

Know Your Bible

HOW TO  
**MEMORIZE  
THE BIBLE**  
FAST & EASY



Shane Koller

# **How to Study the Bible**

Bible Study Guide for Beginners



Shane Keller

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# Introduction

Apostle Paul in the second letter he wrote to Timothy, advised the young man about the importance of using the scriptures when making decisions on matters in his daily life. Depending on what translation of the Bible you choose to use, the meaning of his words remains the same.

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16 - New International Version  
(NIV)*

His message makes it clear that the words included in the Sacred Scriptures were breathed or inspired by God himself. This makes God, our Creator, the original Author of the Bible.

With that thought in mind, it stands to reason that the words he penned would be beneficial for every aspect of our lives. Just like the manufacturer of a car would logically make recommendations about the type of oil, fuel, and tires you should use to get a better performance and a longer life out of it, He uses His Word to tell us what things would be the best for us in our lives.

What a wonderful treasure and privilege we have, to be able to tap into the very knowledge of God and use it to our advantage! Throughout mankind's history, people have searched for what lies at the heart of the truth of God's Word. One such individual, Moses, who led an entire nation of God's people to freedom had this to say about it:

*“Let my teaching fall on you like rain; let my speech settle like dew. Let my words fall like rain on tender grass, and like showers upon the herb.”  
Deuteronomy 32: 2 The New Living Translation*

How refreshing that sounds. Imagine how good a gentle rain must feel after spending days in a parched land. This is how refreshing he felt God’s Word was to him.

Then there was King David, a stalwart fighter for God’s righteousness, who also expressed his appreciation for God’s written word. His comments:

*“Instruct me, O Jehovah, about your way. I shall walk in your truth.” Ps. 86:11  
New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*

Here, he lets us know that he intended to use God’s word every day to help guide his path through life.

But it was King Solomon, the most eloquent of the ancients who described it most poetically:

*“Having it as gain is better than having silver as gain and having it as produce than gold itself. It is more precious than corals, and all other delights of yours cannot be made equal to it.”*

*Proverbs 3: 14-15 New World Translation*

His comparison of God's Word as being more precious than gold, silver or precious stones makes it clear how much he valued its contents.

There is no question that throughout time, people have found amazing pearls of wisdom in God's written word. But learning how to find these gems is not always easy. It is not as if every Bible has a glossary at the end of the book to explain terminology, or an index to guide you to the pages you need.

In order to get the most out of your Bible Study, it is essential that you first learn how to search out the information you need. There are many different approaches to studying the Bible that can be of a huge benefit to those who take the time to learn them. The strategies will find a spiritual healing that goes beyond anything else they might possibly compare it to in their lives.

They will understand why the entire Bible is beneficial for so many different aspects of life and they will experience God's transforming power in the process. Through it, we become "God's fellow workers," (1 Cor. 3:9), sharing with him in all aspects of life.

So, whether you're studying the Bible for personal edification, to build up your faith, or just to decide for yourself if what you read is true, you'll find the answers to some of the biggest questions we ask within its pages. But if you're like most people, the first thing you realize when you open the Bible is that it takes a commitment and an investment in time to get to the very heart of what matters and many new to Bible Students do not always know where or even how to start.

Through the pages of this book, we will look at the Bible from several different angles and give you some basic foundation knowledge to help you to grasp the true meaning of the words within. From there, you can let the Bible's words

guide and direct you on the best way of life and how to make decisions in all things.

It may not be easy at first but in time, as you absorb the power of the Word, you will begin to feel inspired and motivated to learn more and more and as a result, grow into a spiritually mature Christian with a genuine love for God's message.

## Chapter 1: What Is the Bible?

Chances are, if you're interested in reading the Bible it is because you want to know what message God has given you or you're trying to verify if there really is a God. Either way, the answer can be found within the pages of these sacred writings.

In today's modern world, there is a great deal of excitement over new technology, scientific advancements, and completely new lifestyles. On the surface, they do not all seem to be interrelated yet there is one thread that runs through all of them. They consume our time and distract us from what should be the most important feature in our lives, the message that is found in the Bible.

Studying should be a major part of all of our lives. Whether you're a small child learning how to read and write, or you're a senior citizen learning how to adapt to an ever-changing world, studying is the single thing that connects us to everything we do. It only takes one glance to look out and see the sad results in the lives of those who refuse to study.

God could have created us with all the knowledge we had built in. He did that for the animals; we call it instinct. But probably one of the greatest gifts of all creation is the gift of discovery. You know how you feel when you figure out a particularly intriguing problem, how excited you get when you discover something new. This is all a part of God's gift and it is the reason why study should be so important to each of us.

But studying the Bible is not the same as studying to become a teacher, architect, or gardener. The lessons learned in the Bible are much more profound and life-

altering. Through its page, we learn how to talk to the Supreme Being in the universe, how to address him with respect and honor. We learn what he has in store for all of us, and what His hopes are for us in the future.

In the past, you may have looked into the Bible and even read a few pages but these things do not just jump off the page at us. In order to glean these hidden gems, we have to learn to look deeper and search for things below the surface. Think of it as though you are snorkeling off the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. The view of the coral reef below can be breathtaking and you're caught by the striking colors and textures laid out before you. But now, imagine that you've donned a diving suit and strapped on your scuba gear. Now, you submerge yourself in the water and can look even closer. Your appreciation of this natural beauty becomes even more pronounced as you can see the intricacies of the reef even closer. It is completely different from floating on top of the water and seeing the pretty colors below you and another thing entirely to swim with the little fish, catch sight of the sea anemones as they scurry for cover, or reach out and touch the delicate textures of the reef below.

This is the difference between studying the Bible and reading it. There are some people who will be completely content with a snorkeler's view of the Bible but those who choose to peer deeply into God's Word, there is so much more in store for them. According to the dictionary, the word "peer" means "to look narrowly or searchingly, as in the effort to discern clearly." To do that, we must learn how to tap into God's wisdom that can only be revealed to us through Holy Spirit.

This means looking for not just the things we have been taught to believe but also the reasons behind them. God always has a purpose in everything he does so our beliefs should not be based on traditions nor should they be based on what someone has told us the Bible says. Instead, it should be based on what the Scriptures themselves tell us and our ability to use our own power of reason to prove what we read is true. Being a Christian is not just because we do what God tells us to do but to do it because we understand why He wants us to live this way or that way. It's true, all scriptures have been inspired of God but there is a

purpose behind each one. “So that the man of God can be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.”

But before we can do that, one must understand what the Bible really is so let's start with the basics.

## **The Word ‘Bible’**

The English word ‘Bible’ is a derivation of the Latin word Biblia and the Greek word Biblos, which literally means books. This is one of the reasons that many people struggle to grasp its message. Unlike other books, the Bible is not written chronologically and it is not just one story from the beginning to the end. Instead, there are many stories that can be viewed and analyzed separately but also interwoven together with other records.

The Bible is a collection of books penned by 40 different writers spanning a period of more than 1,600 years with the first writings produced around 1473 BCE and the final book written nearly 100 years after the birth of Christ. There are 66 different books in total and each one offers something valuable to learn.

Just understanding these little facts can help you in your approach to grasping the message of the Bible. It helps us to realize that the traditional way of studying is not always effective. One must approach each book and each group of books with the mindset geared towards gleaning the unique message they carry, discovering the overall theme it speaks of and the finding out how it harmonizes with the other books in the Bible Canon.

The 66 books of the Bible have been divided up into several sections. You are

probably already familiar with what is most commonly called the Old and the New Testament but students of the Bible have seen the need to make even further divisions based on the overall theme of certain sections:

1. The Pentateuch: 5 books
  
2. The Historical Books: 12 books
  
3. The Books of Poetry and Wisdom: 5 books
  
4. The Prophecies: 17 books
  
5. The Gospels: 4 books
  
6. The Acts of the Apostles: 1 book
  
7. The Letters: 21 books
  
8. Revelation: 1 book

In the next few pages, we will look at one of these sections and try to point out exactly why they have been grouped together and how studying them as a unit can not only simplify your study of the scriptures but also fortify your faith and

understanding of the Bible as a whole.

Together we will walk through the Pentateuch, the first section of the Bible and learn how to use history and other outside resources to bring these scriptures to life. You will be surprised at some of the things you are about to learn. Once you've gone through this next section, you can apply the same strategies to the other sections of the Bible. But first, let's answer a few common questions beginners often ask when studying the Bible for the first time.

### **Do I Need to Learn Ancient Languages?**

There are a lot of controversies around about the value of different Bibles. Of course, everyone has their preferred translation they like to use but there are some that insist that to truly understand the original content of the Holy writings one must first understand the language that it was first written in.

There is an expression in English, "lost in translation," that many people apply to this thinking and in many other cases where content has to be translated from one language to another. However, in the case of the Bible, it isn't necessary. Of course, understanding the history, the culture, and the life of the peoples at the time of the writing can give you a deeper insight into why it was written in such a way but the message is inspired by God and has been protected over the eons of time.

To make this point clear, let's look a little deeper into the languages of the Bible and glean a little history into how it was translated.

The Bible was originally written in three primary languages, Hebrew, Aramaic,

and Greek. While these languages are still spoken in some form today, the vast majority of the world does not understand them and so as the Word began to spread across the globe and translations were necessary.

Still, there were challenges even early on when it came to translating the Bible even into other forms of the same language. Not only, are no two languages exactly alike when it comes to grammar, vocabulary, and syntax but all of these languages change within themselves over time. Think about English for example. Not only did the language not exist at the time the Bible was written down, the language itself has evolved over the years. Consider these few examples:

Gay: the original meaning was to be “exuberantly joyful,” had been used for at least three hundred years before its meaning began to change. However, in the 1960s it began to have sexual overtones and eventually evolved to a designation of a homosexual. Think of the words in the old Christmas carol....

“don we now our gay apparel”

Here the word is used to be very happy to the point of singing but when you say the word today, no one really thinks that way, especially if you use it outside of the holiday season.

Fantastic: Once meant something that existed only in one’s imagination. Today, the word means something that is totally amazing.

Cell: Once meant a room of confinement. Today it means a tiny part of the body or it refers to a portable device used to call someone.

Just from these small examples, it is easy to see why Bible translations were needed from the very beginning. But how can we be sure that the translations were done the right way? Let's take a look at how they were done from the very beginning.

### **Some Things to Keep in Mind**

The assumption of many is that understanding Hebrew or Greek will automatically help you to understand the Bible more clearly however that is not the case. If today you spoke to a descendant of the Jews (the original speakers of the Hebrew language) in ancient Hebrew you would find that they were having a difficult time understanding you. Jesus spoke about this when he spoke to the Jews of his time (John 5:38-40)

*“You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me; and you are not willing to come to Me so that you may have life.”*

Here Jesus is talking to those ancient Hebrews about their searching the Scriptures. Surely, it must have been a noble gesture on their part but they still refused to accept him as their Messiah. Was their lack of acceptance because they did not study? No, because they were diligent students of the scrolls available at that time? Was it because they didn't understand the language? No, it was their own mother tongue. They knew it well.

Clearly learning God's message is not really dependent on mastering a language. Remember, it is a message that should be available to all people around the

globe regardless of what language they spoke. As a side point, all languages come from God so he can communicate with us in any language. Even if you were to study Hebrew and Greek today, it would be so different from the original written language that it would do very little to help you to grasp the spiritual meaning of God's Word.

One must also consider the context of the passages we read. If you have ever heard a new word you didn't understand the meaning of, it's likely you asked how it was used in a sentence. While the sentence given did not give you a definition, by considering the words around it you can glean the actual meaning of the word. Consider an example:

Iron: This word has several different meanings depending on how it is used in a sentence. It can be a type of metal, a tool used for pressing clothes, a type of golf club, an instrument for bonding prisoners, and it could also refer to a dietary supplement. But it can also be used as a prepositional phrase as in the case of two people needing to "iron out" their problems.

You could use a dictionary to help you sift through all the possibilities however no dictionary is 100% complete, especially when dealing with an ancient language. To glean the context of the words you read, you would need to read for the spirit of the message and not just the words alone. This is why translations have become so important. Very few people today are capable of reading and understanding the original texts that were written down thousands of years ago but because we have had translators available over those years, we don't need to go back in time and master those old translations.

Remember, God is an all-powerful being and he has the ability to protect his message regardless of the language it has been translated into. Always keep in mind that the Bible was not all written at the same time or in the same language so it was not always available to everyone in its entirety. Those who had the Hebrew Scriptures (The Old Testament) found that the Greek Scriptures (The

New Testament) needed to be translated so that they could understand it. This was also true in reverse.

To be required to learn an Ancient Bible language would go against the spirit of the Scriptures as Jesus said at Luke 10:21.

*“At that time, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.”*

God is not interested in how many words you know or how hard you work at mastering a single language. He is a God of all people and of all languages and has a message to give. When you study you are looking for the very spirit of the Word and how it touches the heart, not in the mechanics its mechanics.

So, even if you were not an “A” student in school and never mastered the skill to learn the deeper things, it does not mean that understanding the Bible is out of your reach. The Bible was not written to reach the minds of such people but it was designed to reach the hearts. Those who appeared to be uneducated were allowed to peer into his deepest thoughts.

