

Message

Title: How To See More In Scripture Reading the Bible Differently

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“The Bible isn't meant to be an easy read — it's meant to be a deep one. Slow down and God will show you more.”

Introduction

This week, pick one short passage of Scripture, read it slowly more than once, and ask the Holy Spirit why your attention is being drawn to what's different.

Have you ever read a passage of the Bible, closed it, and thought, "I honestly have no idea what I just read"?

We love an easy read — the kind of book you take on holiday. But the Bible rarely presents itself that way. Sometimes it's hard because it challenges our opinions, and sometimes it's hard because we genuinely don't know what's going on. In this message, Pastor Sam O'Connell hands us two practical tools — parallelism and symmetrical patterning — that help us notice what the biblical authors are deliberately drawing our attention to, and pairs them with the practice of hagah: sitting with Scripture, chewing it over, and asking the Holy Spirit why.

Scripture was written out of a culture that didn't just value wisdom, but valued the journey of getting there — the experience, the wrestling, the thinking. In a world where we consume everything at 1.5x speed, God is inviting us to slow down. Whether it's the two parallel lines of Psalm 33:6 or the pattern of creation broken by rest on the seventh day in Genesis 2, God is saying something. Learn how to see it, and you'll see more of Him: more of His nature, more of His will, more of what He has done for you.



Scripture

Psalms 33:6 — By Yahweh's word, the heavens were made;
all their army by the breath of his mouth.

Genesis 1 — In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was formless and empty. Darkness was on the surface of the deep and God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters.

God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

God saw the light, and saw that it was good. God divided the light from the darkness.

God called the light "day", and the darkness he called "night". There was evening and there was morning, the first day.

God said, "Let there be an expanse in the middle of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

God made the expanse, and divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.

God called the expanse "sky". There was evening and there was morning, a second day.

God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.

God called the dry land "earth", and the gathering together of the waters he called "seas". God saw that it was good.

God said, "Let the earth yield grass, herbs yielding seeds, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with their seeds in it, on the earth"; and it was so.

The earth yielded grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, with their seeds in it, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.

There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs to mark seasons, days, and years;

and let them be for lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth"; and it was so.

God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He also made the stars.

God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light to the earth,

and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good.

There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

God said, "Let the waters abound with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the sky."

God created the large sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind. God saw that it was good.

God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."



There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

God said, “Let the earth produce living creatures after their kind, livestock, creeping things, and animals of the earth after their kind”; and it was so.

God made the animals of the earth after their kind, and the livestock after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind. God saw that it was good.

God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

God created man in his own image. In God’s image he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them. God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

God said, “Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree, which bears fruit yielding seed. It will be your food.

To every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the sky, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food;” and it was so.

God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

Genesis 2:1-3 — The heavens, the earth, and all their vast array were finished.

On the seventh day God finished his work which he had done; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done.

God blessed the seventh day, and made it holy, because he rested in it from all his work of creation which he had done.

Don't Miss This

- **Difficulty Is Part Of The Design:** Scripture came out of a culture that treasured not just wisdom, but the journey to wisdom — the experience and thought it takes to get there. The Bible asks something of us on purpose. The work isn't a barrier to understanding; it's the path to it.
- **Two Lines, One Picture: Look For Parallelism:** Biblical poetry often places two similar-but-not-identical ideas side by side. J.P. Fokkeman compares it to a pair of eyes — each gives a slightly different angle, and together they create depth. In Psalm 33:6, God 'merely spoke' and 'breathed the word'; the heavens were 'created' and the stars were 'born'. Spotting the difference is step one; asking why is where the depth lives.
- **When The Pattern Breaks, Pay Attention:** Symmetrical patterning lulls us into a rhythm and then changes it to grab our attention. Genesis sets up create, create, create, create, create, create — and then day seven: rest. The story could have ended at day six. It didn't. God is deliberately pointing us towards Sabbath, and that's worth sitting with.



Let's Chat

1. Sam confessed to watching videos at 1.5x speed — even a message from a close friend. Where in your life are you rushing through something that deserves your full attention?
2. Read Psalm 33:6 slowly, a few times. What differences do you notice between the two lines, and why do you think God wanted both there?
3. The creation account could have ended on day six, but day seven exists. Why do you think God drew our attention to rest, and what does that say about how He sees us?
4. What makes the Bible feel like a 'hard read' for you — is it that it challenges your opinions, or that you're not sure what's going on? Be honest.
5. What would it practically look like for you to 'hagah' this week — to sit, hold and chew over one piece of Scripture rather than racing through a reading plan?

