

Overview Of The Bible (2)

Introduction:

- A. The Bible presents a consistent story from beginning to end.
- B. The Bible tells the story of how God created man, and tells the story of God's purpose for man.
- C. The Bible answers our most basic and most important questions about life.
- D. The Bible tells us about sin.
 - 1. Sin is the violation of God's law (1 John 3:4).
 - 2. When man sins he becomes separated from God.
 - 3. Man started out in a perfect relationship with God, but that relationship was soon lost through sin.
 - 4. If one is guilty of committing sin, then he is spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1).
- E. The Bible also tells us about God's plan to deal with the problem of sin.
 - 1. The plan from the beginning was for Jesus, the Son of God, to come into the world for the purpose of taking away man's sins.
 - 2. There was nothing man could do by himself to remove even one sin committed against God.
 - 3. Since man couldn't do anything to remove his own sins, God's plan from the beginning was for Jesus to come and provide a way for man to have his sins forgiven so that his relationship with God could be restored.
- F. God's plan involved Abraham.
 - 1. Abraham (Abram) was a righteous man (Genesis 18:19).
 - 2. God would use Abraham to carry out his plan to save mankind from sin.
 - 3. God made three promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).
 - a. Abraham's descendants would become a great nation (v. 2).
 - b. Abraham's people would be given possession of their own land (v. 1).
 - c. Through Abraham's family one would come who would bring a blessing for all of mankind (v. 3).
 - 4. The rest of the Old Testament deals with the fulfillment of these three promises!
 - 5. The third promise refers to the fact that Jesus would be Abraham's descendant.
 - 6. Since the key to understanding the message of the Bible is understanding the promises that God made to Abraham, we will see how these promises were fulfilled.

Body:

A. The Family Of Abraham.

- A. God promised that Abraham's descendants would become a great nation of people.
- B. Abraham and Sarah have one son just as God promised.
 - 1. The name of their son is Isaac (Genesis 21:2-3).
 - 2. The three promises that God made to Abraham are then passed on to Isaac.
- C. Isaac has two sons.

1. His sons are twins named Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25:25-26).
2. The three promises that God made to Abraham are passed on to Isaac, and are then passed on to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-14).

B. The Family Of Israel.

- A. God changes Jacob's name to "Israel" (Genesis 32:28).
 1. The name "Israel" means "Prince with God."
 2. When we read about Israel in the Bible we are reading about Jacob's family, who are the descendants of Abraham.
- B. Jacob has twelve sons.
 1. The names of his twelve sons are given in Genesis 35:23-26.
 2. These twelve sons of Jacob will become the heads of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.
 3. So, Jacob and his sons represent the beginning of the nation of Israel.

C. The Conflict Over Joseph.

- A. Jacob favors Joseph above all of his other sons (Genesis 37:3).
 1. Out of all of his sons, Jacob loves Joseph the most.
 2. And, it is obvious that he favors Joseph because he gives Joseph a multi-colored coat to wear.
 3. As a result of this favoritism, Joseph is hated by his jealous brothers (Genesis 37:4).
- B. Joseph also begins having special dreams from God (Genesis 37:5-10).
- C. Joseph's brothers become so jealous that they want to kill him (Genesis 37:12-20).
 1. When Joseph is sent into the fields to visit his brothers as they are tending the flocks they see this as their opportunity to kill him.
 2. But instead of killing him, they place him in a deep pit until they decide to sell him as a slave (Genesis 37:28).
 3. Once they have sold Joseph as a slave they take his coat and dip it in goat's blood in order to convince Jacob that Joseph has been killed by wild animals (Genesis 37:31-34).
 4. Jacob believes Joseph is dead.

D. Joseph In Egypt.

- A. Joseph becomes a slave in Egypt (Genesis 39:1-2).
- B. Joseph is thrown in prison in Egypt because of Potiphar's wife (Genesis 37:7-12; 39:13-20).
- C. The king of Egypt (Pharaoh) puts two of his royal officials in prison with Joseph.
 1. The chief butler and the chief baker are placed in the prison with Joseph (Genesis 40:1-3).
 2. Both of these men have troubling dreams and Joseph interprets their dreams through the power of God (Genesis 40:8-18).
 3. Three days later the dreams are fulfilled just as Joseph interpreted them (Genesis 40:22-23).

4. But when the butler is restored to his position he forgets about Joseph, and so Joseph remains in the prison (Genesis 40:23).

D. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams.

1. After two years have passed, the king of Egypt has two troubling dreams (Genesis 41:1-7).
2. When the king is looking for someone to interpret the meaning of these dreams, the chief butler remembers Joseph (Genesis 41:9-13).
3. So Pharaoh sends for Joseph and brings him out of the prison to interpret the dreams (Genesis 41:14-15).
4. God allows Joseph to interpret the king's dreams (Genesis 41:28-30).
 - a. The fat cows and plump heads of grain mean that there will be seven years of plenty in the land.
 - b. But the skinny cows and thin heads of grain mean that the seven good years will be followed by seven years of famine in the land.
5. Since Joseph is able to interpret the dream, Pharaoh places him over the entire land of Egypt and makes him in charge of preparing for the famine (Genesis 41:39-40).

E. **Israel Is Saved From The Famine.**

- A. The seven years of plenty are followed by seven years of scarcity.
 1. Famine hits the land of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 42:1-3).
 2. Jacob sends his sons to buy food from Egypt (Genesis 42:5).
 3. When they reach Egypt, Joseph's brothers bow down before him and do not recognize him (Genesis 42:6-8).
 4. Twice they come to Egypt to buy food from Joseph.
 5. Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers (Genesis 43:1-2).
 6. Since there is plenty of food in Egypt, and since he is over the land of Egypt, Joseph sends for his father Jacob to join him in Egypt (Genesis 45:3-5, 9).
- B. Israel will become a great nation while in Egypt.
 1. God tells Jacob that his descendants will become a great nation in Egypt (Genesis 46:2-3).
 2. Jacob, his sons, and their families move to Egypt and settle there with Joseph (Genesis 46:5-7).
 3. Seventy people of the family of Israel go to Egypt (Genesis 46:27).
 4. Seventy people is not a great nation, but it is a large family.
 5. These seventy people will grow into a great nation while in Egypt in order to fulfill the first part of the promises God made to Abraham.

Conclusion:

- A. While the Bible contains many interesting stories, there is really one overall story that runs through it.
- B. The plan of God to take away sin is unfolded throughout the pages of the Bible.
- C. Remember, sin is the problem!
- D. When we read through the Bible we are reading about how God brought about his plan to solve that problem.