



Bible reading guide.

CONNECT.BELONG.DISCOVER.INFLUENCE

Berean Club.



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations for taking this worthwhile step to join The Berean club where we Endeavour to read the entire Bible in one year.

The Berean Club takes its name from Acts 17.10–12. When Paul and his companions arrived in Berea in the north-east of the Greek peninsula, he visited the Jewish synagogue in that town. While listening with interest to Paul's message of good news about Christ, the Jews examined their (Old Testament) Scriptures daily to see whether those Scriptures supported Paul's claims.

In the same spirit, the Berean Club encourages a spirit of open inquiry around the Scriptures, as God's message to us.

If an individual Christian or a congregation is to grow, it is essential for them to be biblically literate. The Berean Club aims to fulfil this function by a thoughtful and informed approach to the Bible and the Christian faith.

Pastors Boniface & Geraldine

What is the Bible?

The Bible is the Word of God revealed and recorded in a collection of books written over centuries. It is a collection of 66 books, divided into the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament consists of 39 books, which were written in Hebrew and Aramaic and range from Genesis to Malachi. The New Testament consists of 27 books, written in Greek and Aramaic and runs from Matthew to Revelation.

The human nature of the Bible means that it was written by men. Its divine nature means that although it was written by men, it was inspired by God Himself. Thus, it is the divine Word of God in every sense.

The word "Bible" originated from Greek, referring to books. In ancient times, papyrus (the plant from which the fibers were extracted) came to be used for writing, in place of stone. On the sheets created from papyrus, texts were written and stored in the form of rolls or parchments. Each papyrus book, in Greek, was translated as "biblos", and the plural of "biblos" was "bible".

From this originated the Bible, as the set of sacred books. Before the term "Bible" was widely used, this collection of books was more often called "The Holy Scriptures"

How was the Bible written?

The Bible was written over the course of more or less 1,600 years (from 1500 BC to mid-100 AD) in different languages, by approximately 40 authors, at different times, with varying literary styles and genres.

Despite all this diversity, all the books testify in their unity about the Saviour of mankind, the Lord Jesus Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible points to God in the person of Christ.

We can understand the Bible as a great narrative that has a central plot and other secondary stories that serve as images or figures to point to the main core: The great story of God and his love for mankind.

The Bible has a central theme, to which everything converges and which consists of one person: Jesus Christ. From Genesis to Revelation all the books point to God, in the person of Jesus Christ, the author of the Salvation of men (Luke 24:27, 44-45; Acts 10:43).

Characters and stories served as shadows or illustrative figures of the love of God, the life and work of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps the believer understand the Word of God by guiding them to the Truth (John 16:13).

Bible formation

The Bible is originally made up of 66 books accepted as being inspired by God.

These 66 books correspond to the 39 books of the Old Testament, and the 27 books of the New Testament.

The Bible is the Word of God revealed to mankind:

You have been regenerated, not of a perishable seed, but imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

(1 Peter 1:23)

The books of the Old Testament are the sacred books of the Jews written in Hebrew. Only a few small passages were written in Aramaic. The books of the New Testament, on the other hand, were those written in Greek already in the Christian era, after the ministry of Christ. In addition, we can enjoy all the richness of figures, stories, poetry, illustrations, parables, and a vast amount of historical characters that inspire faith, understanding, and the teaching of God's righteousness through the sacred letters.

The Catholic and Orthodox Bibles have a different amount of books than the Protestant Bible. This is because these traditions began to consider and include in the Old Testament some books and texts that were included in the Septuagint. However, these books do not appear in the original Hebrew Old Testament canon. Like the Jews, the Reformed Church did not consider them to be inspired.

However, the Catholic and Orthodox Bibles also have the 66 books that make up the Protestant Bible. As for the translation of these Bibles, there is no really significant difference.

Although the Bible is the most read and sold book in the world, many read and quote it without even understanding its central message. To understand the content of the Bible, one must examine it carefully. Furthermore, one must keep in mind that its entire message points to the person of Jesus Christ.

Division and Organisation

The Old Testament tells the story of the period before Christ. The New Testament records events from the birth of Jesus onward. The books of the Old and New Testaments are also classified by their characteristics and subject matter. Besides respecting a "book by book" narrative, the Bible was grouped by literary styles, as follows: the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Poetical Books, the Major Prophets, the Minor Prophets, the Gospels, the History of the Early Church, the Epistles - or Letters - and Revelation or Apocalypse.

