



THE **weird** BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Series Guide



This guide is designed to help you stay connected to each week's message beyond Sunday morning. For five days after each message, you'll find a short reading and a question or two to help you reflect, pray, and consider how the message might take shape in your life.

Our hope is simply that it gives you an easy way to keep the conversation going with God throughout the week.

Law, Blah, Blah

The Old Testament law can feel strange, outdated, or even troubling. But what if we're asking it the wrong questions? In this message, we explore why God gave Israel the law, why grace actually came before the rules, and how understanding the ancient context changes the way we read some of Scripture's strangest commands. Rather than simply asking, "Do Christians still have to follow this?", we'll learn how the law reveals God's priorities, forms God's people, and ultimately prepares the way for Jesus.

Message memories for Sunday, October 18:

Day 1 – Grace Comes First

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.” EXODUS 20:2

Before God gave Israel a single command, he reminded them of what he had already done for them. He rescued them first. The law did not make them God’s people; it taught God’s people how to live.

God’s law was never an entrance exam. Grace came first.

Consider:

Where are you most likely to think you have to earn God’s acceptance?

How does it change obedience when it grows out of belonging rather than trying to earn it?

Pray:

God, thank you that your grace comes before my obedience. Help me trust that I do not have to earn my way into relationship with you. Teach me to follow you from a place of gratitude, trust, and belonging. Amen.

Day 2 – The Mirror

“Through the law we become conscious of our sin.”

ROMANS 3:20

The law can be like a mirror. A mirror can show you the smudge on your face, but it cannot clean it off.

In the same way, God’s law helps us see what is wrong, but seeing the problem is not the same as solving it. The law helps us recognize our need for something (and someone) beyond ourselves.

Consider:

What has God used to help you see something in yourself that needed to change?

Why can recognizing what is wrong be an important part of spiritual growth?

Pray:

God, give me the humility to see myself clearly. When your Word exposes something in me that needs attention, keep me from becoming defensive or ashamed. Use what you reveal to draw me toward your grace and toward the person you are forming me to become. Amen.

Day 3 – Context Matters

Read Deuteronomy 22:8 (the roof railing command).

A command to put a railing around your roof sounds strange until you learn that ancient roofs were flat and commonly used as living space. The point was not really about architecture. It was about responsibility. If your choices could put someone else in danger, take responsibility to protect them.

Sometimes the Bible seems weird because we are reading someone else's world as though it were our own.

Consider:

Why can it be dangerous to pull a Bible verse out of its original setting.

How might asking, "What was this doing for them?" change the way you read difficult passages?

Pray:

God, slow me down when I read parts of Scripture I do not understand. Give me curiosity instead of quick conclusions and humility to learn about the world these words were first spoken into. Help me hear what you were teaching your people through them. Amen.

Day 4 – **Behind the Law Is the Lawgiver**

Read Leviticus 19:9-10 (the unharvested edge command).

Israel was told not to harvest every last bit from their fields. They were to leave some behind for people who did not have enough.

Most of us do not have fields to harvest, but the law reveals something larger: God cared about how his people treated the vulnerable and organized their lives around the needs of others. Behind every law is the lawgiver.

Consider:

What does the law reveal about what matters to God?

What might caring for vulnerable people look like in your own life today?

Pray:

God, help me look beyond the surface of your commands to see your heart beneath them. Form me into someone who loves my neighbor, notices vulnerable people, and considers how my choices affect others. Let your priorities increasingly become mine. Amen.

Day 5 – Read It on the Way to Jesus

Read Romans 3:20 again.

The Old Testament law gave God's people categories like sin, holiness, sacrifice, atonement, forgiveness, and covenant. Those ideas later became part of the language the New Testament uses to explain Jesus.

Not every Old Testament law is a command Christians are meant to copy. But every part of the Old Testament belongs to the story Christians can learn from. So be curious. Learn their world before forcing the text into yours. And most importantly, read it on the way to Jesus.

