

"THE BIG STORY": Reading the Bible

Out of the 73 books of the Bible (yes, 73, not 66), there are 14 narrative books that, if read in order, give you the overall, "chronological" story of Salvation history.

These 14 books are not "superior" to the other 59 books. What is meant by "narrative" books refers to how the narrative story of salvation unfolds in the Bible.

Let's explain it this way...

If you pick up a mystery novel at the local bookstore, you start on page 1 and end on page 350 or whatever. You read that book left to right, from beginning to end, and you have the entire "story" in order. By the way..."the butler usually didn't do it"!

The Bible is not assembled that way, however, and wasn't really intended to be read "left to right", from Genesis through to Revelation. The word "bible" comes from the Latin word *biblia* (which comes from the Greek word βιβλίον) which means "collection of books." It was assembled by types, groups and styles of literary writings. Put simply, it wasn't assembled to be "read through like a storybook".

What happens when you read the following 14 books in order, is that you begin to see the "big picture" of salvation, the "big story" from beginning to end...as if you were reading it (like you would a modern novel) from start to finish.

The narrative books in order are:

Genesis (Early World & Patriarchs)	1 Kings (Royal Kingdom & Divided Kingdom)
Exodus (Egypt and Exodus)	2 Kings (Divided Kingdom & Exile)
Numbers (Desert Wanderings)	Ezra (Return from Exile)
Joshua (Conquest & Judges)	Nehemiah (Return from Exile)
Judges (Conquest & Judges)	1 Maccabees (Maccabean Revolt)
1 Samuel (Royal Kingdom)	Luke (Messianic Fulfillment)
2 Samuel (Royal Kingdom)	Acts (The Church)

You will be amazed at how the readings, the Mass and your personal study begin to "come to life" in a whole new way.

And don't forget...you're not an insignificant character in "the greatest story ever told." In God's mind and heart, you're a primary character.

Believe it!