

An open book with its pages fanned out, creating a large, textured, golden-brown shape. The text 'Greatness GOD'S WORD' is overlaid on the book. 'Greatness' is written in a cursive script, and 'GOD'S WORD' is in a bold, serif font. The entire image has a warm, golden-brown color palette.

Greatness
GOD'S WORD

Grasping GOD'S WORD

For the message of the cross is foolishness **(intellectually weak)** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power **(potential for functioning)** of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." **(Is. 29:14)** ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the

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world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the

Exalting GOD'S WORD

weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

²⁶ Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-- and the things that are not-- to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so

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that no one may boast before him. ³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." 2:1 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ

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and him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. (1 Cor. 1:18-2:5, NIV)

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Greatness
GOD'S WORD

Review - How To Read Paragraphs

- General and specific (“live by the Spirit” – fruit)
- Questions and answers
- Dialogue (conversation between Jesus and Peter)
- Purpose statements (“God so loved that he gave”)
- Means (“by the Spirit put to death the misdeeds of the body”)

Review – How to Read Paragraphs

- Conditional clauses (if ... then)
- Actions/roles of people and actions/roles of God
- Emotional terms (“I plead with you brothers”)
- Tone (“You foolish Galatians!”)

How to Read the Book—Discourses

- Introduction
 - The Bible is more than a random collection of unrelated words and disconnected sentences.
 - The Bible is a story with themes that run through paragraphs to form discourses.

How to Read the Book—Discourses

- Introduction
 - “Discourse” – a unit of connected text larger than a paragraph
 - We need to see not only the smallest details, but also the larger patterns and themes.

- Things to look for in discourses:

- Connections between paragraphs and episodes
 - Repeated words or themes
 - Logical connections (e.g., cause and effect)
 - Characters and their actions
 - Time sequence
- Story shifts: major breaks and pivots
 - Where does the story take a new turn?
 - Where does the topic change?
 - Does a verb change signal a break?
 - Do you see a pivotal episode in a longer story?

- More things to look for in discourses:

- Interchange
 - Is there a switch back and forth between two stories?
 - Is the author trying to contrast or compare the characters in the two stories in some way?
- Chiasm

A I got up this morning,

B got dressed

C and drove into town.

D I worked hard all day,

C' returned home,

B' put on my PJs

A' and went to bed.

• Review

- Interpreting and applying the Bible is like a *journey*.
- A *river of differences* separates us from the biblical audience—culture, language, time, situation, and covenant.
- We begin to build a bridge across the river by discovering what the text meant to the biblical audience.

• Review

- This calls for careful *reading and observation* of sentences (Chapter 2), paragraphs (Chapter 3), and discourses (Chapter 4).
- What if we bypass observation and move straight to application?
- To hear from God in clear and exciting ways, we must look carefully at what God communicated and not put words in his mouth.



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³ Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city-- a visit required three days. ⁴ On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." ⁵ The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶ When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself

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with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ⁷ Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. ⁹ Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." ¹⁰ When God saw what

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they did and how they turned from their evil ways,
he had compassion and did not bring upon them
the destruction he had threatened. (Jonah 3:3-10,
NIV)

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Jonah and the Ninevites (3:3b-10)

- a** Yahweh's judgment announced (3:3b-4)
- b** people repent with fasting and wearing sackcloth (3:5)
 - (c word reached the king [3:6a])
 - d CENTER:king repents (3:6b)
- (c' word goes out from the king to people [3:7a])
- b'people commanded to repent with fasting and wearing sackcloth (3:7b-9)
- a Yahweh's judgment canceled; he relents and spares the city (3:10)

An open book with its pages fanned out, creating a sense of depth and texture. The pages are a warm, golden-brown color. Overlaid on the book is the text "Greatness GOD'S WORD" in a stylized, white, serif font. The word "Greatness" is written in a cursive-like style, while "GOD'S WORD" is in a more formal, all-caps serif font. The text is positioned diagonally across the center of the book.

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