Consider:

How does knowing that the law prepares the way for Jesus change the way you approach it?

Why might we need to be more careful before saying, "The Bible says..."?

Pray:

God, thank you for the long story that leads to Jesus. Give me patience with the parts of Scripture that confuse or trouble me. Help me understand what they reveal about you, your people, and your purposes. And let everything I learn lead me toward greater faithfulness to Jesus. Amen.

Why All the Blood?

Why does the Old Testament contain so much blood? In this message, we explore why sacrificial blood mattered in Israel's relationship with God and why it meant more than violence or death. From the covenant at Sinai to the sacrificial system and finally to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, blood becomes a symbol of belonging, life, atonement, and God's provision. The difficult parts do not have to become comfortable, but they can become more understandable as we see a consistent story: God moves toward his people, provides a way for relationship to be restored, and ultimately points us toward Jesus.

Message memories for Sunday, October 25:

Day 1 – Why Does This Feel So Strange?

Read Leviticus 1:3-5.

For most of us, blood means something has gone wrong. We associate it with injury, danger, and death. And because most of us are far removed from animal slaughter, the sacrificial system of the Old Testament can feel especially disturbing.

That discomfort is worth noticing. Sometimes understanding Scripture begins by admitting how foreign its world feels to us.

Consider:

What about the Old Testament sacrificial system feels most unsettling or strange to you?

How might our modern distance from blood and the deaths of animals affect the way we read these passages?

Pray:

God, help me to be honest about the parts of Scripture that feel strange or uncomfortable. Give me patience to understand a world very different from my own, and keep me from dismissing what I do not immediately understand. Teach me to approach difficult passages with humility and curiosity. Amen.

Day 2 – Blood Means Belonging

Read Exodus 24:7-8

After God rescued Israel from Egypt, Moses used sacrificial blood to mark the covenant between God and his people.

It is a strange scene to us, but blood could represent relationship, family, and belonging. And the order matters: God rescued Israel first. The covenant did not earn the relationship; it marked a relationship God had already begun.

Consider:

Why does it matter that God rescued Israel before establishing the covenant?

How does belonging to God before proving yourself change the way you think about faith?

Pray:

God, thank you that your relationship with your people begins with your grace and initiative. Help me stop treating faith like something I must earn. Teach me to live from the security of belonging to you, and let that belonging shape the way I follow you. Amen.

Day 3 – Blood Means Life

“For the life of a creature is in the blood...” LEVITICUS 17:11

We often associate blood with danger and death. Leviticus emphasizes something different: blood represents life.

And God says he gave blood as a means of atonement. The sacrificial system was not Israel trying to persuade a reluctant God to forgive. It was God providing a way for broken relationship to be addressed and restored.

Consider:

How does thinking of blood as a symbol of life change the way you hear these Old Testament passages?

What does it tell you about God that he provides the means of restoration?

Pray:

God, thank you that restoration begins with your provision rather than my ability to fix everything myself. Help me see your desire for relationship beneath practices that can feel foreign to me. Teach me to recognize your grace even in places I might otherwise overlook it. Amen.

Day 4 – **God Provides a Way Back**

Read Exodus 12:12-13

At Passover, blood marked the homes of people protected from death. Elsewhere, blood marked covenant and atonement.

These are different events, but together they tell a similar story: when God's people need rescue, restoration, or a way forward, God provides.

Consider:

Where have you experienced God providing a way forward when you could not create one yourself?

How does God's initiative change the way you think about grace?

Pray:

God, thank you that you are not distant from people who need rescue. You move first, you provide what is needed, and make restoration possible. Help me trust your grace when I cannot see how things can be repaired from my side. Amen.

Day 5 – The Blood of the Covenant

Read Matthew 26:26-28

At the Last Supper, Jesus used words that echoed Exodus: “This is my blood of the covenant.” Jesus took imagery Israel had known for generations and applied it to himself. But this time, the sacrifice was not an unwilling animal. Jesus willingly gave his own life.