With those thoughts in mind, let’s begin:

The first five books of the Bible are considered to be the most important section simply because they lay a foundation for which the rest of the Bible is based. While many would argue that the Gospels were the books that brought us the teachings of Jesus Christ and a solid hope for salvation, without the foundation

laid out in these books, there would be no reason for any of us to believe that we needed to be saved. These books are called the Pentateuch, from the Latin word Pentateuch (penta – meaning 5; teuchos – meaning tool, vessel, scroll, case, book); the meaning later expanded to mean a case for carrying scrolls.

## *The Pentateuch*

*Genesis*

*Exodus*

*Leviticus*

*Numbers*

*Deuteronomy*

Here is a brief overview of the contents of each of these books and where its name came from.

*Genesis (Gen.)*

*Penned by: Moses*

*Writing completed: 1513 BCE*

*Time period in history: 46,026 – 1657 BCE*

Most of us are familiar with the book of Genesis as it is the very first book of the Bible. In its fifty chapters, we learn the earliest history of man and how the relationship between man and God evolved during that period.

That is the information you learn on the surface (the snorkeler's view) but if you look a little closer you can also learn God's original purpose for mankind. Why we were created and put on the earth. You also learn about the first death and what brought it about. All of this gives you an excellent foundation for building faith and a close relationship with God.

The word Genesis has a base meaning of origin, which is fitting because its main message is to record how mankind first began. We still use its prefix in many words we use today.

Generation, genetics, Genome, generic, genuine, genius, gender, etc.

While Moses did not live during the period that is covered in Genesis, it is apparent that he spoke to some of his forefathers or he compiled his information from historical documents that had been preserved over time. Moses' role, therefore, was not to write the book of Genesis but to compile these ancient documents into a collection of eleven histories that have all been recorded in this Bible book. How can we be sure of this?

According to the well-known Hebrew scholar Gesenius, a comparison of the ancient writing styles shows us that each historical document was finished with the name of the person who recorded the historical record or the individual who actually was in possession of the document at the time. By using these clues, we can identify the eleven histories and who possessed them.

Adam recorded his family history from creation to his death in two documents. We see the conclusion of his histories in Genesis 2:4 and 5:1, 2.

Noah wrote the next history that continued through the days of the deluge, which was followed by eight other contributors to the record.

As you read through the book, you can now search for these records and identify how each one is ended. The chart below should serve as a guide that you can work with.

# of Record	Beginning verse	Concluding verse	History covered
1st	Gen. 1:1	Gen. 2:4	Creation of Earth
2nd	Gen. 2:4	Gen. 5:1	Adam's history
3rd	Gen. 5:1	Gen. 6:9	Contamination of the Earth
4th	Gen. 6:9	Gen. 10:1	After the Flood
5th	Gen. 10:1	Gen. 11:10	Formation of the post-flood world
6th	Gen. 11:10	Gen. 11:27	Genealogy from Shem to Abram
7th	Gen. 11:27	Gen. 25:13	Ishmael's history
8th	Gen. 25:13	Gen. 25:18	Ishmael's family history
9th	Gen. 25:19	Gen. 36:10	Jacob's diary
10th	Gen. 36:10	Gen. 37:2	Esau's record
11th	Gen. 37:2	Gen. 50:26	Joseph's story

Now that you have a basic overview of what is covered in the book, it is easy to turn your attention to how events unfolded and begin to make a connection between yourself and the message in God's Word. You will see the first prophecy revealed in chapter three and you can now start to unravel what it all means. These accounts can help you to build a strong faith by observing the faith of those faithful patriarchs that laid the foundation that we all stand on today.

As you go through the book, try to find the introductory and concluding words of each record and imagine the lives of the people as they wrote them.

*Exodus (Ex.)*

*Penned by: Moses*

*Where Written: Wilderness*

*Writing Completed: 1512 BCE*

*Time Period Covered: 1657-1512 BCE*

The second book in the Pentateuch contains an eyewitness account of how God's chosen people came to be and his miraculous acts performed on their behalf. In these pages, you learn how he gathered Abraham's descendants into a nation that he called a "People for his name."

The word Exodus is also appropriately named. Taken from the Latin word Exodos, with the idea of leaving or departing a place. We see parts of that name in our common English today. Think of the words that describe going beyond something, exorbitant, exit, exalt, and excursion.

The book takes up where Genesis leaves off by repeating the list of the sons of Jacob and gives the first mention of God's name and its true meaning. Written in Hebrew as "יהוה" this name has been translated in many ways.

YHWH, YHVH, Yahweh, Jehovah, Yehowah, and Yahuweh are just some of them. The reason for so many versions is because ancient Hebrew was written with only consonants and the vowels were completely omitted. Since the pronunciation of the vowels was passed down orally from one generation to the next the true pronunciation of his name has been lost in time. It is difficult to know what the original pronunciation was. We do know, however, that thousands of years later when Jesus was on the earth, he prayed to him using the words Elohim and Adonai. As you study and read through these scriptures, you can try to imagine how the ancient Hebrews called on his name.

Moses identifies himself as the writer of Exodus in three separate places. (Ex. 17:14, 24:4, and 34:27). And later, when you get to the Gospels you will find Jesus even credits Moses with these writings when he asks the question:

*Has not Moses given you the law? – John 7:19.*

In addition, other books in the Bible also point to Moses as the writer and the one who first delivered God's law to his people.

When you consider the fact that this is a historical account, there is a wealth of archaeological evidence that can testify to its accuracy. From Egyptian artifacts that have the same titles and names listed here to their own law books that explain customs recorded it is clear that this is a solid historical record.

Moses gives us a clear picture of royal life as the son of Pharaoh and the pauper's life of an Israelite in detail. Comparing many of these details with secular history books will inspire you to want to delve more deeply into its pages.

Exodus also details the building of the tabernacle (the forerunner of the temple later built in Jerusalem) explaining the materials used, measurements, and the geography of the surrounding area. As we read through these pages we are witnessing the formation of a new religion.

The book is written in chronological order starting with:

1. The death of Joseph
2. The enslavement of God's people.
3. Moses' first attempt to free his people
4. The 10 plagues

5. The parting of the Red Sea

6. The introduction of the Law Covenant

7. The building of the tabernacle

While the list above highlights the key events in the book of Exodus it is all framed throughout Moses' life, which is divided up into three parts:

1. His first forty years of life in Pharaoh's palace

2. His second forty years living in the desert of Midian

3. His last forty years as he led the nation through the wilderness

In order to get a good understanding of this book, it might be best to look for answers to specific questions as you read through the pages.

Why did God bring the plagues?

Why did Moses have to spend forty years in the wilderness after being raised as

the son of Pharaoh?

What lessons can I learn about obedience to God's laws?

How many were God's people when they entered Egypt and how many left Egypt?

Were there only 10 commandments recorded in Exodus?

You can likely think of many more questions as you read through the material.

*Suggestions: When reading, try to do a little research about the history and geography of the land at the time to get a better understanding of what life was like, the materials they used, and how they were all connected as one family.*

*Leviticus (Lev.)*

*Penned by: Moses*

*Where Written: Wilderness*

*Writing Completed: 1512 BCE*

*Time Period Covered: 1512 BCE (approx. 1 month)*

The third book in the Pentateuch, Leviticus gets its name from the Greek word Levitikon referring to the descendants of the sons of Levi (the tribe of Levi). The book details their appointment as “Levitical priests and the laws and regulations they had to keep. They were also charged with the responsibility of teaching the people what was required of them.

Over the years, the book has had several names: The Law of the Priests and The Law of the Offerings were just two of them.

There are several colophons (historical records like those found in Genesis) found in Leviticus, one at Lev. 27:34 and another at 26:46 that show that these were records kept by Moses and that in the original writings both Genesis and Leviticus were combined into one single scroll. Another evidence that points to Moses as the writer is the first word in the book is a conjunction, which clearly indicates that it is a continuation of the book before it.

But the most powerful proof that Moses was the writer is that Jesus Christ and several other inspired writers referred to the laws and guidelines written in the book and mention Moses by name. As you study through Leviticus consider these comparisons:

Scripture in Leviticus Comparison Scripture

Lev. 23:34, 40-43	Neh. 8:14,15
Lev. 14:1-32	Matt. 8:24
Lev. 12:2	Luke 2:22
Lev. 12:3	John 7:22
Lev. 18:5	Rom. 10:5

The time period covered in Leviticus is only one short month. We know this because the previous book of Exodus ends with a definite date and event.

Ex. 40: 17 “Now in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected.”

The following book of Numbers starts exactly one month later:

Nu. 1:1 “Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying,”

If you reason on these two scriptures, it stands to reason that the events of the time period it took to issue the laws to the nation of Israel could not have been more than one lunar month.

This is an addition to the laws given to the nation of Israel in Exodus. Up until that point they were taught about their God and had witnessed his mighty works but this is the beginning of an organized form of worship and his people were given very specific regulations to guide them in their new land.

As you go through these pages, try to imagine what life must've been like for them in the wilderness and what kind of adjustments they may have had to make in order to be approved by God.

Also, think about the “mixed company” and what kind of influences were there. When they left Egypt, many Egyptians joined them in their exodus. What laws applied to the foreign resident that had joined them and what was expected of them? Were foreigners treated any differently? Imagine yourself in the encampment and what kind of adjustments you would have had to make to become a part of an approved nation of God.

Ask yourself questions as you read through the passage. Here are a few to get you started:

What were the laws regarding diet, disease, and the treatment of dead bodies?

How do these laws relate to medical practices today?

The answer to these questions can fortify your faith and convince you of divine inspiration.

The book of Leviticus lays out laws in these cases that only in recent years have been confirmed by modern science to promote better health. They were written long before we understood things like quarantine, cleanliness, and avoiding consuming certain animals. Think of the diseases they would avoid by following these laws.

Trichinosis, tularemia, psittacosis, tapeworms, and all sorts of infections from parasites and such.

They would have also been able to avoid diseases like the bubonic plague, spotted fever, and typhus. Diseases that were found to be caused by water contamination. Yet they lived in the wilderness for forty years, away from what at the time was considered the “civilized world.”

What other practical laws did you learn about as you read through these pages? While these were a people for his name, they were not just practicing religious traditions but it was a way of life. It was a time when religion and government were not two conflicting entities but were governed by a single head, God himself. How does that compare to your life today?

Another approach to studying the book of Leviticus is to analyze the prophecies contained within. You might not think of Leviticus as a book of prophecy but there were many warnings listed in the scriptures detailing the consequences of disobedience of those who did not follow the laws laid out. One example of this is the scripture at Lev. 26:28 where he prophesied that conditions would get so bad that mothers would eat their own children. This prophecy was fulfilled when God’s spirit left the nation after they had disobeyed Him and he allowed the Babylonian kingdom to dominate them for a time causing great famine in the land (Lam. 4:10).

By reading the book of Leviticus alongside history books of that time you will find many parallels that show the Bible’s inspiration and accuracy of detail.

Having a basic outline of the book helps you to focus your mind on the details and what they mean.

## I. Regulations for sacrifices

a. Burnt offerings

b. Communion

c. Sin

d. Guilt

II. Installation of the priesthood

III. Laws on cleanliness

IV. Day of Atonement

V. Statutes on Blood

VI. Festivals

VII. Consequences of obedience and disobedience

VIII. Miscellaneous statutes

Ask yourself, what do you learn about God in Leviticus?

Was God's Kingdom a real government?

Why did he issue the laws and regulations?

How did it benefit His people?

*Numbers (Nu.)*

*Penned by: Moses*

*Where Written: Plains of Moab*

*Writing Completed: 1473 BCE*

*Time Period Covered: 1512 – 1473 BCE*

The book of Numbers follows the Israelites on their 40-year trek through the wilderness. This book is a story of survival and what obedience to God really means. It also gives a vivid picture of God's mercy, as his favor and protection

were not the things that were warranted because of the goodness of his people but because of his mercy.

The book is appropriately named because this is probably the first census recorded in the Bible preserving for prosperity the total number of people first at Mount Sinai and later at the plains of Moab. However, Numbers is not necessarily the only name the book has been given over the years. In the Latin Vulgate, the name Numeri is a derivative of Arithmoi found in the Greek Septuagint. The Jews named the book B'midbar, which literally is translated to mean 'in the wilderness'.

The period it covers begins at the time the Israelites left Egypt and includes thirty-eight years and nine months starting in 1512 and continuing on until 1473 BCE. It is important to note that the events recorded in chapters 7 through 9 did not occur during this particular time period but is used to give the reader some background information about the Israelites.

Reading Numbers and researching the geography and history gives you more evidence of the Bible's accuracy. Not only does Mount Sinai and the vast wilderness still exist today, the odds of surviving in such a desolated place still remains a struggle. Add to that, many of its major events are often referred to in other books of the Bible as well as on the pages of many history books.

This is an account that contains more than just a look back at history but emphasizes that God is one that requires order and exacts exclusive devotion.

Numbers can be divided into three separate parts.

1. Chapters 1-10 discuss the events at Mount Sinai

A. The shaping of an organized nation

B. Census

C. The Tent of Meeting

D. The formation of an army

E. The division of the different tribes

F. Levitical Priesthood set apart

2. Chapters 10-21 discuss the following 38 years in the wilderness

A. The cloud lifted from the tabernacle

B. Problems develop in the camp

C. Conflicts arise

D. Nation arrives in Kadesh

E. Spies sent out

F. Moses begs for God's patience when people disrespect him

G. Additional laws are given

3. Chapters 21-36 discuss the preparation to enter into the Promised Land

A. King Balak of the Moabites

B. Balaam seeks for the king's favor

C. Another census is taken

D. Reminder to obey God's laws and regulations

E. A review of their entire 40-year trek

What lessons can you learn from the Book of Numbers? Not only does Jesus refer to the writings in Numbers on several occasions, the other apostles do as well. You will also see a pattern emerging that prepares our minds to be in expectation of the Messiah.

