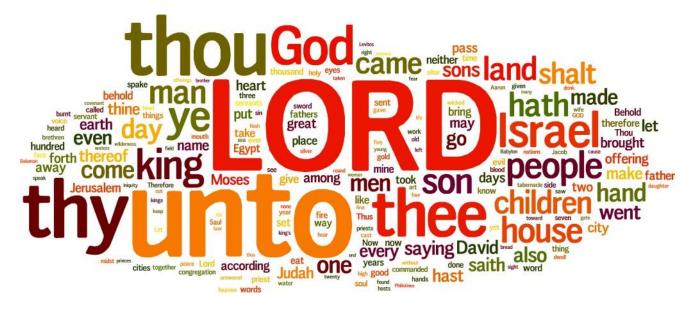
# THE BIG PICTURE OF THE BIBLE

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# The Old Testament

Introduction – Lesson 1



Evangelism, Encouragement, Edification, Equipping and Exaltation (worship) bring people to the closest possible relationship with God. Our mission therefore is to <u>Love God, Love People, Serve Both</u>. Understanding the big picture of the Bible leads to success. People need to see Jesus both in the Old and New Testament, and then they need to GO (evangelize), TEACH (make disciples), and OBEY (worship – to obey is better than sacrifice – 1Sa 15:22).

And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. <u>Go</u> ye therefore, and <u>teach</u> all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to <u>observe all things</u> <u>whatsoever I have commanded</u> you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matthew 28:17-20.

The Bible is a book from God that fits together like pieces of a puzzle.

It contains two Testaments of 66 books - 39 in the Old and 27 in the New.

The 1,189 chapters contain 31,102 verses, 789,655 words and 3,224,508 letters.

It was penned over a period of 1600 years by 40 writers (one Author) and is perfect and without contradiction. (Apparent contradictions are learning opportunities resolved by careful reading, studying and comparing scriptures.)

Consider how a puzzle is solved. First, the picture on the box top provides guidance. Sort the pieces looking for edges, corners, and colors. By carefully comparing and fitting, good progress can be made on solving the puzzle. Some lessons can be learned from the puzzle analogy:

- 1. All the pieces are necessary. Matthew 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
- 2. The pieces correctly fit one way. 2 Peter 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. A private interpretation means the verse was taken out of context and the interpretation does not fit when all relevant comparisons are made.

- **3. Sort, search, and compare.** The Holy Spirit promises to teach and guide by comparing Scripture with Scripture
- John 5:39 <u>Search the scriptures</u>; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and <u>searched the scriptures daily</u>, whether those things were so. 1 Corinthians 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which <u>the Holy Ghost teacheth</u>; <u>comparing</u> spiritual things with spiritual.
- **4. Time and hard work required** 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- **5. Study becomes easier as pieces fall into place**. What seems right at first may turn out to be wrong later. The whole puzzle will not be solved in this lifetime, because *now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known 1Co 13:12.*

Paul told Timothy that it was profitable to study and to teach the Scriptures. 2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is <u>profitable</u> for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

- 2 Timothy 2:15 <u>Study</u> to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- 2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Paul indicated that the Scriptures need to be rightly divided like a puzzle.

What framework should be used to study the scriptures? Here are some good questions to ask.

"I keep six honest serving-men (They taught me all I knew);

Their names are What and Why and When

And **How** and **Where** and **Who**." (From *The Elephant's Child by Rudyard Kipling*)

### Search the Scriptures:

See Joh 5:39 and Acts 17:11 above and also - *Pr 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing:* but the honour of kings is to search out a matter. Jer 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

What does it mean to **search**?

(Webster) To look into or over carefully or thoroughly in an effort to find or discover something:

- a. To examine in seeking something
- b. To look through or explore by inspecting possible places of concealment or investigating suspicious circumstances
- c. To read thoroughly

Spurgeon's Morning and Evening Readings for June 9th (any year) provide insight into searching:

The Greek word here rendered search signifies a strict, close, diligent, curious search, such as men make when they are **seeking gold**, or hunters when they are in earnest **after game**. We must not rest content with having given a superficial reading to a chapter or two, but with the candle of the Spirit we must deliberately seek out the hidden meaning of the word. Holy Scripture requires searching-much of it can only be learned by careful study. There is milk for babes, but also meat for strong men. ...

No man who merely skims the book of God can profit thereby; we must dig and mine until we obtain the hid treasure. The door of the word only opens to the key of diligence. The Scriptures claim searching. They are the writings of God, bearing the divine stamp and imprimatur- who shall dare to treat them with levity? He who despises them despises the God who wrote them. God forbid that any of us should leave our Bibles to become swift witnesses against us in the great day of account.

The word of God will repay searching. God does not bid us sift a mountain of chaff with here and there a grain of wheat in it, but the Bible is winnowed corn-we have but to open the granary door and find it.

Scripture grows upon the student. It is full of surprises. Under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to the searching eye it glows with splendour of revelation, like a vast temple paved with wrought gold, and roofed with rubies, emeralds, and all manner of gems. No merchandise like the merchandise of Scripture truth.

Lastly, the Scriptures reveal Jesus: "They are they which testify of me." No more powerful motive can be urged upon Bible readers than this: he who finds Jesus finds life, heaven, all things. Happy is he who, searching his Bible, discovers his Saviour.

Modern technology gives us many ways to **search** the Scriptures. It is easy to search for words, phrases, and patterns. We have a great responsibility having this great ability.

How are we to **compare** Scripture? Set them side by side in order to show similarities and differences.

#### We should take counsel.

Pr 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Pr 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

What does it mean to take counsel regarding the study of Scripture? We can get advice, opinion, or instruction from other people, writings, sermons, media, etc. We can use commentaries, dictionaries, cross-references, maps, books, songs, and video. **Be careful to always test** "counsel" against Scripture like those in Berea.

(Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.)

## Prepare for the task.

Ezr 7:10 For Ezra had <u>prepared his heart to seek</u> the law of the LORD, and <u>to do</u> it, and <u>to teach</u> in Israel statutes and judgments.

Prepare means to make ready by satisfying all necessary conditions. We prepare ground for seed by tillage; we prepare medicines by pulverization, mixture, &c.; we prepare for college by previous instruction; people are prepared for professions by suitable study; holiness of heart is necessary to prepare for the enjoyment of happiness with holy beings. (Webster)

**Teach**: Teaching is a great way to learn while imparting knowledge to someone else. We are commanded to do it. We must prepare the heart.

Neh 8:8 So they <u>read in the book</u> in the law of God distinctly, and <u>gave the sense</u>, <u>and caused them to understand</u> the reading.

2Ti 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Heb 5:12 For when for the time <u>ye ought to be teachers</u>, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Webster defines the word, teach, as:

- 1. To impart the knowledge of; to give intelligence concerning
- 2. To guide and direct, as an instructor. (Mr. 9:31 He taught his disciples.)
- 3. To show; to admonish.

Synonyms: To instruct; inform; tell; guide; counsel; admonish.

#### Make use of free tools.

E-Sword - e-sword.net	WordSearch - wordsearchbible.com/basic
TheWord – theWord.net	Bible Gateway - biblegateway.com/
Bible Analyzer -bibleanalyzer.com	

Many good "apps" for phones and tablets are available on the internet. You can always have the Bible with you and even hear audio reading of the Scriptures (*Rom 10.17 faith cometh by hearing*).