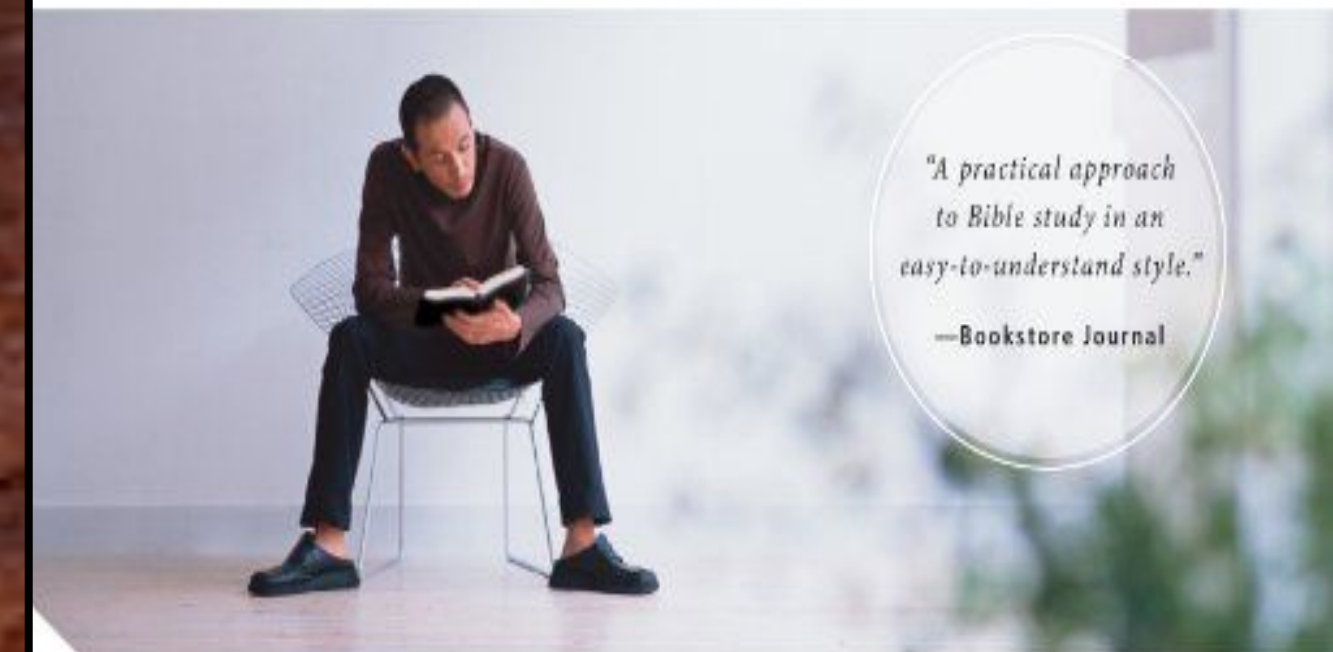


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FOURTH EDITION

# How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth



*"A practical approach  
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Gordon D. Fee  
Douglas Stuart



