A Very Simple Survey of the Old Testament

Preface · Introduction · Section One · Section Two

Opening Matter | Keith R. Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Overview

This overview covers the Preface, the Introduction, Section One ("The Bible Itself"), and the introduction to Section Two, the Doctrinal Survey of the Bible. The focus of the book is God's "time past" program with Israel — what God created Israel for; what His plan and purpose is with them — giving the children a better understanding and backdrop in God's "now" time program. The series has 2 sections: a short, 4 lesson introductory section dealing with the Bible itself, and an extensive section of 80 lessons, a 'running survey' from Genesis to the early part of the Lord's earthly ministry. Section One's 4 lessons teach that the Bible is the word of God and the "word of truth," what God wants you to do with the Bible, and "rightly dividing the word of truth." Section Two's emphasis is doctrinal: understanding what God is doing in His plan and purpose.

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Lessons at a Glance

Section	Core Focus
P	Preface — the focus of this book; the four cornerstones of edification
I	Introduction — the Bible as "the word of God"; 2 sections of lessons
S1-A	The Bible Is The Word Of God — God's book, a super-natural book
S1-B	The Bible Is The "Word Of Truth" — the source for knowing THE TRUTH
S1-C	What God Wants You To Do With The Bible — an 'education in the truth'
S1-D	"Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth" — God's different programs, or "dispensations"
S2	Doctrinal Survey of the Bible — introduction to the 80-lesson 'running survey'

Lesson Summaries

P

Preface *Preface • God's "time past" program with Israel; four cornerstones of edification*

The Focus of This Book

- This 'running survey' starts with Genesis and finishes with the early part of the Lord's earthly ministry, taught rightly divided, giving the children a better understanding and backdrop in God's "now" time program and dealings with us today.

Four Cornerstones of Edification

- The Divine design for edification is a building process: foundational truths laid first, then built upon with other truths; it is God's design to build this foundation on four cornerstones for the edification of the body of Christ.
- In the younger years children need to learn about God's own Person and Being, His Character and Essence; the creation of the heaven and the earth; the fall of Lucifer and the problem of sin; the special creation of man; and the fall of man.
- Following these things, the chief cornerstone: our justification by grace through faith, set forth by Paul in Romans 1–5 — the children's edification in the grace of God and what it means to be saved.
- The second cornerstone: our sanctification by grace through faith (Romans 6–8) — living 'under grace' and walking after the Spirit — and our future sanctification at the Lord's coming for us at the end of this dispensation of God's grace.
- The third cornerstone: understanding and appreciating God's dispensational dealings — Romans 9–11 sets forth this present dispensation of Gentile grace, its distinctiveness from God's program with Israel, and its "mystery" character.
- The children are to understand God's "TIME PAST" program and dealings with His nation Israel; His "NOW" time program and dealings with us today; and the resumption and fulfilment of His program with Israel yet "TO COME."
- The fourth and final cornerstone: the renewing of our minds with the knowledge of God's standard of values — the basics of what God loves, set forth by Paul in Romans 12–16; walking worthy of who we are
- The edification of our children is the primary purpose of a Sunday School program; a church is to be a school of learning for Christian adults as well as children — the local church, the "pillar and ground of the truth."

I

Introduction *Introduction • the Bible as "the word of God," and its basic content*

What These Lessons Are Designed to Do

- These lessons provide children with a fundamental understanding and appreciation both for the Bible being "the word of God," and for its basic content.
- They are designed so that the Bible makes sense to the children, they understand its basic lay-out, and they can rightly divide it, knowing what portion of it is dealing expressly with us and is to us in this dispensation of grace.

Two Sections

- The series is composed of 2 sections. The first is a short, 4 lesson

introductory section dealing with the Bible itself for what it is.