See the organization of the Bible in the table below:

The Bible - 66 Books

Old Testament - 39 Books

Pentateuch - 5 books

Histories- 12 books

Poetic - 5 books

Prophetic - 17 books

New Testament - 27 Books

Gospels - 4 books

Histories - 1 book

Letters - 21 books

Apocalypse - 1 book

- **Pentateuch:** From the Greek pentateuchos, meaning 'book of five volumes' - is composed of the first 5 books of the Bible. These are part of the Torah, the Book of Law for the Jews. They are all arranged in chronological order. They are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

- **Historical Books:** This set consists of 12 books that tell the history of the Nehemiah and Esther.

- **Poetical Books:** these are the books containing poetry and a collection of various wisdom counsels (from Job to Song of Songs).

- **Books of Prophecy:** record the messages given by God about the future of His people. Their writers were men He chose as His spokesmen on earth (Isaiah to Malachi).

- **Gospels:** already in the New Testament, these books tell the biography and ministry of Jesus (from Matthew to John).

- **New Testament Historical Book:** Only one book belongs to this category: Acts of the Apostles. This book records the early years of the Christian Church. It details how the Gospel was spread rapidly throughout the East.

- **Epistles:** these are letters written by Church leaders. These men were raised up by God to teach the Lord's Church. These letters contain the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith (from the Epistle of Romans to the Epistle of Jude).

Who wrote it?

Everything recorded in the Bible was inspired by the Spirit of God. This means that there is not a more inspired part and a less inspired part. Even though the Bible contains several authors, the source of all of them was the Holy Spirit.

Thus, God Himself is the primary Author of the Holy Scriptures. "First of all, know that no prophecy of Scripture comes from personal interpretation, for prophecy never originated from human will, but men spoke from God, prompted by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:20-22).

According to scholars, about 40 people wrote the biblical books in an approximate period of 1600 years between the first and the last writer - from Moses to John the Evangelist.

Despite so many books written and few connections between its writers, the Bible proves to be inerrant and infallible.

The Bible is unitary, harmonious and coherent. It explains itself, proof of how perfect and powerful are the words recorded there. Only the power of God is able to accomplish such a perfect and inexhaustible work.

In the Bible we can find the answer to the great questions raised by man throughout his existence.

The books of the Bible were put together in a very organic way and occurred in two moments, one for the compilation of the Old and another for the New. As the Old Testament was being written, the Writings were being compiled and understood as the Word of God. This happened from the first writings of Moses, to the last ones with Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. The historian Josephus and the Jewish teachers understood it this way, that until these last prophets God was speaking, but after them God ceased.

As for the compilation of the New Testament, the writings of theologians of the first centuries list the books accepted as canonical. Some lists differ, containing one more or one less, but two lists stand out because they contain exactly the books as we have them today, they are the documents: Athanasius' Thirty-Ninth Easter Letter, representing the eastern part of the church; and the Council of Carthage, representing the churches of the west.



Reading plan.



Reading Plan

There are numerous types of Bible reading plans available today. But before you decide where to start, remember that the most important thing is to dedicate yourself to knowing and pursuing the knowledge of God and His Word (Hosea 6:3).

There is no specific rule on how to read the Bible, because each reader has his or her own particularity. But it is common for people to seek some help in order to improve their Bible reading. In this sense, some basic rules can be very helpful in this task. Besides, many people don't know exactly where to start reading the Holy Bible. So in this text we have prepared a series of special tips on how to read the Bible.

Some people prefer to read the Bible simply by the sequential order in which the books are arranged. Here it is important to know that the Bible books are not in chronological order. In fact, the exact chronology of the events described in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, is quite complex.

It is also worth knowing that, because it is a collection of 66 books, there are different literary genres. In the Bible you find historical books, books of prophecies, poetic books, Gospels and letters.

If you have never read the Bible, or are still getting acquainted with the biblical texts and stories, start by reading one of the four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Through this reading you will learn the story of the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He occupies a central place throughout the Bible and is the key to understanding what God wants to communicate to humanity.

The Bible was originally written in languages very different from English. Over the years, it has been translated into different languages and today the word of God can be read in more than 2,400 languages. The Bible in its entirety was not translated into English until the Middle English period, with John Wycliffe's translation in 1382. In the centuries before this, however, many had translated large portions of the Bible into English. Parts of the Bible were first translated from the Latin Vulgate into Old English by a few monks and scholars. Such translations were generally in the form of prose or as interlinear glosses (literal translations above the Latin words).

