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The Story of the Bible – Intro Part 3

Recap ...

It is complex story and even just listening to this can make your mind hurt.

And one of the problems with complexity is ...

- Is that it will take hard work to untangle.
- And truth be told, we prefer things easy!

Excuses that people make for not being able to do things

If we are honest with ourselves, most of us will admit that ...

- That we don't like hard work when it comes to the Bible ...
- And would prefer to just read a couple of nice scriptures every morning.
- Maybe even a devotional book and be better for it.

Wasn't Jesus disciples unschooled ordinary men according to Acts 4:13?

Acts 4:13 ¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Well, like many things in the bible? Yes and No!

I don't think Acts 4:13 refers to them as being "unschooled and ordinary" ...

- When it came to their knowledge of the Hebrew bible ...
- But rather, to their knowledge of the Oral Law.
- That was passed down from generation to generation by the Rabbi's ...
- And later on, codified as the **Mishnah and Talmud** ...
- Just over 2,700 pages.

As a matter of fact, it was their very knowledge of the scriptures ...

- That so impressed the temple authorities.
- That they thought that they must have been with Jesus.
- (Them being previously impressed by Jesus knowledge of the scriptures.)

Even disciples reply to the temple authorities in Acts 4 when they said ...

Acts 4:20 ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

- Was an echo of Jeremiah's words in Jeremiah 20:9

Jeremiah 20:9 ⁹ But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

So, how did these ordinary men get to know the scriptures as well as they did?

Two things ...

1. Jewish boys would go to school from age 7-13 to study one thing ...
 - The Hebrew Bible.
2. These Jewish men had been with Jesus who constantly taught them ...
 - The Hebrew bible and how to make sense of him, Israel and themselves within it.

Remember Luke 24 when Jesus joined a couple of "disciples" on their way to Emmaus ...

- Who were trying to make sense of everything that happened ...
- In and around the future of Israel ...
- Jesus Kingdom mission, him possibly being the Messiah or Davidic King ...
- And then the disappointment of his crucifixion.

After listening to these two men and asking a couple of questions, Jesus said ...

Luke 24:25–27 ²⁵ "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah ^[Christos – anointed one] have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

What was "all the scriptures" that Jesus was explaining to them?

- It was the Hebrew Bible.

When Paul and Barnabas went to Barea to teach the good news of the Kingdom.

- It says that ...

Acts 17:11 ¹¹ ... the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message ^[logos] with great eagerness and **examined THE SCRIPTURES** every day to see if what Paul said was true.

What were these scriptures that they were examining?

- It was the Hebrew Bible.

They were trying to make sense of the story of the Jewish people ...

- And where Jesus and they themselves fit into it all.

What does that mean for you and me?

- It means that if we want to make sense of ...
- What the “Gospel” is ...
- What the Good News of the Kingdom?

If we want to make sense of ...

- Why Jesus came, what he did, why he said what he said ...
- Why he died and where WE fit into all of it ...
- And where we are supposed to be taking the story.
- We have to understand the story of the Bible.

If you just jump in **here ... (somewhere in the middle of the story)**

- And you don't know the story that this forms a part of ...
- And where it is supposed to go.

You will most likely create your **own story ... (story line splitting from bible narrative).**

- Therefore, the importance of knowing the story of the bible!

HERE IS THE STORY THAT I GREW UP WITH

- I will explain in in different “acts” or “movements.”

ACT 1: Creation – (Genesis 1 & 2)

- God made a **perfect world**.
- You were put on the earth to be in relationship with God ...
- And glorify him forever.

ACT 2: The Fall – (Genesis 3)

- Adam and Eve (and because we are their descendants, you and me ...)

- Messed that up by sinning – aka not keeping the commandments.
- Because of their sin they deserved death.

ACT 3: The Law – (Old Testament ???)

- God gives us the Law through Moses ...
- As a path to get them back to “heaven?”
- And in order to show them (and us) ...
- That it is impossible to meet the standard ...
- And we are doomed, unless God gives us grace.