# How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth

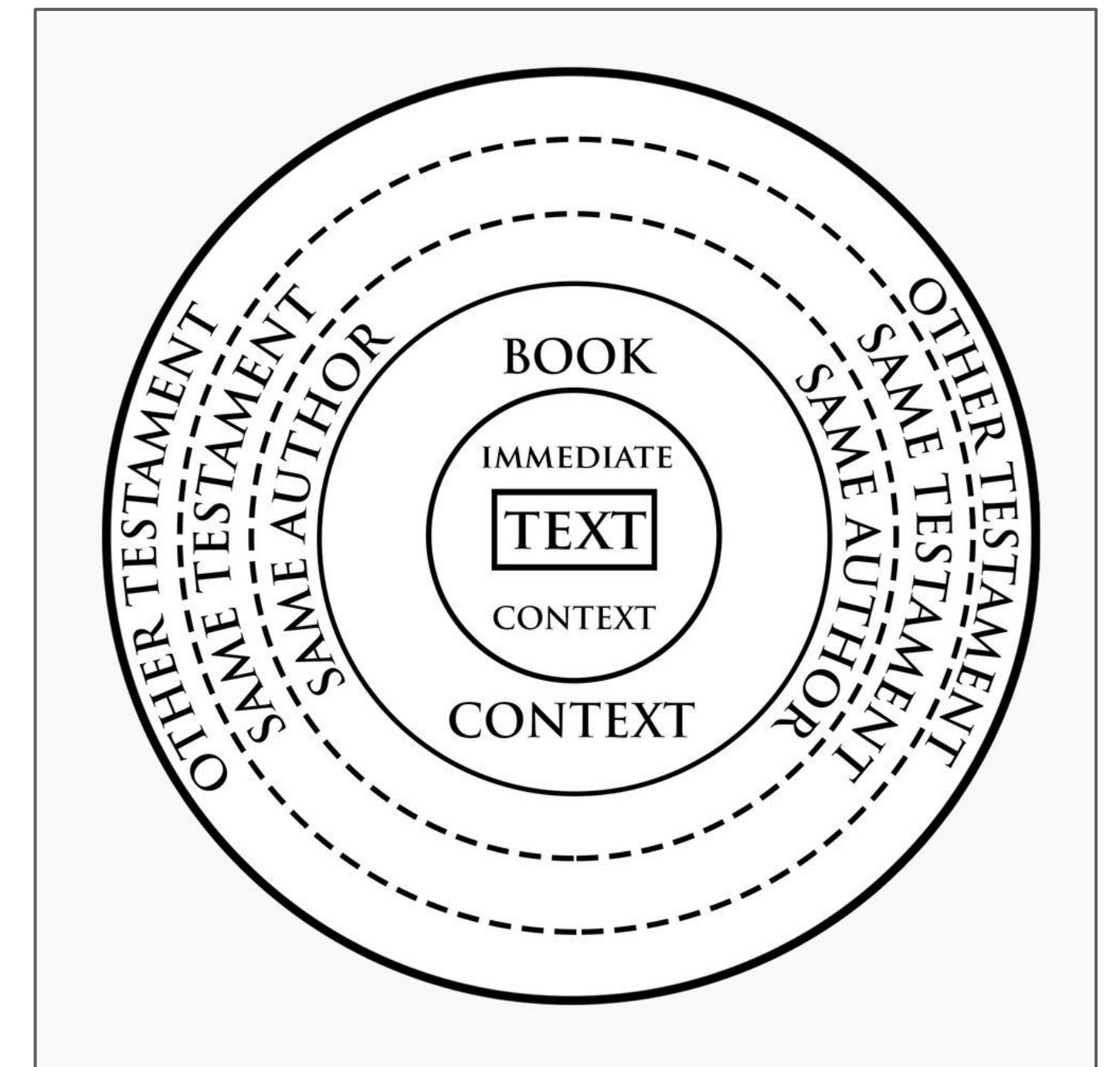
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An 8 week introductory study with  
classroom participation

Week 3: Literary Genre: **Hebrew Narrative**

Week 2: *RECAP: The Tool Kit: Exegesis and Hermeneutics*

- We must attempt to hear the Word as the original recipients were to have heard it
- Only then can we seek an application of what author wrote to the “*here and now*”
- Context drives meaning
- **S.T.O.P.**



Prepared by Pastor Ted Rathman and Todd Frehafer  
with the grateful assistance of Table Group Leaders

