

HOW TO READ MOSES
Practical suggestions
Banská Bystrica, 19. January 2014

LITERATURE: WILKINSON & BOA: *Talk Thru the Bible*; MEARS, H. *What the Bible is All About*; HILL, H. *A Journey through the Bible*; PAWSON, D. *Unlocking the Bible*.

0. INTRODUCTION

- motivation - looking for the main ideas of the books – don't try to find there what cannot be found
- help: *What the Bible is All About* ("O čom všetkom Biblia hovorí")
- *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*
- *Dig Deeper* ("Pod'me hlbšie" /Porta libri 2012)
- need to approach the Bible with the right questions
- reading the Bible for every day's spiritual life is important, as for this series (how to read the Bible), it's going to present a wider perspective on the particular books (= I don't need to understand everything in order to hear God's voice, but it's motivational to know the purpose of His Word better, to understand and approach it with love)

1. WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO READ THE BIBLE

- life and food for the Christian (**1Pt 2:2** long for the pure **milk** of the **word**, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,)
- **John 5:39** You **search** the **Scriptures** because you think that in them you have eternal life;
- ability to check contemporary preaching

2. FIRST THINGS FIRST

1. GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE BASIC INFO

- "Biblia" - "little books" 66 books, ...writing materials; authors etc.
- The Bible is a *spiritual* book - you need regeneration to really understand it (John 3:3)
- The Letter to the Romans - the theological key to the whole Bible

2. THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF READING/STUDY OF THE BIBLE

- read to get the big picture
- read for prayer and meditation
- study for personal understanding
- study for public exposition

3. THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

- *Who* am I? - my relationship to God → prayer
- *What* is the Bible? - the Word of God → respect; expectations
- *How* am I going to proceed? - Bible reading plan (regularity) → the big picture
- *What* is the main idea? → ask the right questions
- *What* am I expected to do? - my attitude to the Word of God → obedience

3. THE DANGERS

- closed mind preconceived ideas - prejudice of science and unbelief
- reading the Bible as a set of aphorisms
- forgetting the Bible is an old book from different times and cultures
- getting bogged down by mysteries, speculations

1. READING MOSES

We need to read the Old Testament through the New Testament's lenses.

1. THE DRAMA OF THE BIBLE

- from the Creation to the Consummation (remember the *Plot*)
- History¹

2000	1500	1000	500
Election	Exodus	Empire	Exile
Abraham	Moses	David	Isaiah
Patriarchs	Prophets	Princes	Priests

2. GEOGRAPHY

- the Near East, Mesopotamia (Syria, Iraq, Iran), Egypt, Turkey, Greece

3. THE OLD TESTAMENT

- (1) Moses, (2) history, (3) Wisdom, (4) Prophets
- the Promise
- the Nation
- the Theocracy
- the Law

4. THE NT THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

- the "shadow" of reality in Christ
- look for God's character
- look for God's principles of work

2. GENESIS - BEGINNINGS

"In the beginning" (Greek "Beginnings")

- Probably the most popular book of the Bible (science, questions of the origins etc.) = danger of approaching the book with scientific questions as the main purpose of reading it – these questions are important but the aim/main ideas of the book/particular chapters lay somewhere else

1. MAIN DIVISIONS/IDEAS

- Chpt.1 - Sabbath (fellowship with God) = I've been created to live in analogy with God's work and to have fellowship with Him, that's the ultimate goal of my life (it will be fulfilled in eternity) = the question to ask when reading chpt. 1 is "How should I live as God's image?"
- Chpt.2 - Marriage (fellowship with another human being)
- Chpt.3 - Sin (the Problem)
- Chpt.4-11 - sin→judgment→mercy (the three cycles that can be seen throughout these chapters: in the story of the Flood; Babel...); prehistory, a lot of names – we're usually more interested in reading narratives, but the genealogies tell us that God reigns over generations – He knows and cares about where I come from and He knows who my children will be)
- Chpt.12-50 - The Patriarchs - the life of faith - covenants - ups and downs - norms of conscience