The account of Moses bringing water from the rock is symbolic in meaning. Can you figure out what the actions represent? Compare the two verses at Numbers 20:7-11 and 1 Cor. 10:4.

Questions to reflect on:

Why did the Israelites have to wander in the wilderness for forty years?

How was the greed of men like Balaam and Korah handled and what do we learn from them?

How did God deal with immorality then and how does he feel about it now?

You can also learn the historical background that is the basis for many future Biblical passages. Without a solid understanding of the events that occurred in Numbers, it is difficult to glean the meaning of many other scriptures incorporated into the Bible canon later on.

*Deuteronomy*

## *Deuteronomy (Deut.)*

*Penned by: Moses*

*Where Written: Plains of Moab*

*Writing Completed: 1473 BCE*

*Time Period Covered: 1473 BCE*

The name Deuteronomy comes from the Greek word Deuteronomion, which literally means second. Think of words like deuce, dual, duet, duo. This is combined with the word nomos, which can be translated to mean law. Thus, the book of Deuteronomy is the second book of laws given to the nation of Israel. Some Jewish scholars titled the book Mishneh hat-Torah, which is often translated to mean a repetition or duplication.

Another reason for this name is the instructions that were given to all future Kings of the nation was to copy the law by hand for himself. So, once a king was anointed, his first royal duty was to make his own copy of the law (Deut. 17:18). This shows that it was important for the king to know the law in its entirety so he could set an example of obedience for the people.

Deuteronomy concludes the Pentateuch with a series of discourses that Moses delivered to the nation of Israel.

1st Discourse: Deut. 1:1-4:49, A historical introduction

2nd Discourse: Deut. 5:1-26:19, A restatement of the Law

Third Discourse Deut. 27:1-28:68, Consequences of obedience and disobedience

Fourth Discourse Deut. 29:1-30:20, Conclusion of the covenant and law

The book concludes with The Song of Moses (Deut. 32:2-47) and the blessing of Moses (Deut. 32:48-33:29)

As the final book in the Pentateuch, one would rightly expect to tie all of these details together in a tidy little package. Through all five of these books, we are introduced to God and can learn more than just he is Almighty but learn little facets about his personality, his expectations, and the way he governs his people. You begin to develop a relationship with him and see him more as a person rather than as some faraway entity.

All of this can be done with just a good preview of what is included in each book. By starting your study with a brief outline of each chapter, you prepare your mind for what you are about to learn so rather than just reading the words and trying to make sense of them, you know what to expect and can take the message in at a more deeper level.

Learning on this deeper level requires you to do more than just read; it requires taking a slower approach, looking beneath the surface and perceiving what the

mind of God really is. To do this, one needs to meditate on the material as they go through it.

## Chapter 2: Preparing Your Mind Through Meditation

In this modern world of high-tech devices, and knowledge moving at the speed of light, preparing our mind for Bible study may seem like taking a step back into the Dark Ages. Reading, in general, has taken a backseat to TV's, videos, Smart phones, and computers. But for true Christians that should not be the case.

We should never forget that we are reading the Holy Scriptures. If we keep it foremost in our mind that it is a message from our Heavenly Father, then we will be happy to take the time to dig a little deeper to grasp a clearer understanding of his word. In essence, Bible Study is not something you do alone but it is something you do with God. It is one of the tools he uses to connect with us so as we approach whatever topic we're planning on studying we need to start each session by asking him and his Holy Spirit to help us glean the lessons we need to learn.

It may help by starting off with a scripture of meditation. (Prov. 2:1-6).

*“My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;  
so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to  
understanding;*

*Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if  
thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt  
thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

*For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and*

*understanding.”*

These words describe the mental frame of mind we need when we are searching into God’s Word. But for some, reading is a chore and not something they would value as a treasure. Still, learning how to cultivate the right frame of mind before we begin to study will not only help us to understand better but to enjoy the experience more. Consider these points:

First, mental preparation involves the heart. That means that we must have an open and willing heart to learn about God and all his blessings. As you read through the scriptures listed above, the blessings are conditional, we must first “incline” our ear then “apply” our heart. Other words tell us to “cry” out for knowledge, and “lift” our voice.

We should approach the scriptures as if it was a valuable treasure you have no desire to lose.

Imagine for just a minute that you had won the lottery and now you have millions of dollars at your disposal. All you need to do is fill out the necessary paperwork. As you read this letter, you grasp the importance of your reward and you know what you need to do. Do you toss the letter aside and figure you’ll get it done after your favorite TV show is over? Do you hand it off to someone else to take care of for you? Or do you just take it for a hoax and toss it in the garbage without further investigating?

All of these situations depict the view that many people have of the Bible. They see taking the time to read it as a chore and they are content to wait until someone else tells them about the treasures inside. But if we really want a relationship with Jehovah, it is necessary for us to prepare our minds and hearts for the lessons he wants to teach us. When we develop the mental attitude that it

is a valuable treasure like gold or silver, it will become first in our lives and become the most important thing we can do each day.

This means that one of the primary things to acquire to have good personal study is the desire to learn about God and his Word. An earnest desire shows a willingness to take the extra time and go beyond just reading the material. But how do you develop that zeal, that fire, that desire if you're new to study and have no idea of what you're looking for?

It starts before you open the Bible and start reading. It takes a careful examination of our motives. God wants us to worship and follow him because of our love for him. One might have been promised everlasting life away from this wicked world but those are gifts he rewards to those who truly love him. Ask yourself these questions:

Do I want to be able to show that I have more knowledge than others?

Do I want to appear more Holy?

Do I want to find out what it means to be a true Christian?

Am I looking to find fault with someone or something?

Am I looking for ways to better myself and perhaps help others?

As you can see, asking yourself personal questions can help you to discern the quality of your heart. All of us have flaws so none of us will be able to answer these questions perfectly. However, understanding where your heart is at before you open the book will help you to see what lessons you need to learn and allow your eyes to search for those things that can help you to improve.

It doesn't matter if the answers are not as enlightened as you would hope. No one will know these things except for you. However, as you do this exercise, over time you will find yourself changing and your inclinations will begin to fall more in line with what is expected of a true Christian.

### **Sometimes You Need Help**

For the true beginner of the Bible, it could help to prepare your heart by reading some simple Bible stories (you know, the kind they read to little children) like the one about the Ethiopian eunuch. He was not an Israelite (Jew) but had at some point learned something about the Holy writings. He was, however, a sincere believer in God and wanted to study the scriptures. As he was riding alone in his chariot, he found himself reading out loud from the scrolls of Isaiah. Did he get the sense of what he was reading?

When asked if he understood what he was reading, he answered the apostle Philip. "How could I unless someone showed me?" (Acts 8:27-35). This is a perfect example of how just reading the Bible is not enough. We need extra help. Sometimes there are others who could help you to find your way when you're new but the greatest help of all is in God's Holy Spirit. Through this Spirit, God can help us to glean the true meaning of the words we read. This we can receive by making a heartfelt prayer of request for it. With the right attitude, our approach to Bible Study can be richly blessed and our minds and hearts can be prepared to receive whatever lesson God has in store for us.

## **Why Is This Important?**

Bible Study is important not just because it helps us to understand the teachings of God and Jesus but because it gives us the foundation on which all of our beliefs are based.

When we have a deeper understanding of the scriptures, we have a defense for our faith. When asked why we chose to do this or that, rather than saying because it's my religion we can truthfully answer "because this or that is morally wrong and I don't want to displease my God." Which answer do you think better shows the closeness of your relationship with God? When we understand not just the laws that He has given us but also why he gave them to us, it is easy to build a strong and powerful faith that can carry us through all sorts of trials and tribulations in the future. We learn to look at the world through His eyes and to perceive the reasons for his commandments. We move from being a robotic follower to sincere follower living according to his true beliefs.

## **The Art of Meditation**

Another way to prepare the heart is to meditate on the words we read. However, many people have different views on what meditation really is. Some believe it involves emptying your mind of all thought and surrendering to whatever influences come their way. Others believe it involves chanting a mantra over and over again, and others just believe it involves connecting the mind to the body to increase awareness and sensitivities.

But, considering how the goal of Bible Study is to open your mind to the lessons from God, it is not likely that any of these forms will help the mind to absorb the lessons you're trying to glean. To understand the art of spiritual meditation it helps to know how our Creator designed our brains to learn.

Our brains can learn to read, write, and speak, which in turn gives us understanding. Because we can do these things, we can pray and offer honor to our God. We can sing praises, and share emotions with Him. This makes us the most unique of all creation so limiting our brain's ability to chant endless mantras, or to empty our minds of all thought seems to be a discredit to the abilities he has bestowed us with.

Another reason why meditation needs to involve something deeper is that according to Genesis 1:27, we are "Made in God's image." We can't imagine God emptying his mind in an endless session where thought no longer exists. When we empty our minds, we leave room for negativity to seep in and weaken our faith.

So, what does it mean to "meditate" on God's Word? What do we have to do? We can answer that by looking at the Apostle Paul's instructions to Timothy at 1 Timothy 4:15.

*"Think about these things; dedicate yourself to them, so that your use is evident to all."*

So, instead of emptying our minds, we should delve deeper into our conscious thoughts, concentrate on a point we read and give it careful consideration. Ask ourselves questions, imagine ourselves in those situations, and envision Jehovah and Jesus as real people. In short, we need to consider these four questions:

1. How can we read so that we can meditate?

2. What things should we be concentrating on?

3. What can we use to help us meditate more often?

4. How can we get enjoyment out of meditation?

Here are a few thoughts on how to get the best answer to these questions.

The brain is a real learning machine. It quickly picks up new skills and files that knowledge away so you can readily retrieve that information once it's learned. As a result, over time we begin to do things by rote. None of us ever have to give thought to how we breathe, how we walk, or drive a car. We have muscle memory, which is activated so that we can focus our minds on other things.

This often happens when we read. We have become so accustomed to reading that often our eyes gloss over the page and we may finish reading material without learning anything new. This is because we are reading words and not ideas. There may be times when we let our minds drift to other things while we're doing our Bible reading and again we miss the main point of our lesson.

However, when we know how to meditate we can avoid slipping into this habit of glossing over the words we read.

This requires being able to focus all of our attention on what we are reading and then stopping to think about it. This is best done when we slow down. In fact, scientists have discovered that we tend to retain more information if we do two

things while reading:

1. Slow down and read with purpose

2. Read out loud.

It has been proven that those who read aloud actually are better able to concentrate and recall what they've read. This fact is already noted in the Bible. Consider the words written in the book of Joshua 1:8.

*“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”*

By slowing down and reading the Bible out loud, more of the information can be absorbed into your mind and will reach your heart. This means that you must be careful about where you read and when you read.

You want to choose a time when your mind is more alert and has fewer distractions. For some people, that may mean getting up an hour or so earlier for some quality Bible reading. For others, it may be at the end of the day after all the chores are done and you have some time to yourself. Ideally, you want a time and place when you can give your whole mind and heart to your Bible Study. Even Jesus Christ, perfect in every way, took time out to meditate on the scriptures, how much more so is it important for us? (Luke 6:12)

## **Talk About It**

Another way you can keep your mind tuned into what you are learning from the scriptures is to talk about it. The things we learn from God do not all come from the Bible. When you can enjoy the wonders of creation and meditate on what He teaches you when you gaze at the stars, look out over the deep waters of the oceans, or enjoy the antics of the animal kingdom you create an even closer bond with Him.

When you see these things, ask yourself questions:

What do I learn about Him from what I see?

Why did he choose to create this? Or that?

What can I use to help others to look into God's Word?

The more you open up your mind and contemplate on everything you see, the easier it will be to find those things written within the pages of the Bible.

## **Make it a Habit**

Of course, you won't get the hang of this every day but you will eventually reach a point where meditating on God's promises will become a regular routine. The Bible is the most important book you can use every day and throughout history,

many have died for the privilege. It would be a shame if one day you woke up and found it had been removed and you no longer had access to it. How would you feel then? Things like this have happened in the past and will likely continue to happen in the future. So, take advantage of your freedom to use it now. Keep a notebook handy where you can write down your favorite scriptures and why you appreciate them and never forget to offer thanks for this most valuable and precious gift.

Just like with anything else, a person that spends little time thinking about God and all He has done will soon lose interest and in time, their faith will weaken. To remain faithful to God you must see him as more than some invisible Being in the heavens but as a real person who has real interests in your life and what happens. Without that connection, life's anxieties, and troubles can overtake us and distract us from the true worship he wants for us.

*Review: To meditate means to concentrate on the things you read, take the time to understand, and search for the underlying meanings behinds the words. It's an attempt to discern the lesson that you need at that particular point in your life and how you can apply it so that you bond even closer to your Creator.*

## Chapter 3: Making Time for Study

We live in a time where everything moves at a fast pace. Few people see the need to read even the most superficial of books and magazines let alone something on a deeper level. They are caught up in the everyday hassles of life in this crazy world. Jobs consume countless hours, free time is often spent enjoying material possessions, and thoughtless pastimes. But a true student of the Bible will find the time to dedicate to Bible Study.

This is not always easy to do and for those whose life is already cluttered with just getting by it may feel like an exercise in futility. As you start finding a regular time to study, think about your priorities in life. We all have things that could crowd out these more important things, things that can demand more attention simply because of the urgency of the situation.