What begins in the Old Testament as a difficult story about blood ultimately points Christians toward a God who gives himself to restore relationship with us.

Consider:

How do Jesus’ words at the Last Supper change the way you understand the earlier covenant and sacrificial imagery?

What does it tell you about God that the story ultimately moves toward self-giving love?

Pray:

Jesus, thank you for willingly giving yourself to bring us near to God. Help me see the larger story running through Scripture: a God who initiates relationship, provides restoration, and gives himself in love. When I do not understand every part of the story, keep leading me toward you. Amen.

Your One and Only Son

Genesis 22 is one of the Bible's most disturbing stories: God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, the son he loves and the son through whom God had promised a future. Rather than explaining away the horror, this message wrestles honestly with the story, considers Abraham's ancient world, and asks what happens when one troubling moment becomes our entire picture of God. As Christians, we keep reading and ultimately look to Jesus, the clearest picture of who God is.

Message memories for Sunday, November 1:

Day 1 – It's Okay to Be Troubled

Read Genesis 22:1-2.

Genesis 22 is difficult because it should be. God's command to Abraham is disturbing, and understanding the ancient world does not make everything about the story comfortable.

Faith does not require pretending difficult parts of the Bible are easy. We can ask questions, admit what troubles us, and keep seeking understanding.

Consider:

What part or implication of this story is most difficult for you?

What happens to faith when we believe we are allowed to be honest with God about what bothers us?

Pray:

God, give me the courage to be honest with you about the parts of Scripture I struggle to understand. Keep me from pretending that difficult questions are easy, and give me patience to sit with tension while continuing to seek you. Amen.

Day 2 – The Promise in Isaac

Read Genesis 22:5-8.

Isaac was more than Abraham's beloved son. He was also the child through whom God had promised Abraham a future.

That makes Abraham's situation even more confusing. In one hand he held God's promise; in the other, something that seemed to contradict it. And yet Abraham continued forward saying, "God himself will provide."

Consider:

Have you ever experienced a season when God's promises and your circumstances seemed difficult to reconcile?

What does trusting God look like when you do not yet understand what he is doing?

Pray:

God, there are times when what I experience does not seem to fit what I believe about you. Meet me in those moments. Give me faith that is honest about confusion while still remaining open to what I cannot yet see or understand. Amen.

Day 3 – Don't Freeze the Story

Read Genesis 22:11-14

If we freeze Genesis 22 with Abraham's knife in the air, we get one terrifying picture. But that moment is not the end of the story. God stops Abraham, Isaac is spared, and God provides the sacrifice.

One frame can be real without being the whole story. And the same can be true of how we understand God.

Consider:

Have you ever taken one difficult experience or Bible passage and allowed it to define your entire picture of God?

What might change if you kept reading rather than freezing the story here?

Pray:

God, help me resist building my entire understanding of you from one moment I do not understand. Give me humility to keep reading, keep learning, and keep seeking the fuller picture of who you are. Amen.

Day 4 – Look at Jesus

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” JOHN 14:9

For Christians, Jesus is the clearest picture we have of what God is like. In Jesus we see a God who moves toward people, welcomes children, loves the overlooked, forgives enemies, and gives his life rather than taking the life of another.

When Scripture leaves us confused about God, Christians keep reading until we get to Jesus.

Consider:

What does Jesus show you about the character of God?

How does looking at Jesus affect the way you approach difficult passages elsewhere in Scripture?

Pray:

Jesus, help me know God more clearly by looking at you. When other parts of Scripture confuse me, keep your life, love, mercy, and sacrifice at the center of how I understand God. Form my picture of God around the one you reveal. Amen.

Day 5 – The Lord Will Provide

“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all...” ROMANS 8:32

Isaac is spared. Jesus is not. But Jesus makes clear that his life is taken willingly: “I lay it down of my own accord.” The Christian story is not about finding something valuable enough to offer God. It is about God moving toward us and giving himself for us.

Abraham named that place, “The Lord Will Provide.” Christians look to Jesus and say he has, he does, and he will again.