[4][self-published source?]

Very few complete translations existed during that time. Most of the books of the Bible existed separately and were read as individual texts. Translations of the Bible often included the writer's own commentary on passages in addition to the literal translation.

[4]Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne and Abbot of Malmesbury (639–709), is thought to have written an Old English translation of the Psalms.

Bede (c. 672–735) produced a translation of the Gospel of John into Old English, which he is said to have prepared shortly before his death. This translation is lost; we know of its existence from Cuthbert of Jarrow's account of Bede's death.

[5]In the 10th century an Old English translation of the Gospels was made in the Lindisfarne Gospels: a word-for-word gloss inserted between the lines of the Latin text by Aldred, Provost of Chester-le-Street.[6] This is the oldest extant translation of the Gospels into the English language.[6] The Wessex Gospels (also known as the West-Saxon Gospels) are a full translation of the four gospels into a West Saxon dialect of Old English. Produced in approximately 990, they are the first translation of all four gospels into English without the Latin text.

[4]In the 11th century, Abbot Ælfric translated much of the Old Testament into Old English. The Old English Hexateuch is an illuminated manuscript of the first six books of the Old Testament (the Hexateuch).

The choice of which version of the Bible you use will affect the quality of your study, because each person has a different level of understanding.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO STUDY THE WORD OF GOD.

- 1-The Sword Method
- 2-Character Study
- 3-Write Out Verses From The Bible
- 4-Study A Book Of The Bible
- 5-Topical/Thematic bible study
- 6-Practical Study
- 7-Memorise Scriptures
- 8-Study Scripture Cross-References
- 9-Meditate On The Word
- 10-Word Study
- 11-Read Through The Bible

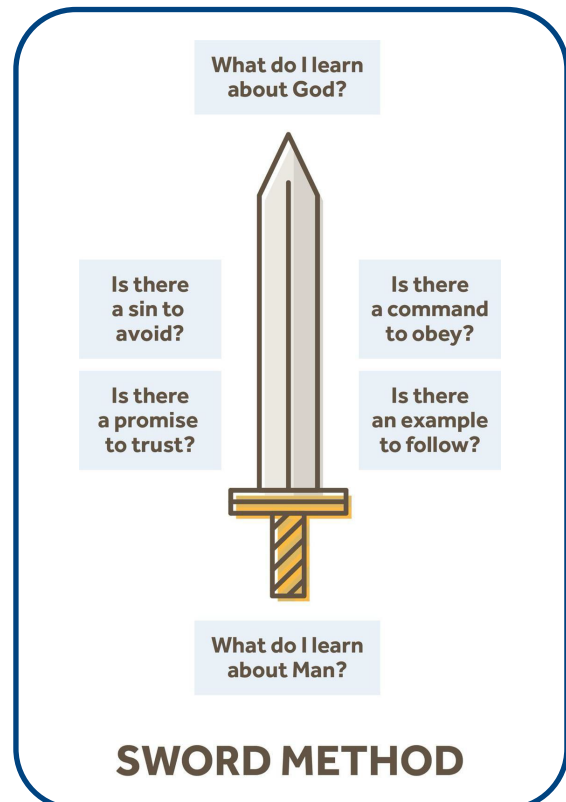
WHEN YOU READ THE WORD

- 1. PICTURE IT 2. PROCLAIM IT 3. PARAPHRASE IT 4. PERSONALISE IT

1. The Sword Method Of Bible Study

The Sword Method of Bible Study is a simple, but powerful way to study the Bible. You simply ask 3 questions that cover the 3 most important points. It can be applied to a single verse or multiple verses (for example, the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10).

The blade of the sword points upward toward heaven, so you ask "what do I learn about God in this passage?" Next, the handle of the sword points down toward man, so ask "what do I learn about people in this passage?" The 3rd question asks how we apply what we learned: "What does God want me to do?"



There are many variations of this type of devotional or observation Bible study. You might have seen different graphics or charts for Bible Study methods that emphasize different aspects of learning and applying the Bible. The important thing is to not get distracted by the tools. Highlighters, charts, acronyms are helpful if they help you engage with the Bible and apply it to your life.

Usually, it's best to go with a simple, reproducible method like the Sword Method.

