Bible Stories — Told Faithfully

About the Series: A Faithful Presentation

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The great stories of scripture, presented as God wrote them: with their setting restored, their language opened, and their meaning traced all the way to Jesus Christ.

What We Are Presenting

Most of us met the Bible's stories as children. Noah and the ark, David and Goliath, Jonah and the great fish, the baby in the manger. We remember the pictures. But many of us never went back to them as adults, and many of the retellings we grew up with were thin. Some added details that are not in the Bible. Some left out the parts that were hard. Most stopped at a simple moral — *be brave*, *be kind*, *obey God* — and never showed why the story was written or where it leads.

The Bible was not written to be thin. Paul tells us why these accounts were preserved:

> **Romans 15:4** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

These stories were written *for our learning*. They teach. They carry the history of God's dealings with people, the promise of the coming Messiah, and lessons that still apply to us today. They reward careful reading, and they give hope.

This series retells the major stories of the Bible, from Creation to the early church, in a way that honours that purpose. Each story is complete in itself, and together they will form one volume.

What "A Faithful Presentation" Means

A faithful presentation tells the story the way scripture tells it — no more, no less — and then helps the reader see what is actually there. In practice, that means a few firm commitments.

1. Scripture speaks first. The story is told from the Bible's own words. At every turning point the King James Version is quoted directly, so the reader sees exactly what the text says rather than someone's paraphrase of it.

2. Nothing is added and passed off as scripture. Many retellings fill in gaps with imagination: what someone was thinking, what they looked like, how many there were. We don't. Where the text is silent, we say so. When we draw an inference, we label it plainly — *"as this series understands it"* — so the reader always knows the difference between what the Bible says and what we are suggesting.

3. Nothing hard is hidden. The Bible is honest about its people. Abraham lied about his wife. Jacob deceived his father. Rahab was a prostitute. Some passages about judgment are hard to read. These stories are written for adults and young adults, and they are direct. The hard parts are presented plainly and handled carefully, with the Bible's own explanations laid out.

4. The original languages are opened. Much of the richness of scripture lies in its Hebrew and Greek words. The basket that carried baby Moses is called an *ark*, the same word as Noah's. The scarlet cord Rahab hung in her window is *tiqvah*, a word that everywhere else in the Bible means *hope*. When Jesus said the Son of man must be "lifted up," He used a word that means both crucified and exalted. These details are not decoration. They are part of the message, and they are explained in plain English.

5. The customs of the Bible world are explained. The Bible was written in the East, thousands of years ago, to people who lived very differently from us. A hand under the thigh when swearing an oath, the birthright and the father's blessing, removing shoes on holy ground, bowing seven times, sleeping on a stone: these made immediate sense to the first readers. Once their customs (often called *orientalisms*) are explained, many puzzling passages become clear.

6. Figures of speech are named and explained. Scripture uses figures of speech on purpose, to add emphasis and feeling: repetition, comparison, exaggeration, wordplay, questions asked for effect. When the text uses one, we point it out, name it, and explain what it does. Readers learn to recognize these figures for themselves, and to avoid reading a figure as if it were plain literal speech, or plain speech as if it were a figure.

7. Scripture interprets scripture. A story is never read alone. The New Testament often comments on Old Testament events. Hebrews tells us Moses' parents hid him *by faith*. Paul tells us the Red Sea crossing was a baptism *unto Moses*. Jesus tells us the bronze serpent was a picture of Himself. Those inspired comments are brought in wherever they belong.

8. Each story is set in its administration. God has dealt with people in different ways at different times: before the Law, under the Law, in the days of Christ's ministry, and now in the age of grace. Knowing which of these a story belongs to keeps us from applying to ourselves what was meant for others, and helps us see what *is* for us.

9. Every story is followed to where it leads. The whole Bible points to Jesus Christ. Many stories carry pictures and promises of the Messiah: His death, His resurrection, and His ascension to God's right hand. Each story traces that thread, and then shows what the story means for believers today.

10. Differing views are stated fairly. Where sincere Bible students disagree — the date of the Exodus, where the Red Sea was crossed, how a difficult verse should be read — we say so, present the main views fairly, and explain which one this series follows and why.

The result is something between a children's Bible and a scholarly commentary: as readable as a story, with the substance of a study.

How Each Story Is Presented

Every story follows the same pattern, so readers always know where they are, and teachers always know where to find what they need.