# Hebrew Narrative - Old Testament

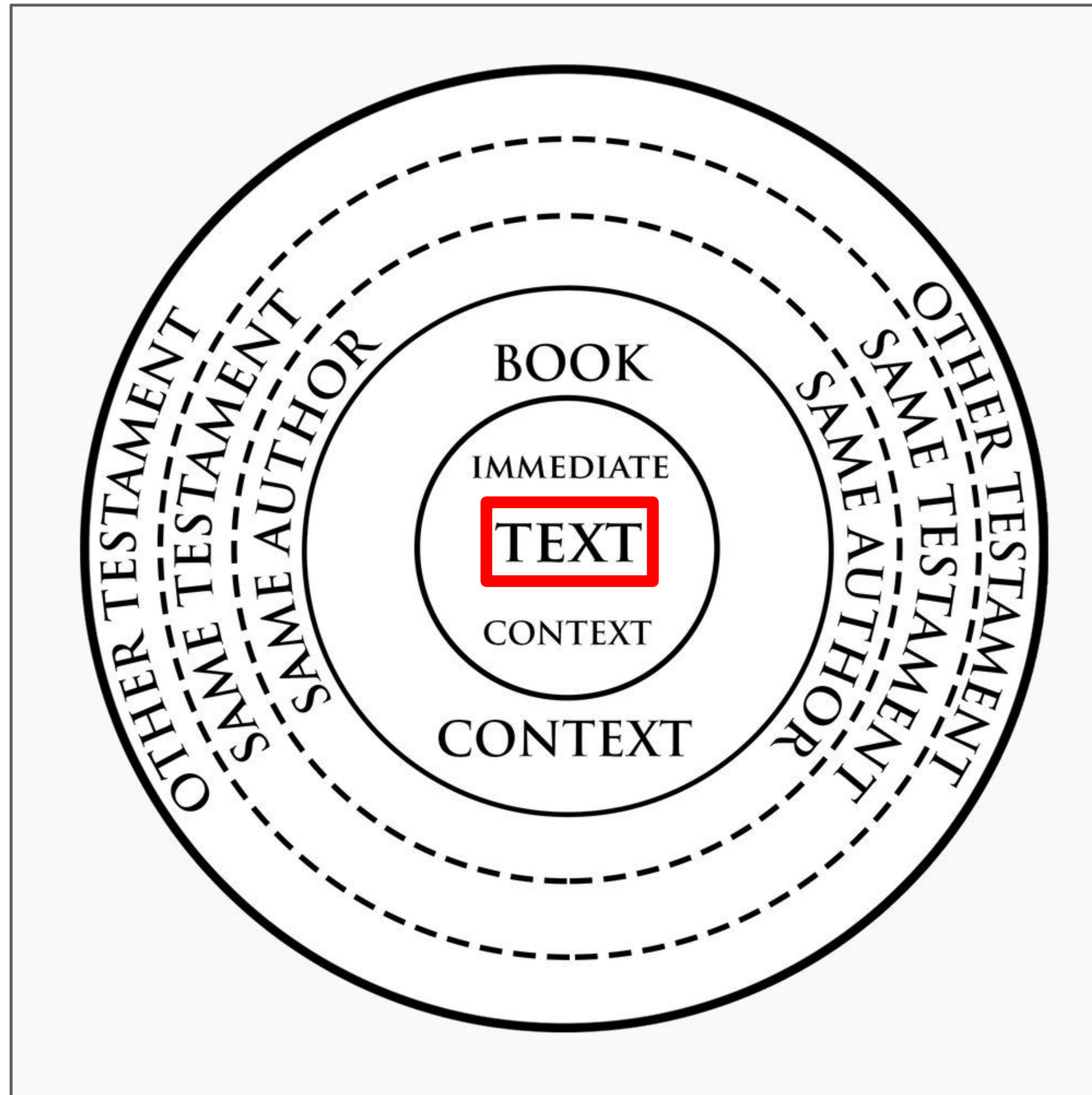
40% of OT

Old Testament Narratives are **selected** stories retelling the *historical* events that are intended to give meaning and direction to a given people in the *present*. These select stories were chosen to demonstrate God's faithfulness to His promises and His sovereignty over human history.

- Genesis, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, Jonah, Haggai.
- Also significant portions of Exodus, Numbers, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Job contain narrative portions.



# The Concentric Circles of Bible Interpretation



Identify smallest (minor) literary units  
Paragraphing is already provided in most translations.

- Epistles and Hebrew Narrative: paragraph
- Poetry: strophe or stanza
- Proverb: overall theme encircling individual proverb
- Prophecy: entire oracle
- Gospel: paragraph (narrative); elsewhere one teaching session, parable, theme

# Three Levels of OT & NT Narrative

1. **Metanarrative:** Creator God has created a people for His name—“in His own image”—who were to be stewards over His earth. But an enemy appeared who persuaded the people to take his “image” instead, and so became God’s enemies. The plot resolution is the long story of “redemption”, how God rescues us from our enemy, restores us to fellowship in His image now, and ultimately in the New Heaven and Earth. Story of Mankind.
2. **Second Level Narrative:** God redeeming a specific people for His name through covenant blessings, promises, and fulfillment—initially with the nation of Israel, and later through the covenant of His Son with all believers—Jew or Gentile! Story of Israel and the Church.
3. **First Level Narrative:** All the hundreds of individual narratives that comprise the other two levels. Story of Individuals.