It's simple and reproducible, so it can be used and taught by adults and children. It can be used to lead a small group Bible Study or discussion. Here are a few related questions you can branch off into. You can get an idea of how useful the 3 main questions are.

1. What does this passage teach me about God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?
2. What do I learn about mankind in general – How and why do people act, think, and feel the way they do? What do I learn about myself personally and why I act, think, and feel the way I do? Do I identify with anyone in the story and why?
3. Is there anything that God wants me to do according to this passage?
4. Is there a Sin to avoid? Is there a Promise to claim? Is there an Example to follow? Is there a Command to obey? (You can use the acronym: S.P.E.C. to remember the 4 questions related to what God wants you to do)

2. Character study

In a Character Study or Biographical Study, you look at one character in the Bible and draw out lessons from their life.

There are many to choose from – major characters like Abraham, Joseph, Deborah, Moses, Ruth, David, Solomon, Esther, Paul, and Peter. There are hundreds of other characters in the Bible that you can learn from.

In a character study, you are looking at how God relates to people and how people respond to God. You can observe and learn from the dealings of God in a person's life.

You can learn from both the positive and negative experiences in a person's life. Are there any interesting life lessons?

Were there any challenges that the person faced?

What were his or her biggest faults? Did they overcome them? How?

For example, the life of King David, the second King of Israel, is a fascinating study. He starts out as a shepherd boy who is faithful in the mundane things of this life, like taking care of a few sheep. God sees him as a man after His heart and chooses him to be king over all of Israel. Yet, it takes many decades before the full promise is fulfilled. Along the way, David has many triumphs and some really big stumblings.

Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

1 Cor. 10:11 (ESV)

The Bible is a combination of biographies, poems, songs, visions and dreams, letters, and history. The Bible is not written like a theological textbook. It's about how God relates to people in everyday life.

When you do a character study, you can delve into the life of one person in the Bible and learn valuable lessons to apply to your own life. You can find yourself in the story.

How to do a Character or Biographical Bible Study

1. Pick a character in the Bible.

2. Find out all the passages of the Bible where the person is mentioned.

Be careful of different people with the same name. A quick internet search or a Bible dictionary will be helpful. Study Bibles may have a concordance or index that can be helpful.

3. Make a timeline of their life if it's helpful.

What are the major events in that person's life? What kind of trials or temptations did they face?

E.g. For King David, it might be nice to map out the different seasons of his life and the different cities where those seasons took place: Bethlehem, Gibeah, Adullam, Hebron, and Jerusalem. These can be found in the books of Samuel and Chronicles.

4. What character traits do you notice?

What strengths or weaknesses of the person are highlighted in the Bible? Do they struggle with the same issue throughout their life? Do you notice any patterns? How did they overcome those trials or temptations?

5. What lessons can you glean from their life?

Can you find yourself in this story?

How can you identify with the character?

What can you apply to your own life? What does God want you to do?

Commit to obey. Ask God to empower your heart to obey.

Before we look at the next Bible study method, I want to share with you what I've found to have the most impact in the long-run when studying the Bible. It's not mainly about tools and techniques but the posture of the heart.

3. Write Out Verses From The Bible

Writing out a verse or several verses makes you slow down and think about the Scripture. It can give you a different perspective on the verse than just reading it alone.

Write it in your own handwriting. It can be on a lined sheet of paper. You can also get creative and write it in a different pattern. You can get colorful if you want to. You can doodle a little bit and draw small pictures if it helps you process the verse.

As you write the verse, ask yourself:

1. What words are my eyes drawn to?

2. What is the main subject?

3. What is the main verb?

Read the passage out loud several times.

Try reading it slowly. Try reading it quickly to get a sense of the structure.

Read it again as many times as you'd like.

I didn't include journaling as a separate way to study the Bible because that can apply to any of these different ways to study the Bible. But, a journal would be a great place to keep these.

Take the journal or paper you wrote the Scripture on and look at it throughout the day.

You can take a photo with your phone and set a reminder during your lunch break to look at it. Think about the verse and how you can apply it to your life.

To take it a step further, you can paraphrase or summarize the verse or passage in your own words. This makes you process and ask what the verse means even further.

You can also come up with a title for the verse or passage and write it at the top. It can be a phrase that summarizes what the verse is about, what you learned, or how you can apply it to your life.

4. Study A Book Of The Bible

Have you tried other ways to study the Bible and want to go deeper? Do you like to be challenged? Studying a book of the Bible, or doing a book-by-book study, is a great way to go.

