

Old Testament History & Religion

BIB 101 - Section 3 (TR)

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Reading and Study Guide for *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth (OT)*

These questions are to facilitate the reading of the Old Testament sections of *How to read the Bible for All Its Worth*. They attempt to point out the most important concepts in the book that relate to the course “Old Testament History and Religion.” You will not have to have exhaustive knowledge of all the details of this book for the exams. However, you will be responsible for the general ideas presented in the book, and for those details of the book that are also referred to in class lectures and discussions.

pp. 17-31 (Interpretation)

1. What is the aim of good interpretation of the Bible?
2. Be able to summarize how our prior understanding, assumptions, and experiences influence how we read the Bible.
3. What is the antidote to “bad interpretation” of the Bible?
4. What are some of the implications in saying that the Bible has both “eternal relevance” and “historical particularity?”
5. How does the statement that “God’s word to us was first of all his word to them” help us read Scripture?
6. What is “exegesis?”
7. What is the key to good exegesis?
8. Be able to define and summarize the importance of both *historical* and *literary* context.
9. Be able to explain the significance of the principle “A text cannot mean what it never meant.”

pp. 89-106 (Narrative)

10. What is a *narrative*?
11. What are the three basic parts of a narrative?
12. Be able to describe the three levels of biblical narrative.
13. What are three ways that Old Testament narratives should *not* be understood?
14. What is the role of the *narrator* in biblical stories?
15. What is the role of “characterization” in biblical narratives?
16. How does *dialog* help establish the point or purpose of a narrative?
17. What are some features of biblical narratives that show the story was designed primarily for hearers not readers?
18. Who is the primary character in all biblical narratives?
19. Why are the *implicit* aspects of a narrative important?
20. Be able to summarize some of the common errors of interpretation that people employ in reading narrative.
21. What important principle of Bible reading is expressed in the statement: “No biblical narrative was written specifically about *you*”?
22. Be able to summarize the ten principles for reading Old Testament narrative.

pp. 163-180 (Torah)

23. In Exodus, what are the three defining narratives for Israel as a people?
24. What are the five different ways the term “law” is used in the biblical traditions?
25. Be able to summarize the six guidelines for understanding how Christians relate to the Old Testament “law.”
26. What is a *covenant*?
27. What two kinds of Old Testament “laws” no longer apply to Christians?
28. Rather than a “means of salvation,” what was the purpose of the Old Testament “law?”
29. Be able to explain the two basic forms in which OT “laws” are given.
30. How does Israel’s law codes compare with those of surrounding peoples?

pp. 181-204 (Prophets)

31. What is the main reason that the prophetic books are so hard to understand?
32. What is the *primary* function of Old Testament prophets?
33. Be able to summarize the four aspects of the role and function of Prophets in Israel.
34. How can the prophets be considered “covenant mediators?”
35. Why is *historical context* important in understanding the prophets?
36. Be able to summarize the different literary forms of prophetic books: lawsuit, woe oracle, salvation oracle, enactment prophecy, and messenger speech.
37. What are some features of prophetic poetry that serve as a vehicle for the prophet’s message?
38. Be able to summarize the issues involved in seeing the prophet as a “foreteller of the future.”

pp. 205-223 (Psalms)

39. What is the primary difficulty in understanding the Psalms?
40. What is the most important thing to keep in mind when reading the Psalms?
41. Be able to summarize the three aspects of Hebrew poetry in the Psalms.
42. What are the features of the Psalms as *literature*?
43. How does it help us to understand the Psalms to realize that they were “aids to worship”?
44. Be able to summarize the characteristics of the major types of Psalms.
45. What are “imprecatory psalms” and what is their function?
46. What are the three basic benefits of Psalms for Christians?

pp. 225-248 (Wisdom)

47. What four Old Testament books are usually considered “wisdom books?”
48. What is “wisdom?”
49. What are the major ways people tend to misuse the wisdom literature?
50. How does the statement “the entire progress of our lives may be viewed as the result of choices” relate to wisdom literature?
51. What is “proverbial wisdom?”
52. What is the role of *poetic* and *figurative* language in Proverbs?
53. Be able to summarize the guidelines for reading and understanding Proverbs.
54. What is “speculative wisdom?”
55. What is the primary topic of the *Song of Songs* (or the Song of Solomon)?
56. What are some guidelines for reading the Song?