

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

In our message today, guest speaker Dr. Bill Jones leads us in an overview of the Old Testament in order to help us understand how these Biblical books serve as both the foundation and consistent signpost to God's ultimate work of redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Rather than simply being a collection of stories about the Jewish nation, they allow us to see how God is intentionally moving His Creation through the sacrifice of Jesus back to a restored state of perfection of life with Him in a Garden (see Revelation 21:22-22:4). So to get your group started today, let everyone share which fresh fruit is their favorite and why...

BIG THOUGHT

The Old Testament shows us that God is consistently working through all of human history to restore our relationship with Him - which means we can trust Him for today's needs!

1. The first two periods which Dr. Jones mentions are the "Nothing/Something" eras which begin with the creation of the universe and end with Joseph's triumph as Pharaoh's second-in-command. In the first era, what was God's desire in creating the universe? (Genesis 1:27, 31) What happened to shatter its goodness? (Genesis 3:1-13) In the second era, how does God show His blessing to Joseph, a grandson in God's chosen family of Abraham? (Genesis 45:5) And how does Genesis 3:15 point to the work of Jesus?
2. The next two periods of time are the "Exiting/Entering" periods where Moses leads the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt and Joshua leads them into the Promised Land. What task did God have for Moses? (Exodus 3:1-10) After Moses' death, what was Joshua to do? (Joshua 1:1-2) Read Joshua 2:1-21. How does Rahab's story show us God's desire to be in a relationship even with people who don't know about Him yet?

3. The "United/Divided" eras begin with the establishing of a monarchy and end with the nation of Israel being split into two separate kingdoms (Israel in the north and Judah in the south) until the northern Israel kingdom is eventually conquered and dismantled by the empire of Assyria. Read 2 Samuel 7:8-13. How is Jesus the fulfillment of God's promise to King David (see Matthew 1:6, 16)? Now read Isaiah 53:4-6. How do the prophet's words (written during the growing threat of Assyria) also point to Jesus?
4. The next two periods, "Scattered/Gathered", describe the Babylonian's conquest of Judah (after the Babylonians conquer Assyria) and last until the Jewish people are allowed to return home when the Mede-Persian empire conquers Babylon. Read Daniel's prophecy from captivity in Babylon in Daniel 9:25. Then read Zechariah 9:9. Now read John 12:12-15. Using the Jewish calendar, these verses all describe the appearance of the Messiah during the exact week of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem 490 years later. What role should fulfilled prophecies like these play in our faith?
5. Now read Galatians 4:1-5. After having worked through this study, what does it mean to you now to realize that Jesus came at "just the right time"? And how can that encourage us right now in our life's circumstances?

Take it Further

Thank God for His faithfulness to always pursue a relationship with you - and talk with Him about the circumstances in your life you'd like to see Him change.

Daily Verse Readings

Day 1: Habakkuk 2:3

Day 2: Psalm 130:5

Day 3: Ecclesiastes 3:1

Day 4: Romans 5:6

Day 5: Isaiah 40:31

Day 6: Psalm 27:14

Memory Verse: Galatians 4:4



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