- The second is extensive: 80 lessons in which a 'running survey' is accomplished, from the book of Genesis to the early part of the Lord's earthly ministry, including His early boyhood, 'signs ministry,' prayer and the parables.
- A basic Biblical theology is provided as the children follow the Bible from Genesis to the Gospels, coming to appreciate the sense of its lay out as they follow God's "time past" program and dealings with the nation of Israel.
- The series will require approximately 2 years; the second section employs the "Through the Bible in Felt" visual-aid created by ©Betty Lukens.

S1-A

The Bible Is The Word Of God *Section One — The Bible Itself • "the word of God" — God's book*

God's Book

- All other books are the product of merely men's creativity; the Bible is God's production, His communication to us — a precious possession which ought to always grip our hearts.
- When we read the epistles of the apostle Paul, the portion of God's word expressly to us and about us today, we are reading what Paul says is grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible's Claim for Itself

- In 2 Timothy 3:16 Paul says "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God" — literally 'God-breathed': God Himself 'breathing out' through the men He was using the words He wanted communicated and recorded.
- In 2 Peter 1:21, in reference to the work of the prophets, "holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost" — the Holy Spirit Himself both prompted them and moved or directed them.
- The word "Scripture" means 'sacred or holy writings' — writings from the Sacred and Holy One Himself, God.

A Super-natural Book

- Being the word of God, the Bible is a super-natural book; fulfilled prophecy testifies to this — the detail of its prophecies is phenomenal, and hundreds are fulfilled in exacting detail.
- Through Micah the very place where Christ was to be born was given more than 600 years before (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1-6); to Daniel the very time for the coming of the Christ, about 400 years in advance (Daniel 9:25).
- David prophesied Christ's crucifixion when crucifixion wasn't even known about, foretelling His very words upon the cross and the parting of His garments, about 1000 years before (Psalm 22; Matthew 27:34-46).
- Through Isaiah God foretold the very name of the Gentile ruler which would provide for the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity — Cyrus — more than 200 years before (Isaiah 44:24–45:3).

S1-B

The Bible Is The "Word Of Truth" *Section One — The Bible Itself • the record and account from God of what is really going on*

Not Guesses or Theories

- This is very important for Christian children to get established in their minds, in view of the barrage of theories, propositions and philosophies they are beset with in school from the atheistic thrust of the day.
- The Bible is not taking guesses or proposing a theory; it is the communication from the One Who created everything and Who knows everything from the beginning unto the end.
- Paul calls the Bible the "word of truth" in 2 Timothy 2:15, and the Lord declares God's word to be "truth" in John 17:17; the Bible is not only true, but the source for knowing the truth.

'Discovered' Truths the Bible Declared All Along

- Men as a whole did not always think that the earth is round; but Isaiah 40:22 spoke of God as the One who "sitteth upon the circle of the earth" — the 'circle' concept being that of a vaulting or arcing shape.
- The 'discovery' that the earth is suspended in space was made only a few hundred years ago; but the book of Job, over 3500 years ago, declared that God, in connection with His creation of the earth, "hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7).
- Men as a whole only began to understand wind circuits and evaporation around the time of Galileo in the 1600's; but Solomon in Ecclesiastes 1:6-7 recognized that "the wind returneth again according to his circuits."
- The moon used to be thought a luminous body of itself; now it is realized that it reflects the light of the sun — but Job 25:5 declared "even to the moon, and it shineth not".

The Source for Knowing THE TRUTH

- The Bible is not set forth by God as a scientific textbook; but being the "word of truth" it states the reality of things when aspects of this physical world are dealt with.
- Contrary to men's ideas, the "word of truth" declares God does exist, that He created the heavens and the earth and man, and the truth regarding the need of salvation, the reality of hell, what God is doing today, and what is yet to come.

S1-C

What God Wants You To Do With The Bible

Section One — The Bible Itself • an 'education in the truth'

An Education in the Truth

- God wants us educated in what He is doing in the out-working of His plan and purpose, in what is really going on in this world, and in all that He has done for us by His grace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

- Paul declares what the Bible is designed by God to do for us: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- Something "profitable" is something someone has designed and given to 'profit' or benefit you in a particular way; the benefit God wants us to receive is the issue of an education.
- "Doctrine" is authoritative teaching which results in understanding; "reproof" is exposing someone's wrong ideas or thinking; "correction" is setting straight and right the ideas or thinking which are wrong.