Consider:

How does Jesus change the way you understand what God ultimately asks of us and what God gives for us?

Where in your life do you need to remember today that one difficult moment is not the end of the story?

Pray:

God, thank you that you have shown us your heart most clearly in Jesus. When I cannot understand what you are doing, keep me close to what I know of your character. Help me trust that you are still at work, that you are faithful to your promises, and that you provide what I could never provide for myself. Amen.

Don't Touch That!

Why was Uzzah killed for touching the Ark when the Philistines mishandled it and lived? In this message, we look at one of the Old Testament's strangest stories and discover how knowledge changes responsibility. But knowing more about God isn't dangerous. The message of Jesus doesn't create the danger, it announces the rescue. And through Jesus, a holy God has made himself approachable without ever becoming ordinary.

Message memories for Sunday, November 8:

Day 1 – God Is Not Ordinary

Read 2 Samuel 6:6-7

Uzzah's story is disturbing, but the larger context shows that touching the Ark was only the final mistake in a much longer chain. Israel had been given clear instructions for handling something they believed represented God's holy presence.

The story reminds us of something easy to forget: God may be approachable, but God is not ordinary.

Consider:

What does it mean to you that God is holy?

Has familiarity with God ever made it easier for you to take him for granted?

Pray:

God, remind me of who you are. Thank you that you invite me close, but keep me from becoming so familiar with you that I forget your holiness. Restore wonder, gratitude, and reverence in the way I worship and follow you. Amen.

Day 2 – What You Know Matters

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded.” LUKE 12:48

Jesus taught that greater knowledge brings greater responsibility. The more we understand, the more responsibility we have for what we do with it.

But responsibility does not have to mean fear. Knowing more about God gives us more opportunities to live differently because of what we know.

Consider:

What has God taught you that now carries some responsibility with it?

Where might knowing more need to become doing something differently?

Pray:

Jesus, thank you for everything you have taught me and for the people who have helped me know you better. Keep my knowledge from becoming merely information. Give me wisdom and courage to live differently because of what I know. Amen.

Day 3 – Good News Is Still Good News

“How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?” ROMANS 10:14

If ignorance were ultimately safer than knowing God, then telling people about Jesus would be a terrible thing to do.

But Jesus never treated knowing him as dangerous information. The message of Jesus does not create the danger. It announces the rescue.

Consider:

Do you tend to think of the message of Jesus primarily as a warning or as good news?

What makes Jesus genuinely good news to you?

Pray:

Jesus, thank you that knowing you is not something to fear but a gift to receive. Help me understand your message as genuinely good news, and let that good news shape the way I speak about you and share your love with others. Amen.

Day 4 – When Familiarity Takes Away the Wonder

“Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy.” PSALM 99:5

Sometimes the people most likely to take God for granted are the people who know the most about him. We can hear sermons, sing songs, pray, and say things like, “Jesus died for me,” so often that extraordinary truths begin to sound ordinary.

Through Jesus, a holy God has come close. But close does not mean common.

Consider:

What truth about God have you heard so often that you may have stopped feeling its weight?

What might help restore a sense of wonder in your relationship with God?

Pray:

God, forgive me when familiarity causes me to lose my sense of wonder. Remind me of the weight of your grace, the cost of your love, and the extraordinary gift of being invited into relationship with you. Help me never confuse your nearness with ordinariness. Amen.

Day 5 – What Are You Doing with What You Know?

“Do not merely listen to the word... Do what it says.”

JAMES 1:22

Maybe the most important question is not, “How much do I know about God?” but “What am I doing with what I know?”

If you know grace, are you becoming more gracious? If you know forgiveness, are you becoming more forgiving? If Jesus is good news, does your life increasingly look like you believe it? Knowledge becomes a gift when it changes us and then moves through us toward others.

Consider:

What is one thing you know about God that needs to shape the way you live more deeply?

Where would someone see the good news of Jesus through your life this week?