For example, everyone needs to work or go to school. It is a priority if we want to fit in the society that we live in. None of us would ever say we don't have time for these things. We do them because we know they must be done. We also never have to think about taking time out to eat or drink; it's what fuels us and gives us the energy to keep on another day. And rarely do we forget to recreate when we get the chance. Whether we relax by watching movies, taking a vacation, or just hanging out with our friends, we find that those times are the most enjoyable. But all of those things are free gifts that we get from our Supreme Creator, therefore finding the time to study his Word should be even more important.

But remember the scripture we read earlier in Proverbs. We need to seek out God's Word as if it was a hidden treasure. Our time with God should be valuable enough that we won't need to struggle to find room for it. It should not feel as though we have to sacrifice something to make it happen. The time you choose,

however, will depend largely on your routine. As a matter of fact, according to the words penned by the Apostle Paul at 1 Tim. 4:13-15,

*“While I am coming, continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching ... Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons.”*

Yes, in order to progress spiritually, it is necessary for you to study. We cannot make advancement if we stagnate and stop learning all we can about our God.

The best time for you to set aside for Bible Study will depend on your regular routine. Some simply choose one scripture to read in the morning and meditate on it all day, others choose a passage to study at night so they can ponder over it in the night. Others may take a portion of their break time to read and meditate on something from the scriptures.

It doesn't take hours upon hours of study to do this but it should be a serious and regular block of time set aside for learning entirely about your God and it should be time for you and him alone without outside interference. Depending on the life you lead it could be as little as a few minutes a day or it could be as long as an hour or two. The main thought is that it should be quality time and not rushed. This is the ideal situation for getting the most out of the time you set aside to study.

By doing this, it is possible not just to learn a wealth of information about God, but you will also build a close bond with him, making him your friend you can turn to in times of joy and distress. And it will be more pleasurable too as you build up your faith to a point where it could not be broken no matter what happens to you.

## **The Bible is Boring**

This is a common lament among many people, young and old. Few can pick up the Bible and get the sense of it right away. Even many adults struggle to keep their concentration when reading the pages of the Bible. Much of this attitude is the result of how you prepare for your reading. To overcome this problem, consider asking yourself a few questions.

Am I bored because I don't understand the text?

Is it because there is no story to connect to?

Is it because there are too many numbers, regulations, or etc?

Is it because there is no action like when I watch a movie?

Is it because it's like listening to my grandma?

The list of reasons why the Bible is not interesting can be endless. I'm sure you can think of a bunch more reasons not listed here. Still, boredom stems from not having enough foundation in what you are reading. Once you know the history, the outline, the background, and the culture the story hidden in the pages will suddenly come to life.

The human brain can absorb new information in a variety of different ways. If you're struggling to grasp the point by reading then try adding more of your senses. Aside from reading, many people also need a hands-on approach to learning. They have to feel themselves in the picture, smell the air, taste the environment, or hear the booming voices. When you add in your other senses, the picture suddenly becomes real and just as powerful as watching special effects in a movie.

Let's look at a pretty easy example. (Gen. 6-9) Everyone knows the story of Noah and the Ark. How he took two of each animal into the Ark, it rained for forty days and forty nights and flooded the entire earth killing every other living thing on the planet. As you read through the account in Genesis, use your imagination to get the feeling of what the world was like at that time.

After you read the passage where he is commanded to build the Ark, (Gen. 6: 13-15) try to figure out the measurements in today's modern terms. This may require you using your electronic devices, making a trip to a library, or just using your own Google search. Once you've learned the exact measurements, go outside and try to mark out the actual size of the Ark. You'll quickly find out that your backyard or parking lot may not be large enough to contain it. Now imagine, Noah having to build it with his bare hands, no modern power drills, metal nails, or sand paper. Do you feel the blisters on your hands? How did you get that splinter out? Ask yourself these types of questions. Where did he get the wood, how did he move it, how long did it take? How about collecting the animals, what did they smell like when he puts them in the Ark. What about collecting food and supplies? Now extend your imagination a little further. How hard must it have been for him and his sons to do all of this while the rest of populated world made fun of them, ridiculing them as they followed God's Word? How long were they on the Ark? What was it like when the doors closed? Can you hear the people screaming outside as the water rose?

Is it more interesting now, isn't it? It's not just reading a list of measurements and instructions. These were real people with real families; men, women,

children who may not have understood the things their parents were rejecting. It's no wonder God says in Gen. 8:21, 22:

*“And Jehovah began to smell a pleasing aroma. So, Jehovah said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground on man’s account, for the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up; and never again will I strike down every living thing as I have done. 22) From now on, the earth will never cease to have seed-sowing harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night.”*

The imagery of this account can be truly astounding under the right circumstances. This type of teaching is especially important if you're trying to bring the Bible to life with small young children. It is difficult to keep their attention span for much time, but a study like this, while only a few chapters, can be covered over a period of several weeks. Depending on their age, you could give them assignments that could peak their interest even more.

Try approaching the Bible the same way you would choose any other book to read or movie to watch. Look closely at the characters and get inside their heads. You've had the experience of watching a movie and getting so caught up in the characters that you find yourself yelling at the screen. “Get out of there!” “Look behind you.” “What were you thinking?”

When you read the accounts of the Bible with this frame of mind, it will be far from boring. Think about these scenarios:

1. Banishment from society.
2. Heroic battles fought to the death

3. Plagues

4. Deception

5. Intrigue (spies, clandestine affairs, mystery)

6. Family challenges

7. Married life

8. Single life

9. Poverty and wealth

10. Struggle for power

11. Successes and failures

12. Music, dancing, art

13. Love and hate

14. Sword fights

15. Animals talking

16. Struck blind

17. Jealousy

18. Greed

19. Good vs. evil

20. Sex, violence, and power

The list goes on. These are just a few things in the Bible that can draw your attention if you let it. The same things that draw you in to watch movies, attract you to a new book or novel, or leave you curious and wanting more. All of it is found in the Bible but you have to be willing to dig for it just like you would dig for a hidden pile of gold.

This kind of study can be applied to all sorts of situations. Abraham left Ur and

was a very wealthy man but chose to roam for years living in tents. Getting maps and following his travels, understanding the clothes they wore, the foods they ate, etc. All of this can bring light to what would otherwise seem like a boring story about old people.

Here are a few suggestions that could help to increase your interest and draw your attention to the message of the Bible.

1. Choose a translation that you feel comfortable with. As we discussed before, there are many Bible translations to choose from. If you're finding it difficult to grasp the meaning in an older translation it is probably because the language used is not in use anymore. The King James Version, for example, was translated in 1611, over 400 years ago (Shakespeare's time period). While the translation was quite effective and practical for that time, much of the language is now out of date and many people do not understand those older terms. Experiment with different translations and choose one that you can not only understand but has the power to touch your heart.

2. Use modern technology. You don't have to use the Bible in its printed form. You can get the Bible in audio or visual form. You can have it downloaded on your computer, smartphone, tablet or some other technical device. Many of these versions also include appendices and additional information to help you understand better. You might find maps, diagrams, cross references, and pages that answer some of your most interesting questions. The main point is to find a Bible that works well for you.

3. Try a Different Approach. For some people, reading the Bible from cover to cover is not always the best approach. Since the Bible is not written in chronological order, it doesn't have to be read that way. You may decide to read the Gospels first since they are usually the easiest to grasp. Those who want to seek out deeper messages may choose to study the prophecies. Some people like to research and study about a single character written in the Bible or to try to

research a particular topic.

For example, some might want to research women in the Bible. There are numerous women both good and bad that you might be able to relate to on some level. Consider studying about the lives of women like Abigail, Jael, Esther, Jephthah's daughter, Hannah, the Shulammite Maiden, Mary, Martha, Rahab, Miriam, Rebekah, and Sarah. Maybe you want to find out more about the Judges in Israel or learn about the Promised Seed.

The point is the possibilities are endless. So, if you find you're struggling to get through a cover to cover approach to Bible Study, shift gears and find a method that works best for your personality and individual learning style. As you've already learned, just a deeper understanding of the names of the books can make a huge difference in how you approach your study of that book. Imagine what you will learn if you open your mind up to other juicy little tidbits of information.

### **Break Down the Genealogy**

Especially in today's modern age, the subject of genealogy consumes many of us and it's no wonder. From the Bible's very first writings genealogy seemed to be at the core of everything. Read the colophons in the Pentateuch and you'll find that nearly every one of them is a record of a family line. This is the book of Adam, This is the book of Noah, This is the record of Joseph, Abraham, David, and so on down the line.

Today, many people are interested in tracing their family lines back as far as they can go. Have you ever wondered why so many are intrigued by their family line? Would you be surprised to learn that this interest is also a gift from God? Look in your Bible at Eccl. 3:11.

*“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart, yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.”*

He has put in our hearts the desire to live for an eternity and since we cannot live forever we seek out the next best thing. We want our names, our family names to be remembered forever. It is naturally important to mankind for people to know they existed. That he lived, contributed something and then he died.

When we recognize that desire in our own heart, it makes it easier for us to relate to the long lists of family records in the books of Numbers and in 1st and 2nd Chronicles. That endless list of names is a reflection of the desires same that we all naturally have so why not study them? Rather than rush through them, slow down and try to figure out who these people are? Have you read their names someplace else in the Bible? Who are their relatives and what do they do? Why are they included in these lists and what is the purpose of the list?

Take the time to look through the lists and then try to figure out which Bible figures lived at the same time. Imagine how did Moses get the colophons from Adam and Seth. Did they live at the same time or were they passed down? How is it that Abel had such strong faith when both his parents and his brother had sinned so grossly? What did he see? What did he think about? Who taught him how to be righteous? Who were his peers? What were his sisters like? Did they have any questions? How did Adam and Eve answer them? How do you think they felt after being evicted from the garden?

Methuselah, the oldest man ever recorded in history lived to be 969 years old. Who were his contemporaries and what things did he witness and learn from? Did he ever meet Adam? Talk to him? Have dinner with him? A genealogical approach will tell you that he was Noah’s grandfather. What did he teach his grandson and why was it important?

But the main reason we want to look at Biblical genealogy is because of Jesus Christ. Across the globe, people have come to recognize him as the Promised Messiah. How did they know who to look for? How did they know where to look or even when to look? All of those questions can be answered by a careful study of the genealogical records found in the Bible.

One of the first things you read as you begin your study of the Gospels is Jesus' genealogical record from both Mary and from Joseph. Why was that so important it was recorded before his miraculous works and his teachings? Because his genealogical record gives evidence that his birth fulfilled prophecy. Several prophecies stated that he was to be born in the "line of David." People living in Jerusalem at that time had studied the genealogical records and other prophecies and they knew that the Messiah had been born and was among them.

This intrigue in genealogical records goes all the way back to Genesis, which we've already learned meant the "origin." The history of all mankind starts there. No matter who we are, what ethnicity we claim to, or even the religion we follow, it all traces right back to that first genealogical record.

Even the very first prophecy recorded is connected to genealogy. At Gen. 3:15 it refers to the Seed that would one day come and bruise the serpent in the head. Who was that Seed that would be a distant descendant of Adam? We eventually learned it to be Jesus Christ. Yes, genealogy is very important in the Bible, so take the time to learn this information and find out where you fit in the human family line.

Aside from being an aid to put things in chronological order, genealogy had another purpose in the Bible. It is one of the primary keys we need to decipher the many prophecies recorded in the scriptures. After the Flood, the descendants of Noah's son Shem were to receive divine favor. This was a continuation of the

prophecy recorded in Gen. 3:15, which stated that there would be a Seed to come and save mankind. Now, we know a specific family line to watch throughout history. Later, there was more clarification on that same prophecy in Gen. chapter 17 pointing to the descendant of Abraham as producing the promised Seed. Then later, in Gen. 49:10 we learn that it was going to be through the line of David.

This bit of enlightenment continued throughout the scriptures until the appointed time for the Messiah to arrive. It's no wonder so many were looking for the Messiah when he finally came; because they paid close attention to the genealogy throughout all of the recorded histories of the Bible. How much more important is it for us to understand those same prophecies to bring us hope for a better life to come.

Think about these points:

1. It was through genealogy that the Levitical Priesthood was appointed.
2. It was through genealogy that the Promised Land was portioned out to all of the tribes after they left the wilderness.
3. It was through genealogy that the avenger of one's death could be chosen.
4. It was through genealogy that the entire nation of Israel was born.

The fact is that the genealogy was so important that the governments also kept

Careful records of family lines and histories. Some of those records have been discovered in archaeological digs serving to prove the authenticity of the Bible.

The historian Josephus who lived at the time of Jesus attests to the existence and importance of these records in his own writings, which would be a perfect Segway into additional research in validating the Holy Writings.

As important as these genealogies were to the Jews, sadly they did not survive the first century after Jesus birth. Their official records, save for those recorded in the Bible, were destroyed by the Roman Empire when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 CE. From that time on, down to our day, no person of Jewish descent can establish his true line family record and give evidence allowing him to claim the role of the Messiah.

You will find, however, that the record of genealogies lost its importance after Jesus brought in the Christian faith. This was entirely appropriate too. One of the reasons for this was because the Jewish nation was no longer the chosen race. They had lost favor in God's eyes because of their willful disobedience. Because of their unfaithfulness, the Christian faith began to be his chosen people. They were a people who worshipped him by choice and not by birth. Therefore, it didn't matter what their family line might have been, whether they were Jews or Gentiles they were all acceptable to God if they followed his regulations.

