



Introducing the Bible: The Drama of Scripture

Week 8

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Overview of this week

- ❖ A brief look at a few other NT books
- ❖ The book of Revelation
- ❖ Revisiting our six-act play
- ❖ Applying the story in our lives
- ❖ Introducing the Old Testament

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Hebrews & the general epistles

- ❖ Hebrews (anonymous)
 - Jesus as the high priest
- ❖ James (probably Jesus' brother)
 - Practical, not doctrinal: how should we live?
- ❖ 1 Peter -- Encouragement in time of persecution
- ❖ 1 John – importance of orthodoxy
 - Criteria of true Christian profession
 - Righteous living
 - Love for other believers
 - Belief in Jesus as the incarnate Christ



The Revelation to John

- ❖ An apocalypse (Greek for “unveiling” or “disclosure”)
 - There were others! Very strange and weird to us, but not in the first century.
 - A way of writing about space/time events with cosmic significance!
- ❖ Written as a circular letter late in the 1st century to encourage those being persecuted by Rome
 - Much harder on Rome than most of the NT letters.
- ❖ This is a book of prophecy (as in OT prophets!) and God's word is to be kept – not some sort of secret code waiting to be cracked.



The Revelation – What to look for

- ❖ The opening visions of God & Christ (ch. 1)
- ❖ The messages for the seven churches (chs. 2 & 3)
- ❖ Visions of the heavenly throne room (chs. 4 & 5)
- ❖ Preliminary visions of judgment and salvation (chs. 6-11)
 - The seven seals, the 144,000, the seven trumpets
- ❖ Visions of the final judgment (chs. 12-19)
 - The woman, the dragon, the two beasts
 - Seven bowls
 - The judgment of Babylon (Rome!); ch. 17 - 19
- ❖ God's final victory!
 - Jesus – the rider on the white horse (19:11-21)
 - The final defeat of Satan (20:1-10)
 - The judgment (20:11-15)
 - The story ends well!! The new heavens and the new earth, the new Jerusalem (chs 21 & 22)

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Symbols in Revelation

- ❖ Colors, numbers, animals, lampstands, buildings, plants, etc.
- ❖ The symbols are used variously
 - Sometimes the symbols are explained, sometimes, they are standard OT usage, sometimes they are details that make the vision more vivid
- ❖ The whore of Babylon in chapter 17
 - The symbols reveal – they don't conceal
- ❖ Note all the sevens – signifying completeness or totality!
 - Seven churches, seven angels, seven spirits, three sets of seven judgments, the Lamb has seven eyes, etc.
- ❖ 666? (13:18)
 - Graffiti in Pompeii – “I love her whose number is 545”
 - Nero Caesar = *nron qsr* in Hebrew characters, sums to 666. Using the Latin pronunciation, we get *nro qsr*. This sums to 616, which is found in some early manuscripts!

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Revisiting our six-act play

Act One *Act Two* *Act Three*

Creation → Fall → Israel →

Act Four *Act Five* *Act Six*

Jesus → The church → Renewal of creation

Follow the story! Where are you in the story!

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Applying the story in our lives

- ❖ God is always seeking a relationship with us
 - He has done and is doing for us what we are unable to do for ourselves!
- ❖ We can heed Jesus' command – "be not afraid"
 - Our Christian hope is not just for this life – but also for the next – the story ends well!!
- ❖ Christians have a unique story to tell
 - We believe it is true – don't be afraid to tell it!
- ❖ We are part of the story
 - God calls us to live it!

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Introducing the Old Testament

- ❖ The class will be built around an in-depth look at five books
 - Deuteronomy, Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah
- ❖ Look at three crucial questions about the OT
 - What are the keys to understanding the OT?
 - Is the God of the OT also the God of the NT?
 - How is the Christian to apply the OT to life?
- ❖ We'll take a more careful look at Israel's story
- ❖ More time with the Bible
 - Will need some sort of study bible



New Testament Timeline