2. IMPORTANT VERSES

- **Gn 1:1; Genesis 3:15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."
- **Genesis 12:1-3** Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I

¹ PAWSON, D. *Unlocking the Bible*

will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

= the central passage for the whole OT – all the history of Israel and evolves from this statement

- A problem with the title “Old Testament” = the testament is given in Exodus 2,20 – Genesis, but also many other books of the OT do not present the old testament that God gave to His people (the 39 books of the OT are called TANACH in Hebrew = the Law + the Prophets + the Scrolls)

3. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

- the purposes of God in Creation and Salvation
- the problem of humankind, judgments and grace; workings of sin
- principles of faith in God's promises
- GOD IS AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERYTHING

3. EXODUS - REDEMPTION

"Let my people go!"

1. MAIN DIVISIONS/IDEAS

- chpts 1-18 - deliverance from slavery
- chpts 19-40 - life in freedom (nationhood and worship of God) – after a story of great deliverance there come many chapters of seemingly uninteresting rules and regulations – why? – Sanctification – discipline for the delivered slaves = How do I as a Christian live my everyday life 100% for God? How do I live my free life with God? How do I bring sacrifices? (recommended are books talking about parallels between the Tabernacle and the New Testament)

2. IMPORTANT VERSES

- **Exodus 6:6** I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.
- **Exodus 19:5-6** 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

3. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

- the power of God over the nature; pagan gods; nations
- picture of the salvation - redemption from the world; sin; flesh; demonic powers
- the use of blood in redemption

4. LEVITICUS - WORSHIP

"Be holy!"

1. MAIN DIVISIONS/IDEAS

- chpts 1-17 - sacrifices
- chpts 18-28 - purity

2. IMPORTANT VERSES

- **Leviticus 17:11** For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.
- **Leviticus 11:45** you shall be **holy**, for **I am holy**. (1Pt 1:16)
- **Leviticus 20:7-8** 'You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. You shall keep my statutes and practice them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

3. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

- the aspects of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross
- the aspects of holiness in pictures
 - Maybe the most difficult book to understand
 - All the regulations have been fulfilled in Jesus – all the parallels and aspects have been dealt with for me!
 - Sanctification is not simple, God knew I wouldn't be able to meet His expectations so He sent His Son to deal with it = read Leviticus with this in mind!

5. NUMBERS - WANDERING

Numbers 14:9 “do not rebel against the LORD”

- One of the most depressing books in the Bible = God's chosen nation rebels

1. MAIN DIVISIONS/IDEAS

- chpts 1-10 - preparation and order for marching to the Promised Land
- chpts 10-25 - disobedience, rebellion, longing for Egypt
- chpts 26-36 - new generation, prepared to enter the Promised Land

2. IMPORTANT VERSES

- **Numbers 14:22-23** "Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice, shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it.
- **Numbers 20:12** but the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

3. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

- 1Cor 10 - warnings for the redeemed to *go on in obedience*
- lessons about the leadership leading the people of God
- Rom 11:22 “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God...”

6. DEUTERONOMY - RENEWED COVENANT

Deuteronomy 29:9 “So **keep** the words of this **covenant** to do them that you may prosper in all that you do”

1. MAIN DIVISIONS/IDEAS

- chpts 1-4 First speech of Moses
- chpts 5-26 Second speech of Moses
- chpts 27-34 Third speech of Moses

2. IMPORTANT VERSES

- **Deuteronomy 10:12-13** Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, *and* to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?
- **Deuteronomy 30:19-20** I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

3. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

- the importance of repetition = I need to “update” my understanding of God’s will every day, I can’t have it as “a hardware” and pull out things out of it only when I feel like it = I need to come back to His words every day
- the importance of encouragement/admonition
- God's grace in the midst of sin and judgment (the goodness and severity of God)
 - Moses is reminding Israel what God wants them to do and he wants to encourage and admonish (he adds his own attitude, his own commentary)
 - JESUS cites Dt three times when He’s being tempted!
 - There are some key prophecies in the book: the Messiah is coming (18:18)