Pray:

God, thank you that you have made yourself known to me. Do not let what I know remain in my head. Make me gracious because I have received grace, forgiving because I have been forgiven, and generous with the good news I have received. Let knowing you continue changing who I am. Amen.

The Prayer You're Not Supposed to Pray

Psalm 137 contains one of the most disturbing prayers in the Bible: a traumatized exile wishing horrific violence on the children of his enemies. Why would God preserve a prayer like this? In this message from *The Weird Books of the Bible*, we discover how context and genre change the way we read Psalms, and why God doesn't require us to clean up our anger, grief, or vengeance before bringing it to him. You can tell God exactly what you feel without doing everything you feel.

Message memories for Sunday, November 15:

Day 1 – Genre Matters

Read Psalm 137:1-3.

Psalm 137 is not a command from God telling people what to do. It is a prayer of anguish from someone who has lost their home, community, safety, and freedom.

It does not make every line of prayer good. But it does help us understand where it came from.

Consider:

Why does it matter what kind of writing we are reading in the Bible?

How does understanding the psalmist's story change the way you understand Psalm 137?

Pray:

God, give me wisdom as I read Scripture. Help me pay attention to context, genre, and the people behind the words. Keep me from rushing to conclusions, and teach me to listen carefully before deciding what a difficult passage means. Amen.

Day 2 – Tell God the Truth

Read Psalm 13:1-2.

The Psalms are full of people saying things to God that do not sound polished or religious. They are angry, afraid, confused, grieving, and sometimes furious.

Prayer is not where you pretend those feelings aren't there. Prayer is where you bring them.

Consider:

What emotion are you most prone to hide from God?

What would it sound like to pray honestly instead?

Pray:

God, thank you that I do not have to clean up my emotions before I come to you. You already know what I am angry about, afraid of, and carrying. Give me courage to tell the truth instead of pretending I am fine. Amen.

Day 3 – **Feel It Without Becoming It**

Read Psalm 137:8-9.

The psalmist wants Babylon to experience the same horror Babylon caused them. The feeling is real, but the psalm does not show the writer carrying it out.

You can tell God exactly what you feel without doing everything you feel. Prayer can become a place where we hand God what should not stay in our hands.

Consider:

What feeling do you need to give God rather than act on?

How can prayer create space between what you feel and what you do?

Pray:

God, when my emotions are strong, help me bring them to you before they control me. Give me honesty without impulsiveness, and help me trust you with the things I am not equipped to carry well on my own. Amen.

Day 4 – What Do We Do with Our Enemies?

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” MATTHEW 5:44

Jesus does not pretend enemies are imaginary. He assumes there will be people who hurt us.

Loving an enemy does not mean calling evil good, removing consequences, or giving unsafe people access to your life. But it does mean refusing to become evil in response to evil.

Consider:

Who is hardest for you to think about with grace right now?

What might it look like to pray for that person without pretending what happened was okay?

Pray:

Jesus, when I am hurt, keep my pain from turning me into someone I do not want to become. Help me tell the truth about what happened, pursue what is right, and still refuse hatred and revenge. Teach me how to love without denying reality. Amen.

Day 5 – Give the Pain Somewhere to Land

“Do not take revenge... leave room for God’s wrath.”

ROMANS 12:19

Psalm 137 shows us someone taking their ugliest thoughts and putting them in front of God. Prayer is not passivity. It is giving pain, anger, and the desire for justice somewhere to land without letting those things consume us.

What you are feeling may be true to you, but it does not have to become true of you.

Consider:

What would an uncensored prayer from you sound like today?

What are you carrying that you need to place in God’s hands?

Pray:

God, I bring you the parts of me I would rather hide. Take my anger, grief, fear, and desire for justice. Help me trust you with what I feel, and give me the courage to let Jesus shape what I do next. Do not let my pain decide who I become. Amen.