Studying a book of the Bible is one of the more challenging ways to study the Bible because it involves a little bit of every method of Bible Study. It can involve studying themes, topics, characters, individual words, and cross-references.

A book study takes time and commitment, but it can also be the most rewarding! It's my favorite way to study the Bible because it takes me deeper and helps me wrestle with the text over an extended period of time. You might see many Bible verses in a whole new light when you read them in their context.

You might even find that some of your favorite verses mean something different than what you might have heard in the past.

If you take a verse out of its context, it can seem to mean something different than what the author intended. The advantage of a book study is that it helps you keep Bible verses in their context. You want to know what God is saying and not change its meaning.

What you will love about doing a book study of the Bible is that you usually end up where you didn't expect. I start out with a general idea of what I think the book means. Then I end up in a surprisingly different place at the end. Also, whatever book I studied last becomes my new favorite!

Studying the Bible one book at a time requires some time commitment. It can take anywhere from a few weeks to many months to study one book of the Bible, depending on the length and complexity of the book.

How to Study Books of the Bible

1. Make an outline of the book.
2. Look for keywords or phrases.
3. Identify the main themes, ideas, and key verses.
4. Look for the main applications.
5. Study the background of the book.

These steps don't have to be followed in the exact order. You can go back to any of the steps as your understanding of the book develops. As with any of the methods to study the Bible, enjoy the journey and the learning process.

The lessons you learn in Bible Study, and in life too, often come at unexpected times and in unexpected ways. Stay consistent and stay on track and you'll discover many jewels in God's Word along the way.

If it's your first time doing a book study, my recommendation would be to pick a book from the New Testament that's not too long, like the book of Philippians

5. Topical/thematic Bible Study

As you read the Bible, there might be some topics or themes that you're interested in going more in-depth into.

A Topical or Thematic Bible Study is a type of study that explores a theme or topic through the entire Bible.

How to do a Topical Bible Study

1. Choose a topic.
2. Look up every instance of that topic in the Bible.
3. Categorize and summarize your findings. Explore the differences, nuances, and connections in the verse

There are many theological or doctrinal themes in the Bible.

For example, how is Jesus both fully God and fully man. Theologians would call this the doctrine of the Incarnation. There are also topics like salvation, angels, or the nature of the church.

The topic can also be application-oriented.

What are the fruit of the Spirit? How do you develop passion for God? How can I forgive people who have hurt me and let go of the past? What does the Bible say about baptism in water? What is the purpose of prayer and fasting?

There are countless numbers of topics and themes in the Bible that you can pursue.

How is the color purple used in the Bible? What does the number "12" often signify?

Depending on the topic, it might be a study that takes an hour, or if it's a major theme like the End Times, it could take months.

The idea of a Topical or Thematic Study is to study what the Bible says about a topic or theme throughout the entire Bible and not just from one verse.

To do this, you can use tools like a Bible Concordance. Many Bibles, especially Study Bibles have at least a short index in the back.

How do you look up every instance of a topic or word?

A concordance is a great tool for this.

A Concordance is like an index at the back of a book.

For example, you can look up all the verses where the word "heaven" occurs in the Bible. Some Bibles have a concordance in the back, but they're usually very limited.

Some concordances are organized by topics, which would be perfect for a topical or thematic study.

Here's one that's online that I would recommend: [Torrey's Topical Textbook Online Resource](#).

TIP: Navigate using the alphabet at the bottom, not with the search bar at the top. If you wanted to study the topic of "heaven," click on the letter "H" then scroll down and choose the word "heaven."

It should take you to a screen that shows you the verses for the topic and subtopics: [Torrey's Topical Textbook Entry on "Heaven."](#)

You can look up each verse to study and compare (cross-reference) with other verses.

If the topical concordance doesn't have many results, or you want to study the verses on your own before you look it up in a topical concordance, you can use a standard concordance that looks up words, not topics.

The most widely used concordance is some variation of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, but most Bible apps or websites can do this easily using the search feature. Here's an example at [esv.org](https://www.esv.org) (you might have to create a free account to use the tool). [ESV.org Search on Heaven](https://www.esv.org).

6. Practical Study

A Practical Study is like a topical study of the Bible, but with a broader focus on applying it to your life. These are topics that entire books can be written on. For example, practical studies can dive into topics like prayer, discipleship, raising children, relationships, how to live out your faith in the workplace, and how to share your faith with others.