Once we come to understand all of this, it is easy to grasp why those lengthy records of family names continued to be recorded for thousands of years. Still, we all have that natural inclination to connect to our eternity so when you come to those genealogical records in the Bible, tap into that feeling and you'll get a deeper understanding of the scriptures you're reading.

## Chapter 4: Find the Theme

There is no question that the Bible is a controversial subject in this modern day and age. People question the Bible's accuracy, pointing out that it does not always agree with proven science. Others say it's just a book of morals and has no real support to speak of. Then there are those who question the wisdom of the more than 600 judicial laws, domestic regulations, and moral restrictions.

Much of this disconnect has to do with not knowing how to study the Bible correctly. Many people's approach to the Bible is to have someone tell them what to believe and pick and choose a particular scripture in the Bible and follow it. The problem with this reasoning is that one becomes a mere parrot of the instructor and not a student of the Bible himself. As you study your Bible why not try to find ways to defend its writings, searching for proof of its validity.

Here are some well-intentioned yet misguided pieces of advice people may give you about the Bible that could send you down the wrong path.

1. You don't need to read the whole Bible, just the New Testament. It is the only part that applies to us today.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness 17) so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work."

The entire Bible is good for teaching and there is no single part that is more important than another. One of the reasons that people say the Bible is not in

harmony is that many people believe that it all does not apply to us today. Yet, the Apostle Paul made it clear that we can all learn from the experiences that were recorded for our benefit, even those that have already been fulfilled.

Think of all the things you can learn from the Hebrew Scriptures. Compare the laws on health with the scientific studies of today. Compare their moral code with the psychological discoveries man has learned over the years. As you search, you will find that the Bible proves itself over and over again.

2. The Bible shows God as a harsh and cruel ruler who cares nothing about his people.

From the creation account in Genesis, we see how God came to the rescue of his people time and time again. He placed Adam and Eve in a garden that had everything for them to not just to survive but to also thrive. It was the man who turned their back on him.

Even when the nation disobeyed him, he still took care of them in the wilderness. In forty years, they had food every day, in an environment where even wild animals struggled to survive. His laws protected their health and gave order to their lives.

The promised Kingdom was set up from the very beginning to buy us out of sin and give us a hope for the future.

As young children, most of us are taught to recite the Lord's prayer by heart. Yet, have we stopped to think about what Jesus asked us to pray for? What can we learn as we read through our Bible that we can give to him?

*Our Father – He is our creator and our first parent*

*Who art in heaven – He lives in the highest place of the universe*

*Hallowed be thy name – He has a name and he wants it to be pure (clear his name)*

*Thy Kingdom come – His promised solution to all of mankind's problems*

*They will be done – If we follow his commandments we follow His will*

*On earth – Good things are in store for the earth as well as in heaven*

*As it is in heaven – the peace in heaven should spread to the earth as well*

Notice that in the first part of this prayer, all of the things we should pray for are outside of ourselves. We need to vindicate or make Jehovah's name sacred, do His will, and pray for that kingdom to come. It is only later that Jesus tells us to ask for personal things; our daily bread, deliver us from evil.

Continue on through the prayer and you will be able to find your own answers to those who argue against the Bible. The more we are able to prove these arguments for ourselves the stronger our faith will be.

3. The Bible is outdated. It is true that many books outlive their usefulness but the wisdom of the Bible lasts forever. Take for example, the practical wisdom found in the some of the books of the Bible.

A. Prov. 12:18 – Words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Lesson: Think before you speak.

B. Prov. 14:30 – A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

Lesson: Jealousy is bad for your health.

C. Prov. 22:6 – Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Lesson: Discipline is necessary to raise children properly.

D. Matt. 5:7: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Lesson: God rewards those who put spiritual things first.

As you can see, all of those lessons are found in the “Old Testament” that many believe is too outdated for our time. The Bible is not like any other book you can read; its advice was practical for the nation of Israel, it is still practical today, and will continue to be useful for many years to come.

Think about it. If you were far away in a foreign land, would you not appreciate getting a loving letter for one of your parents? If you really valued their lessons and advice you would keep that letter with you at all times. You would not view it as old and out of date, you would read it over and over again, discovering other little tidbits each time you read it.

The Bible is a letter of loving advice from our Heavenly Father when you view it this way, you will never develop a negative viewpoint about it and you would staunchly defend it against the unwarranted opposition. This is the mark of a true Christian and one who has realized the deep value each scripture this Holy Book contains.

### **So, What Is the Bible Really About?**

Another approach to Bible Study is to find the underlying theme. Just like all books, there has to be a single thread that runs through it from beginning to end. As you read try to find that singular thought that goes from the beginning to the end. You can do this by trying to sum up each chapter you read in one sentence. Then at the end of the book look back at your sentences to see if anything stands out to you.

Look for connections that link one book to another. For example, the book of Genesis tells us that Adam and Eve were given a Paradise, which they lost but

Revelation tells of a new Paradise. Are these two paradises linked? How can you find out?

Depending on how you want to do your study, here are a few suggestions and where you can find the accounts that will leave you wanting for more.

1. The origin of mankind: Genesis
2. The start of the nation of Israel: Exodus to Deuteronomy
3. Stories of action and intrigue: Joshua to Esther
4. Poetic writings and music: Psalms and the Song of Solomon
5. Practical guidance for life: Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
6. Prophecy: Isaiah to Malachi, Revelation
7. Jesus life on earth : Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
8. The spread of Christianity: Acts

## 9. Loving letters: Romans to Jude

## Chapter 5: The Bible and Science

One of the biggest enemies of the Bible is the field of science. Many learned scientists feel that in this modern age, belief in an all-powerful God that governs the entire universe is tantamount to believing in the Ancient Greek and Roman gods of the past. Common questions that people may be asking as they look into the scriptures are:

1. How, when and where did life originate?
2. What is a simple life form?
3. Do we all share a common ancestor?
4. Is the Bible really just a fairy tale?
5. Are science and the Bible really in conflict?
6. How can I prove to myself that the Bible is genuine?

As scientists become more and more bold in their attacks on the Bible, being able to answer these questions first to ourselves and then to others has become a primary responsibility of a Christian.

Remember, the Lord's Prayer that we talked about earlier? How can we honor God's name and make it sacred if we can't defend it? This was one of the primary things Jesus asked us to concern ourselves with, sanctifying God's name. If you are scientifically inclined, you may want to go into a search of the scriptures to find solid answers to these questions.

Let's see how Bible study can help to answer these questions.

### **How, When, and Where Did Life Originate?**

This is a common question that we all ask. You probably started asking your parents something similar when you were very small. Remember these:

Where do babies come from?

Did life really come from nothing?

Who made the animals?

You probably asked each of these questions at some point in your life. Depending on your age, you may have gotten a vague answer that satisfied you for the moment but later the question popped up in your head again. Now, it is time to use the Bible to find the answer.

Many scientists have not seriously studied the Bible to determine if it is accurate or not. They base their opinions on what they remember from their childhood or what they think they believe. They take a snorkelers' perspective of the Bible and are rarely interested in looking deeper below the surface. Instead, they argue that evolution began by chance in something called a primordial soup where chemicals accidentally came together and a spark of life emerged. That life started with a simple single celled organism.

The surprising thought is that not all scientists agree on this same simple precept. Some believe that these first sparks of life actually came from outer space. As you start your study of the Bible, you can search for strands of similarities between the Bible's teachings and science and make your own comparisons.

Here are some facts that the Bible emphasizes that agree with scientific teachings:

1. Life always comes from life. Even in scientific experiments, life always stems from other life (Gen. 1). This is a fundamental law that we have not seen broken from the beginning of the Holy writings.
2. Life always remains within a species. Despite common belief to the contrary, science has yet to prove that life can jump from one species to the next. If it was born a monkey, it has yet to be seen that the offspring will be some other form of life.

Almost as soon as you open your Bible you get confirmation of these two facts. In the book of Genesis, in the words "according to their kind," "after their kind," and "according to its nature." The new life that springs from existing life does not come from nothing as scientists often state but it comes from life. This leaves us with even more questions to be answered. Just where did that first

spark of life come from?

Herein is the proof that the Bible and science have agreed when they approach the subject with an open mind. However, if someone was reading the scriptures as a means of finding fault, their mind is already made up and they will not find the hidden gems found inside. As you read through the scriptures, search for such answers to help you prove the authenticity of the scriptures.

You can do the same with the other four questions we mentioned above. There are other scriptures that prove the Bible is scientifically accurate found in the book of Job (Job 26:7), the book of Ecclesiastes (Eccl. 1:7), and the book of Isaiah (Isa. 40:22) Take the time to meditate on these and other scriptures you find as you read to prove to yourself how reliable God's Word truly is.

Key things you want to keep in mind as you do your research is to be able to distinguish between what is true fact recorded in the Bible and what many people actually speculate about the Bible. It is the difference between watching a documentary on science and watching a science-fiction movie. Both can be very compelling yet one has its roots deep into the truth where the other finds itself deeply rooted in conjecture and supposition.

So, how can you tell the difference? Let's look at an example:

Many people say that the creation account in Genesis is scientifically impossible. The account tells us that God created the universe and everything in it in six days. Yet, we all know that a small plant takes much longer than six days to reach maturity, how much more so is that true for walking, living, and breathing creatures? Is the Bible really wrong on this point? The answer is no. This does not mean that believers in the scriptures are sticking their head in the sand and ignoring the facts. To the contrary, they have studied the scriptures to understand

why there is a discrepancy.

Just like we spoke about language earlier in this book, one single word could have many different meanings so in order for it to harmonize with science we need to understand the true meaning of the word “day.” A day could be 24 consecutive hours, which is probably the most common use of the word. However, a day can also mean a period of time. As we read through the creation account we understand that the “day” spoken of there does not apply to the 24-hour day example. This is because, at the beginning of creation, the 24-hour day did not exist. It wasn't until the third “day” that the luminaries (the sun and the moon) were placed in the heavens that we began to have something called day and night.

So then, what does the word “day” in the creation account really mean? It simply means a period of time. When you understand the Bible in this way, the Holy Scriptures and science are in perfect harmony. The conclusion that the earth is approximately four and a half billion years old only supports this fact now.

We read the Bible to build up our faith, not to be blindly led down a path by other's suppositions. A further study of science tells us that the order of creation is the only way life could have been supported on the planet. The plants had to be created first. If animals had appeared on the scene first, they would have had nothing to feed on and would have died off almost immediately.

The more you study and meditate on these types of scriptures, the more convinced you will be that science when it rids itself of conjecture and theories will find itself in perfect harmony with the Bible. True Christians respect science and are open-minded enough to dig for the truth rather than believe every contradiction that is blown in their direction. With the right heart condition and the right strategies, the Bible can completely answer all such questions.

## **From the Telescope to Microscope**

No matter where you look in the scriptures, you'll find scientific harmony in the Bible. Although written thousands of years ago, the Bible tells us that the earth is round, it describes the water cycle, it puts the creation account in perfect order, there is an understanding of germs and the importance of cleanliness, and that the heavens stretch out across the expanse. Whether you look inside to the minuscule DNA or out in the universe there are patterns everywhere and the Bible is the place that first identifies it.

One of the greatest gifts God has given to man is the ability to discover. He could have created us with all the knowledge we needed to survive but instead, he allows us to have the joy of discovering something new every day. Imagine how you will feel when you experience that joy of finding the precious scientific gems hidden away for you to find in the Bible.

## Chapter 6: Prophecy

There are many reasons why people want to study the Bible. They want to be uplifted spiritually, they want to get to know their Creator, they want to learn how to live a higher quality of life, or they are want to have a connection to something that is higher than them.

The fact is that everyone reaches for the Bible for different reasons and because of that their approach to study is always different. But how does one know that the Bible is really a book from God? How can you be sure that it wasn't really ideas of the men who wrote it? If you are ready to take on the deeper messages found in the Bible, the evidence is there.

While the Bible offers proof of God's communication with us through history, through science, and through medical discoveries, it is not a book about those things. The evidence provided then is just coincidental. What I mean by that is that the Bible is not a history book but when comparing its records with those of historians we often find agreement along those lines.

For example, there are specific times that match exactly with historical records of the same period. This type of information is how we can determine exactly when a certain scripture was written, how we can determine what time period it covered and what life was like at that time.

For example, Daniel 1: 1-2, says:

*“In the year three of the reign of King Jehojakim of Judah, King*

*Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it, 2) and the Lord gave into his hands King Jehojakim of Judah and some of the vessels of God's house, and he brought them to the country of Shinar, and brought the vessels into the treasury of his God's house."*

While the Bible does not say things like on March 5th, 1927 at 6:00 in the morning this happened or that happened it is telling us exactly when things happen. Here we have two historical markers that we can now search for in the regular history books. The book tells us these things began when King Jehojakim (Jehoiakim in some Bibles) was in his third year as King. It also points out that it was at the same time as King Nebuchadnezzar was the King of Babylon.

If we take that information and search historical records we find that both kings were real people and they had kingships that overlapped each other. This added research gives us an exact date for the beginning of the book of Daniel, 618 BCE.

It can take up hours of study to determine the historical accuracy of the Bible but that was not its main purpose. Neither history nor science was the real reason for the Bible being written. Instead, it was something more pervasive that moved God to write these words to us.

The truth is the Bible is first and foremost a book of prophecy, so a true student of the scriptures will dedicate some time to reading and understanding the prophecies given, what they meant for the people living at that time and what they mean for us today.

