



Introducing the Bible: The Drama of Scripture

Week 6

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Overview of this week

- ❖ Back to interpretation
 - Handling scripture well
- ❖ Organization of the New Testament
- ❖ Introducing the Gospels
- ❖ Back to the story
- ❖ Who is Jesus?

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Handling Scripture Well

- ❖ The Descriptive Task
 - Reading the text carefully (exegesis)
- ❖ The Synthetic Task
 - Placing the text in canonical context
- ❖ The Hermeneutical Task
 - Relating the text to our situation
- ❖ The Pragmatic Task
 - Living the text

cyclical and overlapping



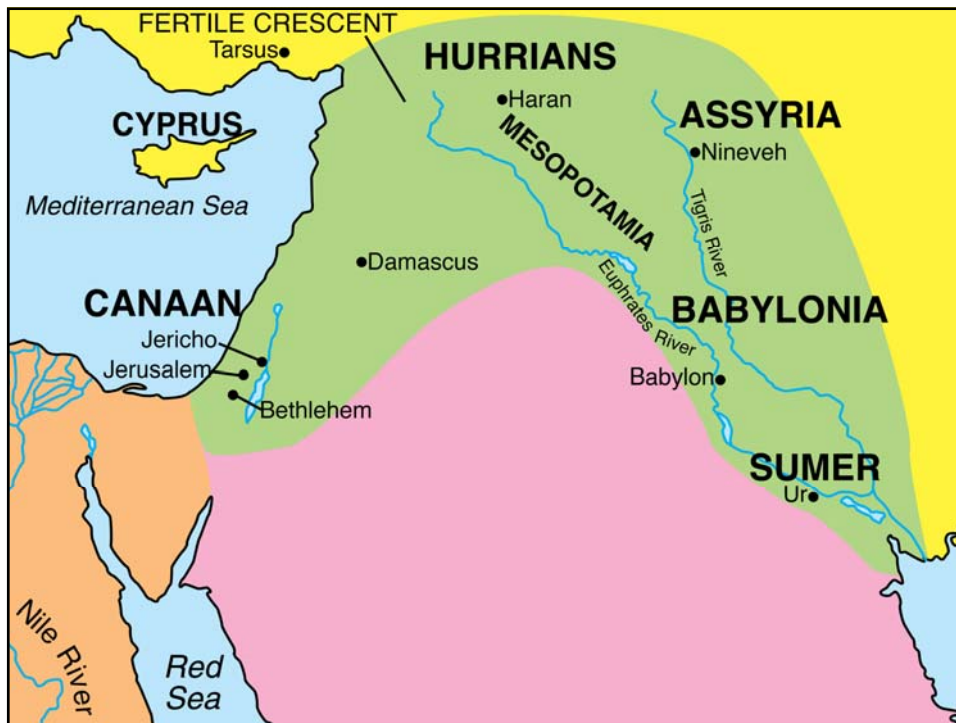
Back to the story: Approaching Jesus

- ❖ The purpose of the covenant
 - To renew all the cosmos, to bring salvation and peace to all, to bring God's kingdom on earth => **through Israel**
- ❖ Key Jewish symbols: what constitutes the people of God?
 - Torah – the Sabbath, circumcision, & dietary laws
 - Temple – where sins of Israel are forgiven
 - Land – Israel is really still in exile
 - Racial identity – avoiding intermarriage with pagans
- ❖ Key Jewish beliefs => driving the tension
 - Monotheism – Israel believes in one God who created all that is!
 - Election – Israel believes that this God choose Israel and made a covenant with them! – *but it sure doesn't look like it!?*
 - Eschatology – When will the story reach its climax? When will Israel be vindicated?



Organization of the New Testament

- ❖ Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- ❖ History – the Book of Acts
- ❖ Letters (Epistles)
 - 13 by Paul (a few in his name?)
 - Hebrews; James; I & II Peter; 1, 2, & 3 John; Jude
- ❖ Apocalypse – the Book of Revelation







The Gospels

- ❖ What does “gospel” mean?
 - gospel = *evangelion* = good news = glad tidings
 - Used as a proclamation in the Roman world
- ❖ Not the earliest writings about Jesus!
- ❖ Each written with a distinct perspective
 - Matthew – Jesus, the Jewish Messiah
 - Mark – Jesus, the suffering son of God
 - Luke – Jesus, savior of the world
 - John – Jesus, the son sent from heaven
- ❖ The “synoptic” gospels
 - Mark & Q => Matthew & Luke

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Jesus and the Good News

- ❖ Mark 1:15 – Jesus’ first public statement
 - “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”
- ❖ What is this Good News/Gospel/Glad Tidings (in Greek, *evangelion*)?
 - A proclamation that there can be no king but God
 - A proclamation about the true God, the God of Israel and his victory over all the world
 - In essence, a proclamation that Jesus is Lord
 - Lord of what? => Lord of all, everything, not just the “religious” stuff, with all the attendant claims on our lives and the call to obedience
 - Not Caesar!! => JESUS

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Jesus and the Kingdom of God

- ❖ Jesus talked more about the Kingdom of God than any other subject!
 - See Luke 4:14-30 for the story of Jesus' first public appearance
 - His teachings, his healings, his parables
- ❖ Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God in two ways – “already/not yet”
 - The Kingdom has come already!
 - The Kingdom has yet to come in its fullness!
- ❖ What does the Kingdom look like?
 - Read the sermon on the mount – Matthew 5-7
 - Bears little resemblance to what Israel expected
 - How might we think about it? What sort of metaphor works? Marriage of heaven and earth?



Jesus' Crucifixion and God's Kingdom

- ❖ Crucifixion was an unspeakably horrible punishment for those who opposed Rome
- ❖ Israel expected God's kingdom to come in power and might – not in death!
- ❖ The crucifixion is the climax of the story!
 - Virtually every problem that Paul addresses or issue that he confronts is taken back to the cross!
 - Still, the NT gives us no single picture of exactly how Jesus' death reconciled us with God!
 - The unblemished sacrificial lamb
 - Israel is declared innocent in the law-court of God
 - Jesus redeemed us, or ransomed us
 - Our sins/debts are marked “paid in full”



Jesus' Resurrection

- ❖ The key to understanding everything that came before!
 - Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection, thus
 - Jesus defeated death on the cross, thus
 - Because death came through sin, Jesus defeated the power of sin, doing for Israel, and for us, what Israel had been unable to do for itself => reconciling us with God
- ❖ Absolutely essential to Christianity
 - Without it there is nothing to indicate that Jesus was anything other than a prophet of Israel who died a horrible death!
- ❖ Proof that Jesus was who the Christians claimed he was
 - Paul's speech in Athens – Acts 17:16-34
- ❖ 1 Corinthians 15
 - Begin here – written a little more than 20 years after Jesus' death and resurrection.



New Testament Timeline