All the tips and tools like concordance resources that we looked at in Topical Studies would also be useful for a devotional/practical study.

The uniqueness of a practical study is the application of the truth from the Bible to our modern life.

It's mind-boggling to see how much of the Bible written about 2000+ years ago could apply to our modern-day life. Countless numbers of people have received God's wisdom and applied the truths of the Bible to their lives.

7. Memorise Scripture

I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11 (ESV)

Memorizing scripture is a great way to hide God's Word in your heart. Memorizing portions of the bible lets you think about the Bible verse any time of the day or night. You can start out with verses that are especially meaningful to you.

You can combine Scripture memorisation with many of the different Bible Study Methods like writing out verses in your own writing and meditating on the Word. These methods flow together well.

You can also memorize several verses or even chapters of the bible. This would be a more challenging goal, but also very rewarding.

There's great value in having the Bible always on your mind and ready to think about for yourself or to share with others (John 14:26).

8. Study Scripture Cross-references

Studying cross-references is looking up other places in the Bible that mention the same or similar ideas. This doesn't require as much time commitment as some of the methods we've looked at so far, but you can apply it to any verse or passage of Scripture you're interested in.

For example, there are four accounts of the Gospel, or Good News of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The writers of the Gospels cover a lot of the same events. Each reference might reveal a different detail or says it in a slightly different way that helps you understand the passage you're studying.

These cross-references will point you to the word, phrase, or idea in different parts of the Bible. You'll find that the Bible often interprets itself. For example, if you're reading a verse in Ephesians, you will find a lot of parallel passages in the book of Colossians. If you're in the book of Revelation, you'll find a lot of references to the book of Genesis.

These cross-references are often in the center column. Some Bibles have titles for sections added in and could list parallel passages. Reference Bibles, some reading Bibles and almost all Study Bibles will have cross-references next to the text of the Scripture.

If a Bible verse doesn't make sense, looking at the immediate context around the verse or looking up cross-references can often bring a lot of clarity. If you don't understand the verse right away, put it "on the shelf" and use one of the other ways to study the Bible. Memorise the Scripture so you can think about it. You can try meditating on God's Word and let the insight arise slowly.

Write your questions in a journal, not just the insights and applications. Ask God to open His Word to you. You'll find that many of these questions get answered eventually.

9. Meditate On The Word

To Meditate on God's Word is to ponder and dwell on the Scripture. It's a way to have the Word of God "dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16).

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Colossians 3:16 (ESV)

The Bible speaks more about meditating on the Word than studying it (Gen. 24:63; Josh. 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 119:23, 97). To study is to observe and gather facts, analyze them, and come to conclusions.

To meditate is to purposely stay narrowly focused on a short phrase or verse and ponder it deeply. Meditating on the Word is more like cooking a stew for many hours than a quick saute in a pan.

Meditating on the Word is not to get more information from the Bible, but to let even one word or phrase from the bible take hold of your heart and mind. There are many ways to meditate on the Word. We've looked at several of these earlier as these different ways overlap and are related to each other.

Ways to Meditate on the Word of God

1. Read the Word

Slowly read the Bible verse several times. Discover key phrases or words.

2. Write the Word

Write the entire verse at least once.

3. Memorize the Word

Having the verse in your mind and heart frees you up to not have to look for your place on the page.

4. Speak the Word

Gently speak it out loud several times. It can help you focus and process the verse.

5. Sing the Word

Sing the Bible? Yes! (Col. 3:16) Singing can unlock the heart and emotions. This has been an important part of many traditions in monasteries throughout history. It adds another dimension to meditating on God's Word.

6. Pray the Bible

Turn the Bible into a dialogue with God. Thank God for the truth that the verse is pointing to. Commit to obey and ask God to empower your heart to follow-through.

7. Picture the Bible

For example, when Jesus says that the Kingdom of God is like a Sower going out to the field to sow seed, picture the scene in your mind. What is God thinking, feeling, and saying?

All of these are ways to meditate on God's Word and be still in God's presence. Be sure to write down any insights and thoughts you had and ask God to give you more.

10. Word Study

A Word Study looks at the individual words and translations of the Bible text. For example, there are several different words in the original languages of the Bible that are usually just translated into one word, love, in the English translations. Another example is that there are more than 7 different Hebrew words for praise in the Old Testament. There are lots of opportunities for fruitful study if you know where to look.