It's true, studying prophecy can be a challenge but there are lots of ways to accomplish this task. We will discuss some of them here in this chapter to give

you an idea of how to go about it but first, let's come to an understanding of what a prophecy really is.

## **What Is Prophecy?**

A prophecy is an inspired message from God that reveals something that will happen in the future. In essence, it is history written in advance. A prophet is an individual God has chosen to reveal his message to and is charged with spreading that message to others.

While most people think that biblical prophecy was only given to men, the Bible does also identify several women who prophesied as well. At some point, you might be interested in studying the lives of powerful prophetesses in the Bible like Queen Athalia, Miriam, Huldah, and Deborah.

There are of course the major prophets like Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah whose entire book is an elaborately detailed prophecy with lots of applications, but there were also the minor prophets too, Amos, Obadiah, Nahum, Micah, Malachi and more. In the beginning, you might want to familiarize yourself with these prophetic books but there are prophecies written throughout the Bible, some of them are easy to decipher and others may take a little effort but I promise you, taking these along with a few history books will open your eyes to amazing things.

## **How Did God Communicate with the Prophets?**

The Bible is often explained as a message from God but the scripture at Ex. 33:20 tells us,

*“But he added: “You cannot see my face, for no man can see me and live.”*

No human in history has ever been able to set his eyes on God and live to speak about the experience. So, this means that a face-to-face communication with him was not possible. So, how did he relay his messages to his people? The Bible tells us that it was done in four different ways.

**In writing: There was at least one case where the Bible said he wrote the words down with his own finger. At Ex. 31:18, the first commandments of the Mosaic Law were written by God’s own hand.**

**He spoke to them: There were several occasions when God’s own voice was heard from the heavens. That must’ve been a powerful sound. In Ex. 3:2-4 God spoke to Moses through an angel giving him directions about what he would say to Pharaoh. In Ex. 34:27 Moses was told to “Write down these words....”**

**Through visions or dreams: Visions happen when you are awake and dreams occur when you are sleeping. Some of these visions and dreams were so vivid that the prophet found himself as an active participant in the unfolding of events. Consider the accounts at Isaiah 1:1, Luke 9:28-36, and Revelation 1:10-17. Other prophets may have been in a trance-like state as in the case of Daniel in chapter 7:1 or with the Apostle Paul at Acts 16:9.**

**Through mental guidance: There were times when the thoughts of the prophets were directed in a certain way. For example, we often say that God inspired the Bible but men wrote it. Some Bible translations say that the men were “borne along” by Holy Spirit, or the words were “God-breathed.”**

## **What does that really mean?**

Some use the illustration of a boss and a secretary where the boss dictates the words and the secretary writes them down. The information thus came from the boss not the secretary. Others like to describe it like an artist creating a work of art. It starts with a simple idea and it grows to a point where the artist no longer has any control of where his work will go. A spirit has entered into his body and taken over and his hands, mind, and heart can only follow the power that is leading them. This is the meaning of inspiration.

Suffice it to say, God has always found a way to communicate with his prophets and deliver his message in a way that is clear and poignant.

## **All Prophecy Is Not a Major Prediction of the Future**

While most prophecy is known for foretelling major events in the future, there are some that are not so profound. Many times, Bible prophets were sent to issue warnings of consequences that could happen if the people acted in a certain way. They would give people a choice to obey or disobey and outline the events that would happen with either option. The message of the prophet Jonah to the nation of Nineveh is a perfect example.

Jonah is most often known for his being swallowed by a big fish and then vomited out after three days but this is only a minor part of a much bigger story. Why not put that on your list of prophecies you want to learn more about. Here are a few other Bible prophecies that do not foretell major events in the future.

- Judges: 6:6-10:

- John 4: 17-19

- Luke 22:63, 64

There are actually four themes that God used when speaking to his prophets; judgment, pure worship, the Messiah, and hope for the future. As you read through the Bible's prophetic accounts why not see which theme these prophecies fall into.

The messages also required people to do something in order to receive His blessings. Look for the actions he wanted the people to take, what were the consequences if they refused, and how would these actions benefit the people? This will reveal a lot about God's personality, his spirit, and why His message was so important.

Now, let's practice with a look at a prophecy that fits each of these four categories.

**Judgment:** The prophet Amos gave a message of judgment to the nation of Israel. He lived at a time when the twelve tribes of Israel had been split into two separate kingdoms; the two-tribe kingdom of Judah on the south and the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel to the north. Amos was sent to Israel to give a message of judgment to the northern 10-tribe kingdom and six other surrounding nations. Read Amos 1:3 – 2:1.

Here we see that on six separate occasions he tells them "I shall not turn it

back.” The fact was that there was no escaping this judgment. Those kingdoms, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Syria, Tyre, and Edom would not escape God’s wrath. However, he doesn’t just tell them they have been found guilty and what will happen but he first explains their offenses and the reason for judgment.

Can you find those reasons for the judgment?

Syria: Stole territory from Gilead and treated God’s people harshly

Philistia: Took the Israelite people into bondage then sold them as slaves

Tyre: Were also slave traders

Edom: The Edomites were cousins of the Israelites through Esau yet they waged war with them.

Ammon: The Ammonites were cousins through Abraham’s nephew Lot yet they sadistically tortured the Israelites.

Moab: The Moabites were also descendants of Lot yet they had a history of violence with the nation of Israel.

Understanding this background helps us to see why the judgment of these nations was warranted. It helps us to see that God is not a vengeful God that just executes simply because someone didn’t follow his rules but the punishment

rendered was truly warranted.

## **Pure Worship**

After the kingdom of Babylon had exiled the Israelites for 70 years they were to be freed once again. Their assignment was to return to their homeland and restore pure worship to the land starting with building a new temple in Jerusalem. (Jer. 46:27; Amos 9:13-15) but they had no idea exactly when or how this was to happen.

The prophet Isaiah (Isa. 44:24-45:3) was charged with giving the details. He foretold that there would be a conqueror by the name of Cyrus, who would conquer Babylon letting the people go free. What is interesting about this particular prophecy is that it was written 200 years in advance. The prophecy not only gives the name of the conqueror but also details exactly how it was to be done. All of this was to unfold exactly as prophesied in order to restore pure worship to the land.

## **The Messiah**

There are hundreds of prophecies that lead to the coming of the Messiah. These scriptures are the only ones that helped the faithful Israelites to identify Jesus as the promised Seed. These prophecies started in Genesis with the promised "Seed" and continue all the way through the Hebrew Scriptures each revealing more details about his birth, his life, his ministry, and ultimately his death.

A Bible Study program of these prophecies can prove to be one of the most enlightening experiences you can ever have. Let's take a look at one of those

prophecies now.

### **Micah 5:2: The prophecy tells exactly when the Messiah would be born.**

*“And you, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, tiniest among the thousands of Judah, out of you shall come one to be ruler in Israel, his origins being from of old, from ancient days.”*

Interestingly, there were two cities named Bethlehem in Israel at the time, one located in Judah and the other located in Zebulun, so for an avid Bible student, it was important to determine exactly which one the Messiah was to be born in.

The scripture says it was the tiniest of the thousands of Judah. Why was this significant? Because the little Bethlehem-Ephratha was so minuscule it was not even included in any of the tribal divisions of Judah; it was designated as the tiniest of all, too small to even be mentioned.

Joseph and Mary did not live in Bethlehem and probably never had any intention of being in the small city but as it turned out they were forced to travel there while Mary was late in her pregnancy when the then leader of the Roman Empire, Caesar Augustus issued a decree ordering everyone to return to the city where they had been born to register their names in a book. Since this was the birthplace of Joseph, they were compelled to be there at the time of Jesus' birth thus Caesar Augustus unwittingly made a decision that brought this prophecy to fulfillment.

### **Hope for the Future**

There are also prophecies in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled. Just like the period of time prior to the coming of the Messiah, faithful Israelites were familiar with the scriptures to know when to anticipate his arrival. The same is true of us today. A careful study of Bible prophecy will reveal a host of prophetic writings that we are still waiting to unfold.

Isaiah 9: 6, 7

Jeremiah 10: 23

Isaiah 11:3-7

Isaiah 33:24

Dan. 2:44

Rev. 21:3,4

These prophecies were all set to be fulfilled during the reign of the Prince of Peace. Won't it be exciting to witness first hand the outworking of these Bible promises? While the Bible does parallel history and details many scientific facts, the heart and soul of the book are in the prophecy, which can lead to hours upon hours of fulfilling and enriching experiences.

As we have already observed, the Bible is full of prophecies that have had major impacts on the lives of God's people both in the past and in the future. One of the reasons these were so effective at drawing people to God was because they were not just vague predictions about what was to happen but because they were very specific. The details they included tell us about the people, the places, and certain events that man had absolutely no control over. By cross-checking these scriptures against historical documents, one can easily confirm the true fulfillment of these events.

This makes us think about the words written at 2 Pet. 1:21

*“For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.”*

From what we have just learned, it is evident that the Bible is certainly unique. Its importance extends far beyond a book of rules and regulations as many people may think. It is a work of practical wisdom and a living testament to a living, loving and caring God.

As you study God's word, it can change your life in a way that no human based program ever could. One may say that they love God but those are only words. The mark of a true lover of God depends on how much they love his words, accept his teachings, and apply them in their lives. Let's all show Him our appreciation for this wonderful gift by studying these profound messages in detail so we can discern his ultimate purpose for us and for our future. Below is a list of prophetic scriptures you might want to consider for your next Bible Study Program.

1. I Shall Make a Great Nation Out of You: Gen. 12:2, Gen. 15:13, 16

2. Flee from Babylon: Jer. 25:8-11

3. We Have Found the Messiah: Isa. 9:7

4. Christ Will Suffer and Die: Isa. 50:6, Isa. 53:12

5. The End Will Come: Rev. 18:2, 8; Dan. 2:44

There are several very significant prophecies that all true Christians must be aware of.

- Prophecies about Abraham and his promised seed
- Prophecies about the Messiah and his followers
- Prophecies about the Last Days and Armageddon
- Prophecies about global warfare
- Prophecies about food shortages, earthquakes, diseases, famine, greed.

This list goes on. Which one would you like to start studying first?

## Chapter 7: Study by Topic

You might be thinking that all of this is well and good but what if I want to study a specific topic? Many people seek answers from the Bible to improve their lives in many ways. They may want advice on how to have a happier family life, they may be looking for moral guidance, or they may just need to find a discussion on cultural differences, business matters, social skills, and so on.

The good news is that the Bible has answers for all of these things questions and more, but they are not listed as they would be in any other book. You won't find a book that deals entirely with marriage, or business affairs, or parenting for that matter. So, how does one go about finding information on these subjects without having to read the whole thing from cover to cover?

### Navigation

One of the first things you want to learn is how to navigate through the Bible. If you are not an experienced Bible reader, the names, numbers, and abbreviations of scriptures can prove to be confusing. Learning how to find things will make your study more effective.

At the onset, we pointed out that the Bible is not just one singular book but in essence a compilation of many books. They have been divided up into eight different sections:

The Pentateuch Genesis

Exodus

Leviticus

Numbers

Deuteronomy

The Historical Books Joshua

Judges

Ruth

1 Samuel

2 Samuel

1 Kings

2 Kings

1 Chronicles

2 Chronicles

Ezra

Nehemiah

Esther

The Books of Poetry Job

and Wisdom Psalms

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Song of Solomon

## The Prophecies Isaiah Major Prophets

Jeremiah Lamentations

Ezekiel

Daniel

Hosea Minor Prophets

Joel

Amos

Obadiah

Jonah

Micah

Nahum

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The Gospels Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

The Acts of the Apostles Acts

The Letters Romans Letters by Paul

1st Corinthians

2nd Corinthians

Galatians

Ephesians

Philippians

Colossians

1st Thessalonians

2nd Thessalonians

1st Timothy

2nd Timothy

Titus

Philemon

Hebrews Other letters

James

1st Peter

2nd Peter

1st John

2nd John

3rd John

Jude

## Revelation Revelation

Knowing these sections and the main points found in each of the chapters can give us a pretty good idea about what information is covered. As you saw in our exercise of the Pentateuch, each book is named for a specific reason so once you've learned the meaning of many of the names of the books of the Bible you will have a pretty good idea of what the message is within those pages.

It will help to have a brief overview of each book and its contents. At the end of this book, you will find a very brief summary of each of the 66 Bible books and its contents. This can help you to narrow down your search and pinpoint a book that will give you the best chance of answering your question.

How well you can narrow this down will depend largely on the Bible translation you choose to use. Most translations come with an index in the back where you can look up scriptures by searching for keywords. Others invest in a good Bible concordance to use along with their Bible. This will also help you to narrow down the best scriptures for your program of study. Here are a few little pieces of advice that might help you to research your topic better.

- If your research involves understanding a scripture, start with trying to determine the context of the surrounding verse. The details you find can often shed light on the text making it much clearer to understand
- Check the cross-references. Some Bibles have cross-references, which will allow you to look up other scriptures that are closely related to your topic to help you to understand it better.

- Use Bible tools. Aside from an index and a concordance, look in the back of your Bible. There may be maps, a glossary, charts, diagrams, or other reference material that can help you to discern the meaning of a particular passage.

- Use the Internet. If you're searching out a particular topic then don't hesitate to use the Internet to guide you in the right direction. A quick Google search on a topic like "The Secret to a Happy Family Life" may be all you need to point you in the right direction.