# Hebrew (OT) Narrative Characteristics

## 1. Narrator

- a. controls the Point of View (e.g. author, character(s), God)

## 2. The Scene(s)

## 3. The Character(s)

- a. God is ultimate character in the narratives
- b. Often appear in contrast (e.g., Cain/Abel) or in parallel (John Baptist/Elijah)
- c. Predominant mode of characterization occurs in the characters' words and actions, not in the narrator's own descriptions

## 4. Dialogue

- a. Provides clue to character of the speaker, often by contrasting dialogue
- b. Narrator occasionally repeats dialogue for emphasis of crucial parts of story

## 5. Plot

## 6. Structure

- a. Repetition of key words or patterns
- b. Inclusion: Beginning and conclusion of story share similarities (chiasm)



# 1 Samuel 1:1-28 “Hannah’s Story”

## 1. Narrator

- a. POV: Author (1-7, 9-10,12-13,19,21,24-25)
- b. POV: Elkanah (8,23)
- c. POV: Hannah (11,15-16,18,20,22,26-28)
- d. POV: Eli (14,17)

## 2. Scenes: Ramah, Tabernacle at Shiloh

## 3. The Characters: LORD, Hannah, Eli, Elkanah, Penninah

## 4. Dialogue

- a. Elkanah & Hannah (8,20,22-23)
- b. Hannah to LORD (11-13)
- c. Eli & Hannah (14-18,26-28)

## 5. Plot - Hannah is childless, Hannah prays persistently for a son, Samuel is born

## 6. Structure

- a. Key Words - LORD (26); Hannah (11); son/s (10); Eli (7); maid-servant (5)

- A. Hannah has no child
- B. Sacrifice to LORD
- C. Elkanah speaks to Hannah
- D. Hannah asks LORD to remember her
- D. LORD remembers Hannah
- C. Elkanah speaks to Hannah
- B. Sacrifice to LORD
- A. Hannah has a child

# What The Hebrew Biblical Narratives Are NOT:

1. Not allegories or stories filled with hidden meanings
  - Avoid mythologizing, decontextualizing, cherry-picking words or phrases to the exclusion of the overall story
  - In contrast with other ancient cultures' concepts of time—endless cyclical turning of season to season—the view of OT narratives is time is linear and history progresses through a meaningful and coherent drama toward an end
2. Not intended to explicitly teach moral lessons
  - Primary role is to relate how God has acted in Israel's history
  - Implicit teaching of right and wrong that is stated explicitly elsewhere
3. Not your personal story—**No Bible narrative was *specifically written about you***