- "Instruction in righteousness": God wants us educated in how to live righteous lives so that we honor and please Him; all 4 terms are 'educational terms.'

God Wants Us Educated

- One of the main reasons God gave us His Holy Spirit at the point of salvation is "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Corinthians 2:12).
- Paul's rebuke in 1 Corinthians 15:34 — "for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame" — certainly stresses God's desire for our education.
- God has designed the local church to be "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15) — an educational institution, a school for the teaching of His word; Christians are to 'go to church' to be educated.
- That is why Paul describes a Pastor as one who needs to be "apt to teach," and to give himself wholly to the reading, exhortation, and teaching of the word of God.

"Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth" *Section One — The Bible Itself*

• our proper handling of the Bible

S1-D

Why Confusion Exists

- To many Christians the Bible doesn't seem to make sense, and confusion and disagreement exist even though the same Bible is being handled.
- Of several reasons, the one probably responsible for most of the uncertainty and confusion is Christians failing to do with the Bible the very thing it tells us to do: "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Not All Going On at the Same Time

- The Bible records ALL of God's programs or "dispensations" — what He has been doing in the 'past,' is doing 'now,' and will be doing in the 'future' — but everything it records ISN'T going on at the same time.
- Only the portion of the Bible that describes what God is doing right 'now' contains God's instructions and promises to us today; all of the Bible is for us, but it is NOT all about us today, nor all written TO us.

Moses and Paul

- Leviticus 11 gave Israel very specific dietary laws; Paul in 1 Timothy 4:1-5 says there is nothing unclean of itself. Moses set forth God's program with Israel, Paul His program with us Gentiles; the two programs are not the same.
- Leviticus 11 is part of God's "time past" program with Israel and NOT the instructions from God for us Christians today; Paul is our apostle today, and in his epistles God has set forth the instructions He wants us to follow.
- Other examples: the keeping of the Sabbath day — Exodus 20:8-11 contrasted with Colossians 2:16-17; and being under the Law — God gave Israel the Law, but Paul tells us in Romans 6:14 that we today are "not under the law."
- The Lord's instructions in the Gospel accounts, such as "Sell that ye have" (Luke 12:33), pertained to God's program with Israel and His miraculous provision for them in the tribulation time — not to us today (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10).

The Dispensational Breakdown

- Genesis through Malachi, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the opening chapters of the book of Acts set forth God's "time past" program with Israel; Romans through Philemon, His program with us Christians today; Hebrews through Revelation deal especially with Israel again.

S2

Doctrinal Survey of the Bible *Section Two — introduction • a basic doctrinal 'make sense' understanding of the Bible*

The Bible Makes Sense

- The Bible is not simply a collection of stories, nor a hodge-podge of information; it is the word of God and the "word of truth," which God has put together in a logical manner.
- Genesis through the opening chapters of the book of Acts record God's "time past" dealings until God unexpectedly set Israel aside; Paul's epistles describe what God is doing "now"; Hebrews through Revelation focus upon the fulfillment of Israel's program yet "to come."

The Aim of the Survey

- The survey runs from Genesis through the Old Testament, so the children understand the 'stories' of the Old Testament not just as stories, but as doctrinally comprehended aspects of the outworking of God's plan and purpose with Israel.
- The same is true for what God is doing "now": that they appreciate "the dispensation of the grace of God" and Paul as "the apostle of the Gentiles," and Romans through Philemon as expressly TO them and directly ABOUT them as Christians.
- They are also to appreciate Hebrews through Revelation as they anticipate the resumption of God's program with Israel, and what God is yet to fulfill once He concludes this dispensation of Gentile grace and takes us to be with Himself in the heavenly places.
- The emphasis is doctrinal: understanding what God is doing and 'why' certain things took place — Why did God create mankind? Why the garden in Eden? Why the judgement of the flood? Why did God separate Abraham and begin forming a new nation with him?