1. Why These Stories Were Written — Romans 15:4

Each story opens with the same anchor verse and a short, rich paragraph on why God preserved these accounts: that they were written for our learning, that they build patience and comfort, and that they lead to hope. It reminds every reader, every time, why the story matters.

2. The Opening

A short introduction that draws the reader in. It gives the heart of the story in a few paragraphs: the tension, the turning point, what is at stake. It also shows, right at the start, why this story is worth our time today, often by showing how Jesus or the apostles referred to it.

3. The Setting

Before the story begins, the reader is placed in its world.

- **When** — where the story falls in Bible history, with dates where they can reasonably be given, and the ages of the people involved when scripture supplies them.
- **Where** — the geography: cities, rivers, deserts and mountains, distances and terrain, and why the place matters.
- **Who** — the people involved and how they are related to the rest of the Bible's story.
- **The administration** — which period of God's dealings the story belongs to, and what that means for how we read it.
- **What is at stake** — the promise, the covenant, or the threat that makes the story matter.

4. The Story, Told Faithfully

This is the heart of each presentation. The story is told in order, section by section, with the King James text quoted at every key moment. Woven through the narrative, right where they arise, are:

- **The meaning of key Hebrew and Greek words**
- **Customs and manners of the Bible world**
- **Figures of speech**, pointed out, named and explained
- **Cross-references**, where other parts of scripture comment on the event
- **Questions the text raises**, and how scripture answers them
- **Hard passages**, faced directly and explained with care
- **Historical and archaeological background**, where it helps, always clearly separated from scripture itself

Nothing is saved for a footnote. The reader learns as the story unfolds.

5. Where the Story Leads

Every story points beyond itself. This section follows it in three directions:

- **To the Messiah** — the promises, prophecies and pictures of Jesus Christ in the story, including His death, resurrection and ascension.
- **To the grace administration** — what the story teaches believers today, drawn from the epistles written to the church.
- **To the topic** — the practical lessons the story carries on faith, prayer, family, temptation, obedience, forgiveness, or whatever the story itself is about.

6. The Main Takeaway

One sentence that sums up the whole story and its meaning, followed by a short list of key lessons. If a reader remembers nothing else, this is what to remember. For a teacher, it is the lesson in a nutshell.

7. For Our Learning

Quick-reference sections, set out in bullet points, that gather what the story taught:

- **The People** — everyone who appears in the story, who they were, and what they did.
- **Customs and Orientalisms** — the manners and practices of the Bible world that the story involves.
- **Figures of Speech** — each figure found in the story, named, defined, and shown with its verse.

8. What the Bible Actually Says

A short list that separates what scripture really says from what people often assume it says. Did Pharaoh drown in the Red Sea? Was the fruit in Eden an apple? Did Jacob climb the ladder? This section corrects common misunderstandings in a few plain lines.

9. God's Will and Intent

Each story closes by stepping back to ask what it shows about God Himself: His character, His purposes, His faithfulness, and His plan of redemption in Jesus Christ.

Who These Stories Are For

For newcomers. You don't need to know the Bible to read these. Every term is explained the first time it appears, every custom is described, and the stories are told in plain language. You can start anywhere.

For experienced Bible students. There is plenty here for you: original-language word studies, figures of speech, customs, cross-references across the whole Bible, administrational context, and honest treatment of difficult passages and differing views. Many readers who have known these stories for years find things they never noticed before.

For teachers and parents. Each story is built to be taught. The fixed pattern makes preparation easy. The Setting gives you your introduction, the Story gives you your lesson, Where the Story Leads gives you your application, and the Main Takeaway and For Our Learning sections give you your review. The stories are written for adults and young adults. Parents can read them and then retell them to younger children at the right level.

For small groups. Read a story together, then work through the For Our Learning and What the Bible Actually Says sections as discussion starters.

A Short Description to Share

Bible Stories — Told Faithfully. The great stories of scripture, told as God wrote them. Each story is quoted from the King James Version, set in its time and place, and opened with the meanings of Hebrew and Greek words, the customs of the Bible world, and the figures of speech God used. Each one is traced to where it leads: to Jesus Christ, and to what it means for believers today. Nothing is added, nothing hard is hidden, and every inference is clearly labelled. Easy enough for someone new to the Bible, and meaty enough for a seasoned student. *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).*

Even shorter (for a link or card)

The Bible's great stories, told faithfully: scripture's own words, their setting restored, their language and customs explained, and every story traced to Jesus Christ.