at the centre of the Bible's story & world history

⇒ One of *the* most important skills in understanding and teaching the Bible is to see how a given part relates to Jesus.

'Bible's Big Story Wall Chart'

The Bible & History

A very rough timeline of #3:

- ~2000BC?? Abraham
- ~1500BC? Moses
- ~1000BC David
- ~500BC Exile (586-538BC)
- ~BC/AD Jesus (4BC-30AD?)

The Bible & the Ancient Near East

Abraham: Ur to Haran (near Carchemish) then to Canaan Joseph and his family to Egypt

Moses/Joshua: From Egypt back to Canaan

David at Jerusalem; Kingdom splits after Solomon (~930BC)

~722BC: Northern Kingdom defeated by Assyria & exiled

~586BC: Southern Kingdom defeated by Babylon & Exiled

Return (Persian Emp), but as a 'vassal state' not indep Nn.

By **New Testament** times, Persia→Greece→Roman Empire

Gospels set in **Israel**; **Acts** ultimately ends up in **Rome**.

⇒ Learning more about the history and culture of these areas will help with our Bible understanding (and the first and most important way to do that is by an increasing Bible knowledge)

Understanding the Bible

Some things are universal, throughout the whole Bible:

As the Bible unfolds God reveals more and more...

- *About his nature*

- *About his plan*

Some things are very different, depending where you've got to in the story...

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

F.

And...

⇒ It is v important to take into acct 'where we are in the story' when we seek to explain & apply the Bible.