

# BIBLICAL PATTERNS

Studying the Bible can be a daunting task. The sheer size and amount of content can appear overwhelming to students who desire to know more. While gleaning insights from individual passages is important, it is also important to understand the biblical patterns and how all of the content fits together.

## Stats on the Bible

- The Bible is a narrative composed of two testaments made up of 66 books.
- The Old Testament has 39 books and the New Testament has 27 books.
- The Bible has 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses, and 773,692 words.
- The Bible was written by 40 different authors whose occupations ranged from kings to shepherds, scholars to fishermen, prophets to generals, tax collectors to doctors, and cupbearers to priests.
- The Bible was written over a period of approximately 2,000 years on three different continents in different languages.
- The Bible tells 1 consistently glorious truth: **God loves you.**

## Biblical Patterns in Narrative

An important element in understanding the Bible as a whole is by learning how to discover design patterns in the way the authors presented the biblical narrative.

1. While much of the biblical content is simple and straightforward, some of the biblical narrative was composed to provide greater depth the more that it is studied.
2. Authors leave clues along the way to show how individual narratives relate to the one big narrative of Scripture.
3. As you study, look for key words, phrases, and settings to connect the dots.
4. Studying on Scripture (Josh. 1:8) provides the reader with a lifelong journey of understanding the biblical text to a greater degree with every reading.
5. The more we understand the message of the Bible, the more we know the Author of the Bible.

## Putting It Into Practice

1. **The Baptismal Dove** - Read Mark 1:9-11. What story does a dove remind you of? How would that relate to baptism?
2. **Tempted in the Wilderness** - Read Mark 1:12-13. What story does Jesus' temptation remind you of? How does that relate to what comes before it and after it?

3. **The 2 Angels in the Empty Tomb** - Read John 20:11-15. Draw what Mary would have seen in that moment. Does that look similar to anything in the Old Testament?
  
4. **Following the Father Up the Mountain** - Read Gen. 22:1-14. What elements of the story of Abraham and Isaac remind you of another key story in the Bible?
  
5. **Which Way?** - There is a common thread regarding direction through key passages in the Bible. See if you notice them (Gen. 3:24; Gen. 4:16; Gen. 11:2; Gen. 13:11; Gen. 29:1; Gen. 32:22; Num. 3:38; Ezek. 43:4; Ezek. 47:1; Ezek. 44:2; Acts 3:2;).
  
6. **Original Sin** - The first sin was an isolated incident but does it also contain a pattern that we see more often? Read the original sin passage (Gen. 1:31; 3:1-13) and see if you see how additional passages connect (Gen. 16:1-13; Ex. 32:1-10; Josh. 7:1, 20-21; 1 Sam. 10:20-27; 2 Sam. 11:2-4; Luke 22:3; Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:32-42).

**Genesis 1:31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**3** Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" **2** And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, **3** but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" **4** But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

**8** And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" **10** And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." **11** He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" **12** The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." **13** Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

**17** And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;