

9. *The Bible as a Story not just a Holy Book*

There are many genres of literature within the 66 books, and letters of the Bible

Try to match the list below with Bible stories or books:

- Horror (graveyard scenes/witchcraft), demons and devils (I Sam 28:1; Jn 11:31; Rev 12:3)
- War
- Travel log (Acts)
- Romance
- Family saga
- Giants, and dwarfs, and dragons (2 Sam 21:20; Is 27:1)
- Detective (Js 7; 14-24)
- Recipe/cooking
- DIY
- Legal drama
- Laws
- Poems
- Letters
- Power plays and intrigue in government, conspiracy
- Clothing and *haute couture* instructions
- Family sagas
- Biographies
- Pride prejudice and treason
- Building and rebuilding accounts
- Star Wars Sci Fi (Rev 12:7)
- UFOs (2 Kings 2:11)
- Wise sayings and proverbs
- Medical dramas
- Fables parables, stories within stories
- Fishing and hunting stories (Mt 17:27)
- Spy (Josh 2:1)
- Generational clash
- Culture wars
- Rags to riches, commoners in the palace
- Boats and shipwrecks
- Races
- Assassinations
- Animal stories
- Farm stories

The Bible is many stories. There is the story before Genesis in heaven where a sector of heaven rebel against God, and the period before angels are created. We are part of the Second Book of Acts, our deeds and biographies are recorded in the book of heaven. The series of stories reel onwards. The bible stories are not in chronological order, time switches in the differing sections.

God has placed eternity in our hearts and a desire to understand the real story of reality (Ecc 3:11). Whether we choose evolution, or scientific socialism, or the Bible story- it is up to us.

Our overarching story is that of paradise lost, of a destruction of harmony in heaven through rebellion that finds expression on earth through the fall. In this epic battle between good and evil a hero, a saviour is promised. Humans are not alone fighting the occupied planet. Satan may hold key tactical positions of power and influence and wage successful campaigns down the march of history, but those allied to the hero-savior are active and guaranteed that the cause of God will enjoy a triumph. There are lots of plots and sub plots in the saga of planet earth, creation itself cries out in the pain of this titanic struggle of a powerful but mortally wounded foe against a seemingly weaker bride of the hero.

The Author has written in a part for you as a teacher, you have been placed deliberately in the geography and time zone you now occupy. He has gathered around you a select group of students to influence in terms of eternity and now. Your life as well as your words forms the contours that shape the lives about you.

To make sense of today's news in the media and what is happening about your school community these students must understand the overarching story, *the metanarrative*. The Bible is somewhat like all the instruments of an orchestra, all play differing tunes, and adding contributions all manner of colours and dimensions. But a master score directs and shapes each individual instrument and each section into a whole unity which is the symphony. The symphony relentlessly builds towards the concluding resounding finale and the coda a summation of preceding themes, motifs, and emotions.

Our students need help to link their lessons, their lives, the school community and the news of the day, into this structure so they don't absorb the postmodern philosophy which sees it all as unrelated and meaningless. Such a view sees reality as personal and denies the validity of our overarching story.

Jesus was the master story teller, he chose this mechanism not song or art or tableaux of law, nor a philosophical treatise to convey the truth. Let's follow his way and get our students to delight in all the genres of literature in the Bible and not lose THE STORY amongst all the stories. And let's not let our students be passive readers titillated by tales, let them understand that with their lives they are writing valiant and proud pages into THE STORY too - a story that is not just written in palaces and high places of power but in the very fabric of our suburbs and countryside.