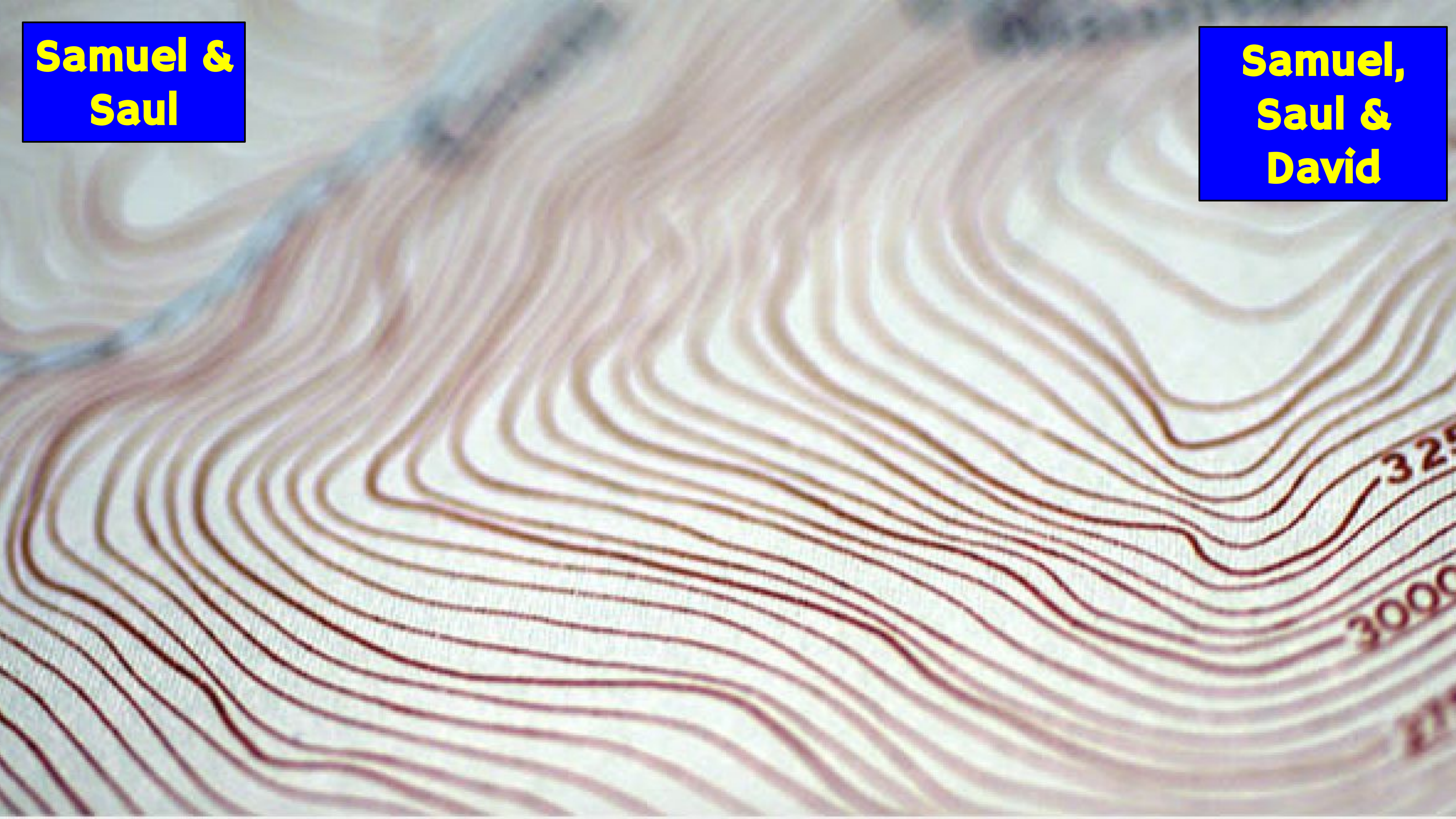
# Principles for Interpreting Hebrew Narratives

1. **Paragraphs** rollup to Larger Literary Units (Scenes)
  - Narrator POV, Characters, Setting, Dialogue, Plot, Structure
2. Author expects reader to have read entire book and be familiar with previous Scripture
3. Usually does not directly *teach* doctrine (e.g. epistles)
  - Narratives may teach implicitly by illustration what is elsewhere taught explicitly
4. Narratives record what happened, not necessarily what *should* have happened
5. ‘What people do’ is frequently NOT ‘what is morally good’ for us to do
6. All narratives are selective and incomplete
  - Everything related is what the author thought was important for us to know
7. Narratives are not written to answer all our theological questions
8. **God is the ultimate hero of all biblical narratives**



**Samuel &  
Saul**

**Samuel,  
Saul &  
David**





**Larger Literary Units**

**Samuel,  
Saul &  
David**

**Samuel Anoints David**

**David & Goliath**

**Saul enters Saul's Service**

**Saul turns against David**

**Saul marries Saul's Daughter**

**David makes covenant with David**

**Saul & Jonathan quarrel over David**

**Jonathan makes consecrated Bread**

**David takes the priests at Nob**

**Saul slays the priests at Nob**

**David rescues city of Keilah**

**Saul continues to pursue David**

**David spares Saul's life**

**Samuel dies**



# Assignment for Week 4

Read the Book of Joel (Old Testament Prophecy)