- Talk to someone. If all else fails, don't hesitate to ask someone to help you find the information you're looking for. Even the Apostle Luke gathered a lot of information by speaking to eyewitnesses of certain significant events in the Bible. Talking to a fellow Christian can put you on the right track with the information you seek. Always keep a record of the things you learn because as you become more familiar with the scriptures you'll inevitably have an opportunity to pay it forward later on.

- Meditate on your results. After you've found the information you've researched, it's time to put your heart and mind into the material. Compile it all together and read it through with an open mind. This is the time when you have to put away all those things people have told you for yourself and personalize the information to your circumstances. While the Bible is available to nearly every person on the planet you should always view it as a personal message to you. Ask yourself questions about its content, how it applies, what adjustments you might need to make, and how you can use it in your personal circumstances.

Never forget that the Bible is God's gift of truth to you. Analyze carefully the information you've collected and ask yourself questions about anything you received outside of the Bible.

1. Is the information reasonable?
2. Is it supported in the scriptures?
3. Is it exaggerated, antagonistic, or narrow in its view?
4. What was the motive behind the writing?
5. Does it conflict anything else in the scriptures?

In the beginning, this may feel like a daunting task but you will be surprised with how quickly you will begin to retain all the things you've learned. Studying the Bible by topic will require you to approach the Bible from a completely different angle but that's okay. God doesn't care if you tackle it from front to back, by section, or jump from one point to the next, as long you leave your mind and heart open to receive his message he will be happy and reward you with his Holy Spirit.

## Chapter 8: The Power of Prayer

Study of the Bible is a very noble effort and it shows that you are someone who is seeking a relationship with the Supreme Being of the universe. This will set you apart from many people who even if they claim to believe the Bible would have a difficult time defending it. Still, for the newcomer to the process, it could feel like a daunting task. However, once you've got the hang of it, you'll come to appreciate the words found at Ps. 19:7-8.

*Jehovah's instructions are unerring, life-restoring;*

*Jehovah's lessons are trustworthy, enlightening simpletons;*

*Jehovah's mandates are acceptable, gladdening hearts;*

*Jehovah's commandment is honest, brightening eyes.*

As the true Author of the Bible, God has made sure His message has been preserved through countless translations despite opposition from enemies. Yes, the Bible has always had enemies, some from even within the heart of religious fervor itself. Why would he do that?

Because he wants us to know him and connect with him on every level and to show Him our sincerity, we may have to defend Him to our peers and family members. The fact that the Bible has been translated into thousands of languages

is a testament to that very fact. No other book in history can make such a claim. So, it stands to reason that those who are serious about their study will naturally ask him for His help in understanding the true meaning of his written word.

## **Why Is Prayer So Important?**

Today, we live in a world where true Christians live like foreigners in their own land. One may have been born in one country but the lives of all those around them is not that of true and faithful followers. People live with worldly beliefs, desires, and goals and God is only a distant memory to them. For those seeking a close bond with Him, it is necessary for us to make transformations that remove us from the worldly influences all around us. So, looking into the Bible, gleaning his principles of good and bad, and taking them into our heart can be a real challenge. We need God's Spirit to help us to stay the course.

This is true whether we are young and just beginning to learn how to search out the precious gems found in the scriptures or a seasoned veteran who already knows and has benefited from the many blessings that come from studying the Bible. We need to convince ourselves over and over again of his righteousness and what his will is. This will empower us to stick with him when everything around us is going to the contrary.

To do this, we have to do more than just know about Him. We must build an intimate relationship with him and that can only be done through prayer. The time we spend in prayer offers us the privilege of having a private and confidential conversation with our Heavenly Father. It is our only means of communicating with him and telling him what we need. In fact, prayer is so important that it is worth taking the time to consider what we want to say before we open our hearts to him. This does not mean that we have to give him a rehearsed speech to make sure it is of a high caliber but that we should only give him our sincerest of expressions straight from the heart.

## **Meditate First**

We talked about meditation for when we study but now we're going to discuss meditation before we study. When it comes to spiritual matters one must never just blindly jump in but do so with the sincerest of intentions. If we're planning on searching his word for something specific that we need help with, we want to make sure that we ask him to guide us to the right information. This way, our prayers can become a specific request for help. Try to avoid the repetitious prayers that many people do. Remember, God is a person and the feelings we have are merely a reflection of the feelings He has. After all, we are made in His image.

As an example, consider meeting someone for the first time. You will normally give them the traditional greeting.

Hello.

Hello.

How are you?

I'm fine and you?

I'm well thank you.

Nice to meet you

Nice to meet you, too.

From there people tend to venture off and talk about the weather, work, or something else that may be of interest. This is the polite and the right thing to do. But now stop and think for a minute. How would you feel if, for the last 50 conversations you had, this was the same conversation? You never ventured off to more interesting comments and every time you saw that person you repeated the same mantra. You would probably begin to believe that that person wasn't sincere and didn't care enough about you to engage in a meaningful conversation.

This is what happens when you repeat the same words over and over again to God. He wants to know that you're interested and that you care about Him as much as He cares about you. Show him by thinking about it ahead of time and opening up your heart to Him.

Just like with any other relationship, the more you open up the stronger the bond between you two. Clearly, there is no higher honor you can have than to speak to God directly. How would you feel if you were asked to go to the White House to meet the President? Wouldn't you give some careful thought to how you dressed, how you acted, and proper etiquette? How much more important it would be when you are addressing the Supreme Being of all creation.

So, before you pick up your Bible to study do a little self-reflection.

- How would He feel about the words I say?
- What kind of things can I ask for?
- How can he help me to learn more about Him?
- How can I show my appreciation?
- How can I get even closer to God than I am now?

I promise you that if you do this, your prayers will be meaningful and you'll find the answers that you seek.

Ps. 25:4- 5

*“Make your roads known to me, Jehovah.*

*Teach me your paths.*

*Direct me in your faithfulness, and teach me,*

*Because you are the only God of my salvation*

*And in you, I hope all day.”*

A prayer by King David requesting that God teach him the right way to walk.

While most of us cannot utter such poetic prayers, we can see from reading David’s words how important it was for him to understand and use them in his daily life.

### **What Should You Pray for?**

Studying the Bible is not just something that a Christian thinks he should do. It’s a part of their lives. It should take priority of the study of any other books so you can pray for him to help you avoid distractions. A regular review of the Bible could actually be a life-saving experience. We should never lose sight of the fact that our Bible is our guideline for what is right or wrong.

- Your study habits

You need to have a regular schedule to study the Bible. If you leave it to when you have time, you’ll find that you rarely will have enough time to open the book. You can pray for him to help you avoid situations that might cause you to not stick to your schedule.

The Bible is our source of spiritual food. So, just like you would not forget to eat when you are hungry, sleep when you're tired, or find a cool place to rest when you are hot, your Bible study needs to take the same priority. Just like you wouldn't wait a week to eat, you shouldn't wait a week to study either. Remember, you have 24/7 access to Jehovah God every day. You won't ever get a busy signal, a recording telling you to leave a message or an assistant asking you to call back later. He is always available no matter what.

- To open your eyes

Many open the Bible to prove a point. They either want to prove someone wrong or they just want to reaffirm something they have always believed in. It's important to have a strong belief in the Bible but it is equally important to have that belief based on what's found in God's Word and not based on some sort of human tradition. You came into this world a single individual before God and at some point, you will leave the same way. Other people's beliefs should not be a factor in your worship and your relationship with God.

Keep in mind that you are studying God's Word. As the Apostle Peter said in his letter to the Thessalonians:

*“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.”*

2 Thessalonians 2:13.

Ask him to help you develop a powerful craving for His word and not just have

your ear open to hear the opinions of others. Rule of thumb you might want to follow is to verify everything anyone tells you with the Bible itself. Put this in your prayers and see what happens.

You will find many people who are content to curl up with a good book and surrender their minds over to something superficial. This is not the case with you. You are looking for something more substantial, something with a little meat on its bones. But studying the Bible is not always the easiest thing you can do. It requires mental effort, patience, and determination.

The Bible is a unique book. As famous philosopher Francis Bacon once said: “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” It is not a book for simply casual reading and definitely falls into the last category. You will learn something new with every bite you take.

Studying in itself is a challenge. The dictionary defines it as an “act of applying the mind so as to acquire knowledge or understanding.” It is a matter of investigating and digging up clues and putting pieces together. It is only logical that to study the Bible will require a lot more effort than taking time out to read it; maybe reading out loud as you go, taking a pen and underlining certain passages, and meditating.

Prayer can help you to accomplish all of those things and a few more too. Why? Because prayer is a powerful invisible force that works on our inner being, opening up our perceptive powers of reason. Over time, with the spirit working on you, you will come to enjoy studying God’s Word, it will bring you pleasure in the same way that your favorite food does and through it, your soul will be made fresher than new.

## Chapter 9: Study with a Purpose

One final note on improving your study skills. Throughout these pages, we've discussed a variety of strategies you can use to enhance your search for knowledge in God's Word. But whatever strategy you decide to use, it is important that you always try to study with a purpose.

This means that you must have a goal in mind before you begin. There are numerous ways you can do this. Many people have questions they want to be answered.

- Why am I here?
- Is the Bible really God's Word?
- How can I find a good husband?
- Should I take this new job?
- How to improve my relationship with my family?

Others are more interested in learning about God Himself.

- If God is invisible how am I made in his image?
- What does this account teach me about Him?
- What can I learn about Him that I didn't already know?
- How does God feel about what I am about to do?
- What is He trying to teach me here?
- How can I worship Him better?

When you set realistic goals each time you sit down to study it will help to channel your concentration on the topic. This may require planning ahead and staying on the course. Setting up a study plan that gives you a schedule to follow is one way to build up the structure and discipline you will need to keep you on track. Eventually, you can build up a fondness for the deep things of God.

This is true for any type of study but especially for those who are attempting to grasp the message in the most important book in the world. One needs to be organized and have a structured plan laid out to get the most out of their experience.

## Conclusion

We all can appreciate valuable gifts and the most precious one we could have is a message from our Father. Through its pages, the Bible unveils a whole new spiritual world that we would never be able to find on our own. It tells us about our earthly home and places us in the majestic gaze of the universe. It gives us an endless stream of guidelines on how to live morally and with decency. It explains why we are here and how we can contribute to the outworking of God's universal purpose. It is truly an amazing gift.

The Bible also tells us about our Creator and teaches us how to get closer to him. Imagine what life could be like with the Supreme Being of the Universe as your best friend. And the truth is, he wants us to know him. We can be sure of that because no other book in the world has been published in so many languages. It is truly a testament to how important He believes it is to have His wisdom at our fingertips.

Through the pages of this book, it is my hope that you have come to understand just how valuable a book the Bible truly is. It is the only book that has been "inspired." You can be sure that your goal to understand it better is truly making his heart leap for joy.

As we come to the conclusion of these pages, there are just a few more suggestions that can make your Bible study more rewarding. Whether you want to just read through the pages until you pick out a passage that draws you in or you have a blow by blow plan to cover specific topics, there are things you should always be looking for. These things, when identified will embolden you in ways far beyond your imagination.

## **The Harmony of the Bible**

At the onset, we explained that the Bible was written over a period of 1,600 years by forty different writers. This fact is common knowledge that few people would dispute but let's meditate on it for a second.

The time it took to record the message from God took more than a millennium and a half! This in and of itself an amazing feat. To put it in perspective, let's say that your grandfather chose to write a book but he didn't finish it before he died. Your father then picked up the pen and continued, writing for the remainder of his life until he died. Now, the pen is in your hands and you must continue the writing.

As you look back over the pages your grandfather and your father wrote, do you fully understand them? Can you relate to the stories they told? Can you match perfectly their style of writing? It's not likely. Your grandfather was writing from the perspective of his own generation, your father the same. It would be very difficult to harmonize when so much time has passed from the start to the finish.

But that is exactly what has happened with the Bible writers over time. Yet every scripture, every page is written in perfect harmony no matter how much time has passed. You will find as you read through the pages, some writers actually quote other writers giving them validity. No human could ever accomplish such a feat. When you find these things in your study of the Bible, let it fortify you. Don't just gloss over it and marvel at it.

You can also look at the Bible from another perspective. The forty different writers were from all walks of life. Some were kings while others were paupers. They were farmers, fishermen, tent makers, carpenters, artists, musicians, shepherds, prophets, priests, judges, lawyers, tax collectors, and there was even a

doctor among them. These people do not see the world the same way yet the words they penned were in complete agreement with other writers from start to finish. Yes, the Bible is truly impressive but it is even more impressive when you meditate on these things.

## **Look for the Bible's Accuracy**

Contrary to what many people have been told, the Bible is both historically and scientifically accurate. It contains information that man has disputed for thousands of years before it was definitively proved. A perfect example of this is the constant argument among scientists that the earth was round. That fact was not proven conclusively until the globe was circumnavigated for the first time sometime in the early part of the 16th century, yet the Bible recorded at Isa. 40:22 that the earth was a circle or sphere. This was nearly 2,000 years before scientists had figured it out.

There are many scriptural passages that detail scientific accuracy in relation to health, ecology, geology, and biology. As you read through its pages allow yourself to be amazed by such wonders. It is clear evidence that intelligence existed long before people got the idea of evolution or the Big Bang Theory or anything else that could discredit God.