Once For All

What if God is not grading your performance or waiting for you to finally get your act together? This week, we explore the New Testament phrase, “once for all” and what it means for the finished work of Jesus. Hebrews and Romans describe Jesus’ death as a complete and unrepeatable sacrifice that frees us from endless trying to earn God’s approval. Grace does not make sin meaningless; it changes why and how we respond to it. Whether you have followed Jesus for years, struggle with guilt or spiritual performance, or are still trying to understand what Christianity claims Jesus accomplished, this message invites you to rest in a grace secured by Jesus’ finished work.

Message memories for Sunday, November 22:

Day 1 – A Permanent High Priest

Read Hebrews 7:24-27.

Israel's priests had to offer sacrifices again and again. Jesus is different. Hebrews describes him as a permanent high priest who offered himself once for all.

Our relationship with God does not depend on continually proving ourselves worthy. Jesus has already done what we could never do for ourselves.

Consider:

Where are you most tempted to feel as though you need to earn God's approval?

How does knowing Jesus' work is permanent change the way you approach God?

Pray:

Jesus, thank you for being the one who has done for me what I could never accomplish on my own. Help me stop relying on my performance to secure what you have already given. Teach me to draw near to you with confidence because of your finished work. Amen.

Day 2 – **Eternal Means Eternal**

“He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.” HEBREWS 9:12

Jesus did not secure temporary forgiveness that expires the next time we fall. The author of Hebrews calls it eternal redemption. That means grace is stronger than our repeated failures, and forgiveness does not have to be continually re-earned.

Consider:

Do you tend to think of God’s forgiveness as permanent or something you repeatedly lose?

What would change if you really believed your standing with God rests on Jesus rather than your latest success or failure?

Pray:

Father, thank you for the complete forgiveness Jesus has made possible. When guilt tells me I need to earn my way back to you, remind me that my redemption is not temporary. Help me live from the freedom of being forgiven instead of the fear of losing your love. Amen.

Day 3 – Jesus Sat Down

Read Hebrews 10:11-14.

The Old Testament priests stood day after day because their work was never finished. But after offering himself for sin, Jesus sat down. That small detail tells a big story: the work is finished.

We do not have to live as though salvation is an unfinished project that depends on our performance.

Consider:

Where does faith sometimes feel like another performance you have to maintain?

What might it look like for you to “sit down” and rest in what Jesus has already accomplished?

Pray:

Jesus, thank you that your work is finished. Forgive me for turning faith into another place where I measure my performance and worry about whether I have done enough. Teach me to rest in what you have accomplished and let gratitude, rather than anxiety, shape the way I follow you. Amen.

Day 4 – **Grace Changes Us**

Read Romans 6:1-4.

If grace covers our sin, Paul anticipates an obvious question: why not just keep sinning? Because grace does more than forgive us. It begins changing us.

Following Jesus is not about behaving well enough to stay accepted. It is learning to live differently because we are already accepted.

Consider:

What is the difference between obeying God to earn his acceptance and obeying because you already have it?

Where is grace inviting you not only to receive forgiveness, but also to change?

Pray:

God of grace, thank you that your forgiveness is not permission to remain unchanged. Free me from both guilt and complacency. When I fall, help me receive your grace, turn toward you again, and allow your love to reshape the way I live. Amen.

Day 5 – God Is Not Disappointed in You

“God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” JOHN 3:17

The message began with a figurine labeled, “Jesus is disappointed in you.” But the gospel tells a very different story.

Jesus comes to save, not condemn. His work was accomplished once for all. Confession still matters. Not because we need to convince God to forgive us again, but because grace frees us to repent, repair what we can, forgive others, and keep becoming more like Jesus.

Consider:

When you imagine God looking at you, do you picture disappointment, love, or something else?

How might believing that you are already loved and forgiven change the way you respond when you fail?

Pray:

Father, thank you that Jesus came to save rather than condemn. When I fail, keep me from hiding in shame or trying to bargain my way back into your favor. Help me receive your forgiveness, honestly face what needs to change, make things right where I can, and live with the freedom of knowing that your grace has already made a way for me. Amen.