

▫ The Bible in an Hour

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1. What is the Bible?

One book?

Several books?

Which books are included? – The question of the canon

The authority of the Bible – Jewish and Christian

A Five Act Play (N.T. Wright)

2. Act I – Creation

Where do we find this?

Genesis 1-2

Psalm 19

Proverbs 8.22-31

What happens?

God creates. The world is good

Two stories in Genesis

What sort of Literature?

Science or poetry or what

Wisdom

Praise

Law (Torah)

3. Act II – Fall

Where do we find this?

Genesis 3-11
Psalm 115

What happens?

Adam and Eve
Cain and Abel
Tower of Babel
Idolatry

What sort of literature?

Aetiology
Just so stories
Holding together goodness of creation and reality of experience

4. Act IIa – Noah

Where do we find this?

Genesis 6-9

What happens?

God despairs
Noah is exception
Salvation worked through one family
New creation
Covenant

Links to other acts

Israel (Act III)
Jesus (Act IV)
Act VI

5. Act III – Israel

Where do we find this?

OT from Genesis 12 to Malachi
NT in stories prior to baptism of Jesus

What happens?

Abraham (Genesis 12)
Exodus (Exodus – Deuteronomy)
Conquest of Land (Joshua)
Life in the land
Judges (Judges and Ruth)
Kings (1 Samuel – 2 Chronicles, Wisdom literature, early prophets)
Exile (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, “Second Isaiah”)
Restoration (Ezra, Nehemiah, Later prophets)
Incomplete restoration?

Writing of the OT

Canon of the OT

6. Act IV – Jesus

Where do we find this?

Gospels, Acts 1, some of Paul’s letters

What happens?

Baptism
Ministry
Death
Resurrection

How does this fit with Acts I-III?

7. Act V – The Church

Where do we find this?

Acts of the Apostles
NT Letters (Romans – Revelation)

What happens?

Life in the church
Arguments
improvisation

NT church as a separate act?

Writing of NT

Formation of the canon

8. Act VI – The re-creation

Where do we find this?

Isaiah 11, 65
Revelation 21-22

What happens?

Fulfilment of God's promises
Resurrection
Heaven on earth
Glimpsed in a glass darkly

9. *Surprising witnesses*

Who are they?

Some examples

Melchizedek (Genesis 14)

Magi (Matthew 2)

Resistance of the Bible to easy interpretations

A Short Bibliography

NT Wright *The New Testament and the People of God* (SPCK, 1992)

An excellent introduction to the NT, its background and the questions. Chapter 5 contains the 5 act play model.

NT Wright 'How can the Bible be Authoritative' (*Vox Evangelica* 21 (1991) 7-21.

A shorter article containing the 5 Act Play model. Easily available on line at

www.ntwrightpage.com/Wright_Bible_Authoritative.htm

Lawrence Boadt *Reading the Old Testament* (Paulist Press, 1984)

A very good, accessible introduction to the OT working historically.

Walter Brueggemann *Theology of the Old Testament* (Fortress Press, 1997)

A superb, but dense, reading of the Old Testament, alert to difficulties and a wide range of issues.

Luke Timothy Johnson *The Writings of the New Testament* (SCM, 1986)

A very helpful and accessible introduction to each book of the NT

Samuel Wells *Improvisation* (SPCK 2004)

Takes up Wright's five act play and asks how Christians should live faithfully