Its historical accuracy is no less amazing. The genealogical records alone list names, dates, and places of all sorts of people. The Bible writers did not hold back from telling you the truth, whether the judgment was favorable or not. They even spoke of their own failures and embarrassments, faithfully recording them for our benefit (Numbers 20:2-12). So, learn from them and meditate on them and let them guide you in the way in which you should walk.

## **Practical Even in Our Modern Day**

The Bible has an amazing moral compass that can lead you down a righteous path. There is a good reason why Apostle Paul described it as being good for teaching, reproof, setting things straight, disciplining, etc. Through the Proverbs, we get an insightful view of human tendencies and their weaknesses. These teach us things we should avoid and through simple and easy to remember sayings you learn how to self-correct. Why not take some of these sayings and hang them up around your house so that you have a constant reminder of what you should do.

And no one could speak as eloquently and poignantly as Jesus Christ when he gave his Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). His teachings were so masterful that even today, 2,000 years later people are quoting from him. He teaches us the 9 happinesses, teaches us how to resolve issues with others, guides us in how to pray, and helps us to keep a balanced view of life in this crazy world.

Other principles taught to us are about the family dynamics, how to be the best at work, how to build positive relationships, and how to apply God's wisdom. These are the kinds of things that anyone can use in any situation. They are so adaptable that a child can use them at school but the parents can apply the same guidelines at work. It doesn't matter your age, gender, experience level, or how much education you have. The Bible has guidelines that can suit every aspect of your life.

## **Prophecy**

It could take you a lifetime to learn all of the different prophecies detailed throughout the scriptures. Nearly every book in the Bible has uttered some type of prophecy but you could start your approach to the studies with the Major Prophets or the Minors. You could start a chronological list of these prophecies and try to decode them on your own. Then compare them with the scholars who

have studied them for generations to see how you did. Make a game out of it or approach it with a structured frame of mind.

Prophecy fulfillment is unique in that it allows you to see the outworking of God's purpose first hand. It makes you an eye witness of future events and it puts you right in the thick of the past at the same time.

Yes, the word of God is not just a book. It is a living, breathing thing with a value that extends to the deepest regions of your heart. It carries a message that can truly change your life. When you start, you may say "I'm reading because I love God," but as you continue to grow in knowledge and in wisdom you will quickly discover that you have only just begun to understand Him. That is only logical. How can we love a God we have not yet come to know fully? We have affection for Him, we have an appreciation for Him, and even if we truly do love Him, that feeling can only grow as we gain more and more knowledge of the things he teaches us through his word.

The Bible is not just a book to be read, it is a book to be studied and cherished like a treasure beyond compare. The more you search into its secrets the more you will want to search for more. It can be a healthy addiction as your fondness for God's Word grows with each secret you reveal.

Happy Studying!

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## **A Little Request From the Author**

If you found this book helpful, chances are that others will, too! A positive review will help others find and access the information here, and will be much appreciated. Thanks again, and I wish you the best of luck on your own personal journey of self-discovery.

## Summary of Books of the Bible and Their Contents

Book	Writer	Date Completed	Content
Genesis	Moses	1473 BCE	Compiled the eleven a
Exodus	Moses	1512 BCE	Chronicles leave Eryp
Leviticus	Moses	1512 BCE	Regulations for sacrifi
Numbers	Moses	1473 BCE	Events on Mount Sina
Deuteronomy	Moses	1473 BCE	Moses' discourses, the
Joshua	Joshua	1433 BCE	Entering the Promised
Judges	Samuel	1100 BCE	Judges Othniel, Ehud,
Ruth	Samuel	1090 BCE	Ruth's decision, glean
1 Samuel	Samuel, Gad, Nathan	1077 BCE	Judge Eli and his sons
2nd Samuel	Gad and Nathan	1040 BCE	David's reign, God's c
1 Kings	Jeremiah	580 BCE	Solomon becomes kin
2 Kings	Jeremiah	580 BCE	King Ahaziah, Elisha
1 Chronicles	Ezra	460 BCE	Genealogies, Saul's ur
2 Chronicles	Ezra	460 BCE	Glory of Solomon's re
Ezra	Ezra	460 BCE	Remnant returns, rebu
Nehemiah	Nehemiah	443 BCE	Nehemiah to Jerusaler
Esther	Mordecai	474 BCE	Esther becomes queen
Job	Moses	1657-1473 BCE	Satan's challenge, Job
Psalms	David and others	460 BCE	Books 1 – 4
Proverbs	Solomon, Agur, Lemuel	716 BCE	Sections 1-5
Ecclesiastes	Solomon	1000 BCE	Man's vanity, counsel
Song of Solomon	Solomon	1020 BCE	Shulammite maiden, s
Isaiah	Isaiah	732 BCE	Isaiah's message to Jer
Jeremiah	Jeremiah	580 BCE	Jeremiah commissione
Lamentations	Jeremiah	607 BCE	Poems 1-5
Ezekiel	Ezekiel	591 BCE	Ezekiel as watchman,
Daniel	Daniel	536 BCE	Preparation for state s
Hosea	Hosea	745 BCE	Israel's adulterous cou
Joel	Joel	820 BCE	Insect invasion, Natio
Amos	Amos	811 BCE	Judgments, Israel's ac

Obadiah	Obadiah	607 BCE	Judgment on Edom, R
Jonah	Jonah	852 BCE	Assigned to Nineveh,
Micah	Micah	716 BCE	Sections 1-3
Nahum	Nahum	633 BCE	Pronouncements again
Habakkuk	Habakkuk	628 BCE	Dialogue with Jehoval
Zephaniah	Zephaniah	648 BCE	Day of Jehovah, Natio
Haggai	Haggai	521 BCE	1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th
Zechariah	Zechariah	519 BCE	Vision of 4 horseman,
Malachi	Malachi	443 BCE	Commandments to pri
Matthew	Matthew	41 AD	Introduce Jesus, Serm
Mark	Mark	60-65 AD	Baptism and temptatic
Luke	Luke	56-58 AD	Luke's introduction, J
John	John	98 AD	"The Word", "The Lar
Acts	Luke	61 AD	Events before Penteco
Romans	Paul	56 AD	Impartiality, no longer
1 Corinthians	Paul	55 AD	Exposes sectarianism,
1 Corinthians	Paul	55 AD	God of all comfort, qu
Galatians	Paul	50-52 AD	Paul argues apostleshi
Ephesians	Paul	60-61 AD	Undeserved kindness,
Philippians	Paul	60-61 AD	Defends advancing the
Colossians	Paul	60-62 AD	Christ head of congreg
1 Thessalonians	Paul	50 AD	Thessalonians exampl
2 Thessalonians	Paul	51 AD	Revelation of Jesus, A
1 Timothy	Paul	61-64	Exhortation to faith an
2 Timothy	Paul	65 AD	Holding the pattern of
Titus	Paul	61-64	Exhort to healthful tea
Philemon	Paul	60-61 AD	Onesimus sent back to
Hebrews	Paul	61 AD	Exalted position of Ch
James	James	62 AD	Patient endurance as d
1 Peter	Peter	62-64 AD	The new birth to a livi
2 Peter	Peter	64 AD	Making sure of the he
1 John	John	98 AD	Walking in the light, n
2 John	John	98 AD	Love one another, reje
3 John	John	98 AD	Hospitality and good v
Jude	Jude	65 AD	Warnings against forni
Revelation	John	96 AD	Introduction of prophe

# **Important Prophecies to Research**

Gen. 3:15 Promise of the Seed to destroy the serpent

Gen. 22:15-18 All nations to be blessed by means of Abraham's seed

Ex. 3:15-18 God emphasizes his memorial name Jehovah

Ex. 9:16; Rom 9:17 God declares purpose to have name published

Ex. 18:11;

Isa 36:18-20;

37:20, 36-38;

Jer. 10:10-11 God greater than all other gods

Ex. 20:3-7 God respects name, demands exclusive devotion

Job 1 – 2 Jehovah’s rightful sovereignty and man’s attitude and integrity toward it

Job 32:2;

35:2

36:24;

40:8 God’s vindication brought to the fore

Isa. 9:7 God zealously supports everlasting kingdom of his Son

Dan. 2:44;

4:17, 34;

7:13, 14 The importance of God’s kingdom by the “son of man”

Ezekiel 6:10;

38:23 People will have to know that “I am Jehovah.” This statement appears more than sixty times in the prophecy of Ezekiel

Mal. 1:11 God’s name to be great among the nations

Matt. 6:9,10, 33 Sanctification of God’s name by his kingdom is of first importance

John 17:6, 26 Jesus declared God’s name

Acts 2:21;

Rom. 10:13 God’s name to be called on for salvation

Rom. 3:4 God to be proved true, though every man a liar

1 Cor. 15:24-28 God to be all things to everyone by means of the kingdom under Christ

Heb. 13:15 Christians must make public declaration of Jehovah’s name

Rev. 15:4 Jehovah’s name to be glorified by all nations

Rev. 19:6 Jehovah's name praised when he takes kingdom power

## **Check Out Other Books**

Please go here to check out other books that might interest you:

Know Your Bible

HOW TO  
**MEMORIZE  
THE BIBLE**  
FAST & EASY



Shane Koller

Know your Bible: How to Memorize the Bible Fast and Easy

by Shane Keller

# RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TODAY TO  
IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY AND  
AWAKE YOUR INNER GENIUS

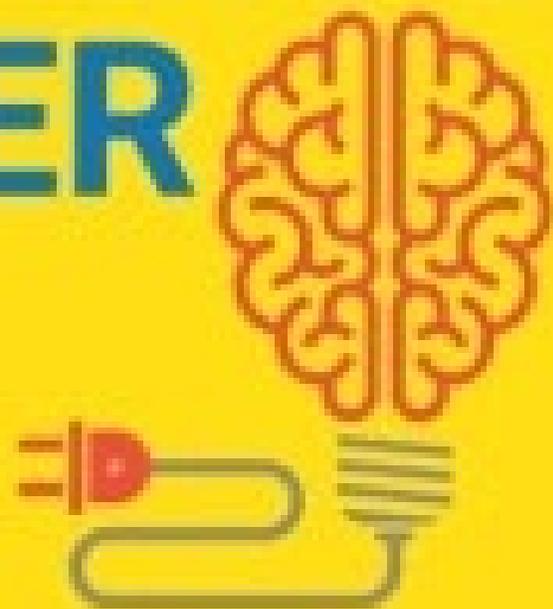


*Ivan Flammion*

Retrain Your Brain: Steps You Can Take Today to Improve Your Memory and  
Awake Your Inner Genius by Ivan Harmon

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# BOOST YOUR BRAIN POWER



LEARN BETTER, SMARTER, AND  
FASTER - SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN  
GUIDES TO SHARPEN YOUR FOCUS  
AND RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN

*Ivan Harmon*

Boost Your Brain Power: Learn Better, Smarter, and faster - Scientifically  
Proven Guides to Sharpen Your Focus and Retrain Your Brain

by Ivan Harmon

**10** FUN FACTS  
ABOUT YOUR

# MEMORY

*How Does Your Memory Work*



*Ivan Harmon*

# 10 Fun Facts About Your Memory

by Ivan Harmon



# 10 INTERESTING FACTS

ABOUT YOUR OWN MIND

*that you probably don't know*



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# 10 Interesting Facts About Your Own Mind that You Probably Don't Know

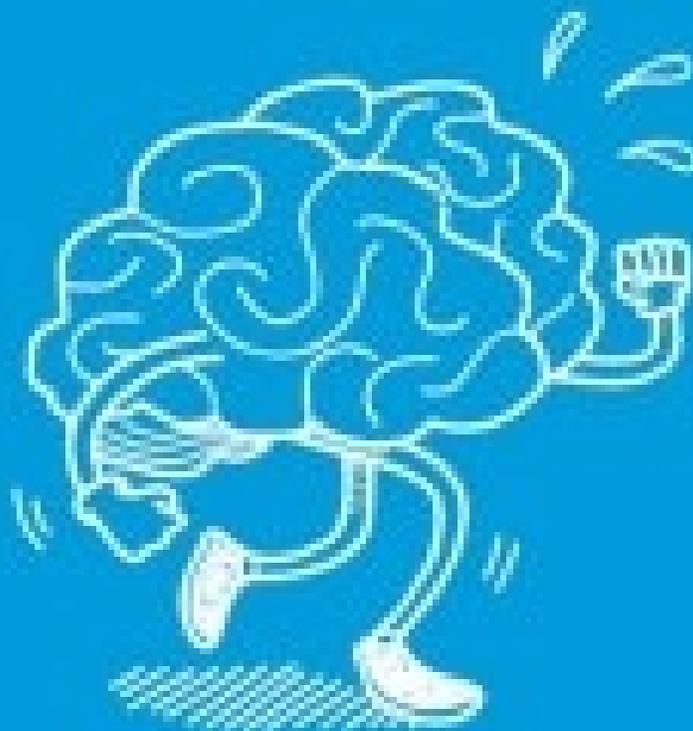
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# MEMORY EXERCISES

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CREATE A HABIT FOR  
MEMORY ENHANCEMENT



IVAN HARMON

Memory Exercises: Create a habit for memory enhancement by Ivan Harmon



# WHAT YOUR BOSS NEVER WANTS YOU TO KNOW



**How to Find Your Strengths,  
Work Happier, Grow Your  
Expertise, and Rediscover  
Your Life**

— *Lynne Frank Hue* —

What Your Boss Never Wants You to Know: How to Find Your Strengths, Work  
Happier, Grow Your Expertise, and Rediscover Your Life

by Lam Thanh Hue

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