# Today's Table Group Discussion-**Hebrew Narrative**

**The Anointing of David**

**1 Samuel 16:1-13**

# **Week 3**

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**



# 1 Samuel 1:1-28 Paragraphing (Hannah's son)

NASB95

<u>Paragraph</u>	<u>Verses</u>	<u>Paragraph Summary</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	1-2	<b>Hannah</b> has no children	Ramah
2	3-8	The second wife mocks <b>Hannah</b> for being childless	Shiloh tabernacle
3	9-11	<b>Hannah</b> prays for a son and makes a vow to LORD	Shiloh tabernacle
4	12-18	Eli prays for sorrowful <b>Hannah</b> to have a child	Shiloh tabernacle
5	19-20	<b>Hannah's</b> continual prayer answered. Samuel born	Ramah
6	21-28	<b>Hannah</b> dedicates Samuel to the LORD	Shiloh tabernacle

Key Words - LORD (26); Hannah (11); son/s (10); Eli (7); maid-servant (5)

	Date	Book(s)	Historical Events	Key Theological Markers
Pre-history		Genesis 1-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation</li> <li>• Fall</li> <li>• Flood</li> <li>• Babel scattering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation blessing</li> <li>• Adam Covenant</li> <li>• Seed blessing</li> <li>• Shem blessing</li> </ul>
Patriarchal Era	2160-1876 B.C	Genesis 12-50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call of Abraham</li> <li>• Four generations from Abraham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covenant with Abraham: <i>Heirs</i> and <i>Land</i></li> <li>• Judah blessing</li> </ul>
Egyptian Captivity and Exodus	1876-1446 B.C.	Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moses</li> <li>• Plagues</li> <li>• Exodus</li> <li>• Law</li> <li>• Wanderings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God remembers and redeems: <i>Mosaic Law &amp; nation of priests</i></li> <li>• Substitutionary Atonement</li> </ul>
Conquest and Judges	1406-1050 B.C.	Joshua, Judges, and Ruth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canaan conquered</li> <li>• Cycle of apostasy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulfillment of land promise</li> <li>• Chaos without king</li> </ul>
United Monarchy	1050-931 B.C.	1, 2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1–11; 1 Chronicles–2 Chronicles 9; Wisdom Lit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saul, David and Solomon</li> <li>• Israel's "Golden Age"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covenant with David: <i>eternal kingdom</i> and <i>eternal dynasty</i></li> <li>• Judah blessing</li> </ul>
Divided Monarchy	931-586 B.C.	1 Kings 12–2 Kings; 2 Chron. 10–36; Hosea, Micah, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah 1–26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division of Israel from Judah</li> <li>• Conquest of Israel (722 BC) and Judah (586 BC)</li> </ul>	<p>Prophets predict God's temporal judgment and future promise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Davidic King</li> <li>• Day of the Lord</li> <li>• Servant of the Lord</li> </ul>
Exile and Resettlement	586-400 B.C.	Jeremiah 27–52, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judah in Babylon for 70 years</li> <li>• God restores a remnant in Judah; rebuilds Jerusalem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Covenant</li> <li>• Revelation of the future of human history</li> <li>• Triumph of God's kingdom</li> </ul>



### The Tribal Allotments of Israel (Joshua 13-19)



### The Kingdom of Saul (1 Samuel)





# Samuel and David in Comparison

## The First Kings of Israel

1 Samuel 11-20

	Saul	David
Appearance	Handsome and tall (1 Sam. 9)	Handsome (1 Sam. 16:12)
Chosen	God (1 Sam. 9:16, 10:24)	God (1 Sam. 16:7,12)
Anointed	Samuel (1 Sam. 10:1)	Samuel (1 Sam. 16:13)
Background	Father had donkeys	Father had many sheep
Command	Leader of Israel's army (1 Sam. 10-31)	Fought for Saul and then united all Israel (1 Sam. 17-20; 2 Sam. 1-5)
Power	Faltered by looking to the people for power and approval (1 Sam. 13; 15)	Looked to God (Acts 13:22)
Sins	Sins were public and driven by insecurity about his kingship and emotion about keeping the people's respect (1 Sam. 13:15; 22)	Sins were private and driven by desires and lust as well as loyalty to family loyalty and over the law (2 Sam. 11-15)

from "The Jeremiah Study Bible" by Dr. David Jeremiah