To learn to do a Word Study properly takes a lot of time in learning at least the basics of the original languages that the Bible was written in. Fortunately, many translations of the Bible and Word Study tools are available, so you can gain many of the insights of Word Studies from these resources. Unless you're doing original research in theology or Biblical studies, these resources will serve you well.

3 Ways That You Can Benefit From Word Studies

1. Compare 2 or 3 different translations of the Bible. E.g. ESV, NKJV, and NLT
2. Use a Word Study resource like Vine's Concise Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words to look up particular words.

11. Read Through The Bible

This will be our approach this year. You can still incorporate all other methods that I have listed above.

Reading through the Bible is a great way to study it. Every page of the Bible reveals God's character, emotions, thoughts, and actions.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

When you read the entire Bible or large portions of it, you can get a big-picture overview of the Bible. Anytime you read the Bible, you'll know what part of the big picture it is in.

Pray before reading the Bible

While the Bible is a human book, it is also a divine book. This means that the Bible was written by men, but these men were used by God to write it.

The Holy Spirit revealed the Word of God to the biblical writers, and inspired them what God was imparting to them. Now, it is up to us, privileged readers of the Holy Scriptures, to pray to the Lord asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understanding.

Concentrate

The vast majority of people cannot concentrate satisfactorily in such situations. Moreover, reading the Bible is not the same as reading a novel or a science fiction book. So sometimes one may find it easy to read in certain places, but when it comes to the Bible, such ease may not apply.

Be Constant

Sometimes people start reading the Bible with a lot of enthusiasm, but as time goes by they get discouraged and put it aside. We live in difficult times, with many commitments, but we should understand that reading the Bible is hearing the voice of our God. This should be more than enough to keep us persevering and dedicated in our reading.

The Bible is its own interpreter

The Bible is its own interpreter! As much as there are difficult passages in the Bible, there are other passages that shed light on the difficult passages, helping us to understand what is being conveyed there.

Reading Benefits

Since we are talking about a long reading that may take a lot of time, but it can also bring a great deal of knowledge.

Believe me, the benefits you will get from reading the Bible every day, making it your routine, are many.

Your soul will be cleansed

Our inner being is constantly bombarded with images, sounds, and other distorted messages from the media, from people, or from our own memories and desires.

Thus, by reading the holy scriptures, you will have access to God's word, where it provides the counter-attack to the enemy's war to contaminate and capture our souls.

Has more wisdom

Know that as you discover how to read the Bible and put into practice everything you learn, you will not only become wiser about life, but you will find purpose.

In other words, you begin to think about what you should be doing in life and what is the best way to go about it right now.

For example, in the book of Psalms and Proverbs there are some very wise instructions for living.

For sure, the word of God is one of the best things that can be part of your body and your life as a whole.

Here are a few related questions you can ask yourself when reading the Bible .

1-What does this passage teach me about God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

2-What do I learn about mankind in general – How and why do people act, think, and feel the way they do? What do I learn about myself personally and why I act, think, and feel the way I do? Do I identify with anyone in the story and why?

3-Is there anything that God wants me to do according to this passage?

-Is there a Sin to avoid?

-Is there a Promise to claim?

-Is there an Example to follow?

-Is there a Command to obey?

(You can use the acronym: S.P.E.C. to remember the 4 questions related to what God wants you to do).

Old Testament

Initially, the Old Testament consists of 46 writings about the Jewish people, their history and their religion. In addition, it integrates the first part of the Christian Bible (before the birth of Jesus) and the entire Hebrew Bible, the Torah.

But far beyond the history of the Hebrew people, the Old Testament contains historical narratives and the pillars of Christianity and Judaism.

The Old Testament, also called the Old Covenant ,is the portion of the Bible that records the history of redemption in the period before the advent of Christ. This even explains the designation "Old Testament". The word "testament", from the Latin testamentum, translates the Greek word diatheke, which indicates a covenant, a pact or a contract.

The Old Testament was written over a period of approximately one thousand years, between the middle of the second millennium and the middle of the first millennium before Christ. The first book was probably written in about 1440 B.C., at the time of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.

Main Books

There are in the Old Testament, the books of the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), the Historical Books (Joshua, Judges, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, the Septuagint and the Vulgate), the Poetical and Sapiential Books (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom and Ben Sirach or Ecclesiasticus) and the Prophetic Books, of the early prophets and the minor prophets.

It is in the Prophetic Books, for example, that for many the arrival of Jesus Christ is predicted, as well as many other important predictions and prophecies for mankind as a whole.