The Lessons

- 80 lessons, about 2 years, following for the most part the ©Betty Lukens "Through The Bible in Felt" visual-aid; no emphasis on its 'memory verses,' quite often dispensationally inappropriate and taken out of context — rather, key verses in context.
- At times lessons will be added and/or theirs deleted; each lesson description will clearly indicate any alterations.
- Lesson descriptions are set forth in 8 lesson blocks, each with a brief preface giving a synopsis of the doctrine — a sort of 'road map' both for you and the children; it is important that the 'flow of the Bible' be conveyed to them.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

God's Book vs. the Product of Merely Men

All other books are the product of merely men's creativity; the Bible is God's production — "the word of God." It wasn't produced merely by the 'inspiration of men'; it was given by God Himself 'breathing out' through the men He was using the words He wanted communicated and recorded.

The "Word of Truth" vs. the Guesses of Men

The Bible is not taking guesses or proposing a theory; it is the communication from the only One in the universe who really does know the truth. In the face of the ever fluctuating opinions and guesses of men, it is vitally important that the children understand and appreciate the Bible as the "word of truth" which they can stand upon regardless of public opinion.

"Time Past," "Now," and "To Come"

Genesis through the opening chapters of the book of Acts set forth God's "time past" dealings until God unexpectedly set Israel aside and ushered in this present dispensation of Gentile grace. Romans through Philemon set forth God's program and dealings with us Christians today; Hebrews through Revelation deal especially with Israel again in anticipation of the resumption of God's program with them.

All of the Bible Is For Us, but NOT All Written TO Us

All of the Bible is for us and God wants us to learn about all that He is doing; but all of the Bible is NOT about us today and it is NOT all written TO us today telling us what to do. In Romans through Philemon the children have the words from God and the Lord Jesus Christ which are expressly TO them and directly ABOUT them as Christians.

Moses and Paul: Two Programs Not the Same

Moses was raised up by God to set forth His program with Israel, but Paul was raised up by God to set forth His program with us Gentiles; the two programs are not the same. If God's word is not rightly divided, Moses and Paul seem to contradict one another; the confusion and uncertainty disappear when we do with the Bible what God Himself tells us to do.

Key Scripture References

Exodus 20:8–11	The keeping of the Sabbath day; to be contrasted with Colossians 2:16–17
Leviticus 11	Specific dietary laws for Israel; part of God's "time past" program, NOT instructions for us today
Job 26:7	Declared over 3500 years ago that God "hangeth the earth upon nothing"
Psalm 22	David prophesied Christ's crucifixion about 1000 years before (compare

	Matthew 27:34–46)
Isaiah 40:22	God “sitteth upon the circle of the earth” — declared long before men as a whole accepted it
Isaiah 44:24–45:3	Cyrus named more than 200 years before, the Gentile ruler who would provide for the rebuilding of Jerusalem
Daniel 9:25	The very time for the coming of the Christ, given about 400 years in advance
Micah 5:2	The very place of Christ’s birth, given more than 600 years before (compare Matthew 2:1–6)
Luke 12:33	The Lord’s instructions pertained to God’s program with Israel, not to us today
Romans 6:14	We today are “not under the law”
1 Corinthians 2:12	One of the main reasons God gave us His Holy Spirit: “that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God”
1 Timothy 3:15	The local church designed to be “the pillar and ground of the truth” — an educational institution
1 Timothy 4:1–5	Nothing unclean of itself; contrasted with Leviticus 11
2 Timothy 2:15	The Bible is the “word of truth”; how God instructs us to handle His word — “rightly dividing the word of truth”
2 Timothy 3:16–17	“given by inspiration of God”; profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness — ‘educational terms’
2 Peter 1:21	In reference to the work of the prophets: “holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost”