

The Bible can be a dangerous book in two ways:

*It can be used justify what we want to believe, and then to coerce and hurt others so they conform to our will.  
Or it can be allowed to speak to us in ways that rock our status quo and inspire us to grow.*

## Why is the Bible so hard to read and understand?

It is 1000s of years removed from us in TIME.

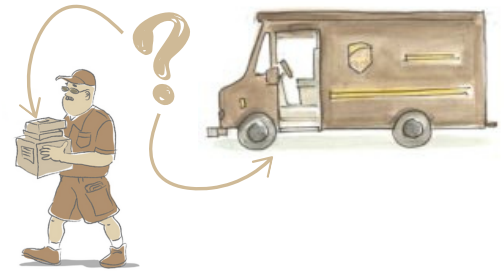
It is far removed from us by LANGUAGE. It uses Hebrew and Greek that have been dormant for nearly 2000 years.

It is far removed from us by CULTURE.

The Bible never meant to be SCIENCE or HISTORY in the ways we understand them today.

## Tools that will help you read and understand the Bible.

- When you are stuck, something feels off, nothing makes sense ASK A BETTER QUESTION of what you are reading.



- Don't get distracted by the VEHICLE, focus on the CARGO.

- The Bible is composed of...  
...UNIVERSAL TRUTHS that we are to absorb and apply

...but mostly the APPLICATION of them that we are to learn from how they did it, and consider what it means for us today.

- Use the WHOLE to interpret the PART, not the PART to interpret the WHOLE.
- Watch for the BIGGER message, as well as the SMALLER point.
- If reading the Bible creates FEAR within you, try looking at what you are reading differently, and re-evaluate the resources or people steering you. *Remember what the angels kept saying, "Do not be AFRAID!"*

**HOMEWORK:** Here are 3 Bible readings to spend some time with this week.

Use **S.O.A.P.** Read the **Scripture** passage. Then **Observe**. Read again, make notes, write in your Bible and in your journal.

Next **Apply** what you found to your life or our world. Use compassion and curiosity not judgment and guilt.

Finally, **Prayer**. Sit with the reading and your thoughts. There may be words you want to speak, things you want to ask, or just be.

Here are the 3 readings, the first is long, the rest aren't. **1. Genesis 6.5-9.17** **2. Psalm 40** **3. Matthew 16.13-20** *Have fun!*