Therefore, for Christians in general, the Old Testament is a must-read, among other things, for telling and narrating the trajectory of humanity before Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament records a history that goes from the beginning of time to the post-exile period, when the Jewish people rebuilt the city of Jerusalem that had been destroyed by the Babylonians. Obviously this means that there is a wealth of detail in the Old Testament accounts.

Specifically, the background of the Old Testament events was the Ancient Near East. The Old Testament stories took place in the regions of Mesopotamia, Syro-Phoenicia, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Palestine and the Anatolian Peninsula.

Therefore, due to all this scope, the Old Testament books were written in the most diverse contexts, such as: migrations, wars, defeats, victories, captivities, deliverances, restorations, etc.

BIBLICAL TIMELINE - THE BIG EVENTS

The God who created all things has knowledge of all things as well. So it is no surprise that in the Bible He provided insights into future events through His prophets and apostles.

The insights are sometimes crystal clear and at other times veiled in symbolism and mystery. Sincere Christians can debate the finer points and timing with great passion as long as they are able to leave the debate and have a nice lunch together. Keep in mind that when it comes to the essentials of the faith, end times prophecy is not something that Christians should part ways in disagreement. The essentials are that Jesus will return, the devil will be defeated, and humanity will face the final judgment of God. Based on our study of the Scriptures, the following timeline gives a glimpse into major events of the past and what is yet to come.

GENESIS

1st Book

Chapters

50

Verses

1.533

Author

Mosés

Date

1.400 b.C

The book of Genesis has sometimes been called the "seed-plot" of the entire Bible. Most of the major doctrines of the Bible are introduced in "seed" form in the book of Genesis. Along with the Fall of man, God's promise of salvation or redemption is recorded (Genesis 3:15). The doctrines of creation, imputation of sin, justification, atonement, depravity, wrath, grace, sovereignty, responsibility, and many others are addressed in this book of origins called Genesis.

Many of life's great questions are answered in Genesis. (1) Where did I come from? (God created us - Genesis 1:1) (2) Why am I here? (We are here to have a relationship with God - Genesis 15:6) (3) Where am I going? (We have a destiny after death - Genesis 25:8). Genesis is appealing to the scientist, the historian, the theologian, the homemaker, the farmer, the traveler, and the man or woman of God. It is a fitting beginning to God's story of His plan for mankind, the Bible.

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

Genesis 1-4. Moses describes the Creation of the Earth and all life forms on it.

Adam and Eve partake of the forbidden fruit and are driven out of the Garden of Eden. They have children. Cain kills Abel.

Genesis 5-11. Because of mankind's iniquity, God promises to flood the earth.

Noah obeys God's command to build an ark, and his family is saved from the Flood. Noah and his family multiply and fill the Earth. The Lord confuses the language of the people and scatters them over the Earth after they build the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 12-23. The Lord promises that Abram will become a great nation and that his seed will bless the Earth. Abram travels with his wife, Sarai, to Hebron and then to Egypt. The Lord makes a covenant with Abram. He changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah and promises them a son. Lot, Abraham's nephew, is spared in the destruction of Sodom. Sarah gives birth to Isaac in her old age. Abraham proves his faithfulness to the Lord by showing his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Genesis 24-26. The Lord guides Abraham's servant by choosing Rebekah as a wife for Isaac. Esau and Jacob are born. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob. The Lord renews the Abrahamic covenant with Isaac.

Genesis 27-36. Isaac gives the blessing of the firstborn to Jacob. Esau hates Jacob and plans to kill him. The Lord promises Jacob the same blessings given to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob serves Laban and marries his daughters, Leah and Rachel. The Lord appears to Jacob and changes his name to Israel. Jacob returns to Canaan and makes peace with Esau.

Genesis 37-50. Joseph is Jacob's favorite. Joseph dreams that his parents and brothers will honor him and submit to him. Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery and he is taken to Egypt. Potiphar's wife tempts Joseph and falsely accuses him. Joseph is thrown into prison. He interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker and then those of Pharaoh. Pharaoh makes Joseph a ruler in Egypt and Joseph prepares Egypt for the time of famine.

When Joseph's brothers go to Egypt, Joseph tests them and forgives them. Jacob's entire family goes to Egypt and Jacob blesses his sons. Joseph prophesies and dies in Egypt.

“Never take a leave of absent from the word of God.”







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