ACT 4: Jesus – (“The Gospel”)

- Jesus came and he took the penalty of sin for you
- And if you believe and have faith that he did so ...
- You can move into Act 5

ACT 5: Heaven – (New Testament)

- One day if you die, you can go to heaven.

ICOC revision of ACT 4

- Repent of your sin, become a disciple ...
- And get baptized for the forgiveness of your sins.

Does this sound familiar?

COOKIE VIDEO

There is more than one lens through which one can see things.

What if “The Story” that so many of us grew up with ...

- Is only “a part” of the Story of the Bible ...
- BUT not the ultimate story.

What if it is only “a part of the truth”, but not the ultimate truth?

What I have come to realize is that THIS story-line has some challenges to it.

- That brings a bit of a distortion to the picture of The Story of the Bible.

Particularly with regards to ...

1. Why we have been created?
2. What happened to “the Fall.”
3. What the purpose of Israel was?
4. Why Jesus died ...
5. And where all of this is heading to ...

THIS Story, seems to be primarily about me ...

- And my need to get to a disembodied and undeserved heaven.

I can see that the path to heaven ...

- Will be very hard with lots of self-denial involved.
- But I endure it, because I love God ...
- And in the end I will get to “rest” and enjoy the “good life” in heaven forever.

NOW, I am not saying that “this Story” is per say completely untrue ...

- But rather that it has some questions marks to it ...
- And that it actually is part of a much larger and MORE glorious story ...
- With a somewhat different **intent** and a fairly different final **destination**.

Why is this important?

Because if this is the way I make sense of the story ...

- It will send me in a particular direction ...
- And most likely shape me into a particular kind of person.
- That might not be the person God is desiring for me to be.
- Nor the path that he is wanting me to follow.

So, after much though, prayer, study & conversation.

- I want to propose a slightly different ...
- And I believe more holistic Story of the Bible.

ACT 1 – Creation & the Human Calling (Genesis 1-2; Ps. 8:3-8)

- God created a good world, but not a perfect world.
- He placed us in it to image him into the world ...
- And expand the garden.

ACT 2 – Human Rebellion & the Fall out (Genesis 3-11)

- Instead of them giving their allegiance to God ...
- Living out his purpose and calling for their lives.
- They decide to give their allegiance to Satan
- And the fallout from that is that instead of bearing God's image into the world ...
- They spread violence and corruption.

ACT 3 – Israel & the Great Commission (Genesis 12 – Malachi 4)

- God calls a couple (Abraham & Sarah) ...
- Through whom he builds a family ...
- Through which he would set the world right.

Unfortunately, although they are called to be a kingdom of priests ...

- And bearers of the promise ...
- They are also carriers of the problem.

And instead of being a light to the nations ...

- They find themselves oppressed by pagan overlord's for centuries.
- Waiting and longing for God to return ...
- Bringing about a new world of Justice and peace ...
- Possible through some or the other Messianic king.

ACT 4 – Jesus as the Coming King (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John)

- Jesus didn't come to enable us to go to heaven.
- But, to bring the rule and reign of heaven to earth ...
- By bringing about New Creation ...
- And breaking the power that sin has over us.

So that through the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit

- We could become truly human or "new creation" people.
- Aka to live out our human calling ...
- Of imaging him into the world and expanding the garden.
- So that the world will be filled with his glory ...
- As the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14)

ACT 5 – The Church & the New Humanity (Acts 1 – Rev. 20)

Through Jesus and by being in Jesus ...

- God created a New Israel, A New Humanity ...

- New Creation People, Messiah people, Messiah shaped people...
- Through whom he would image himself into the world ...
- And expand the garden.

ACTS 6– The Coming King & the New Creation (Rev. 21-22, Rom. 8, Eph. 1:10)

- While we are imaging him into the world and expanding the garden.
- We are holding onto the hope of Jesus the coming King ...
- Who will one day come back to renew all things.
- To bring about justice and peace, judgment and salvation.
- As he brings down the New Jerusalem from his space to our space.
- In order to establish a New Heavens and a New Earth.

And that is the story of the bible ...

- That we are going to start unpacking ...
- Movement by movement or act by act ...
- Starting in a couple of weeks' time.

Hope that helps you to start thinking