

FIVE JOURNEYS
FOR READING THE BIBLE
IN THE NEW YEAR

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Prologue: Why More Bible Plans?

Many Bible reading plans have been written over the years.

The plans found in this booklet are not unique, they are simply made with the intention to help the reader have a positive and progressive experience as they learn the Word of God and grow in their knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Any or all of the calendars can be downloaded, printed and printed again.

They have no copyright. They can be and are meant to be shared with those of your community.

Dates are not included so the calendars can be used any time of the year.

May the Lord bless your journeys through His Holy Word.

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INTRODUCTION

*** 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. ***

Proverbs 2:1-5

Reading the Bible is a personal experience between the reader and God. Whatever method one chooses to approach this experience will bring depth and richness to their relationship with Him.

This book offers the analogy of taking different journeys as a way to learn the various principles taught within the Word of God. Each one is a stepping stone that enlightens us daily in the knowledge, understanding and wisdom contained within it.

Each journey can be used exclusively or can be combined to design one's own personal daily encounter with the Eternal One, depending on where they are today on the path to wisdom.

As we approach our learning of God's Word, we remember that the gaining of knowledge is just the first step to walking with God. Knowledge accumulated over time will bring understanding and as we put the Word of God into practice we will take the final steps into wisdom.

With the goal of wisdom in mind, we cannot reach our destination in a day or two or by following one or two road maps. We need to take some first shorter journeys to loosen our spiritual muscles and then intensify our efforts through more arduous journeys, once we have our rhythm and have built up some spiritual strength.

DILIGENCE, PERSEVERANCE AND COMMUNITY

*** Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. ** Proverbs 8:34*

Diligence and perseverance in our journeys will help us gain greater understanding of what the Lord wants each traveler to know about Him and His plan for mankind.

*** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. ** Hebrews 10:24, 25*

*** ...If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another... ** 1 John 1:7*

In addition to daily reading of the Word of God, attending a church or a Bible Study Group that honors God's Word is essential if the traveler is going to be able to finish his/her journey. Regular attendance can be

viewed as if we were spending time with an over-the-road travel agent. The 'agents' (pastors and leaders) will help us to avoid the wrong paths that the sole traveler may mistakenly take.

Also, we benefit from having companions on our journey. Companionship is essential for every human being, especially those that have taken on an arduous journey.

Spiritual companionship and community happens through shared experiences. Having a partner to walk one's Bible journey with will help both travelers benefit from the experience and invite the Lord's presence in a more unified manner.

*** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. ** Matthew 18:20*

Being a part of a Christ-centered community will enrich and broaden one's understanding of God's Word and keep one another company as they seek to stay on the path to wisdom. The family of God will help steer them both away from dangerous detours and the more experienced travelers can help to protect the novice hiker from the rockier paths.

A solo journey is a lonely and dangerous journey.

Journey #1

THE GOOD NEWS JOURNEY

***But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; **
Isaiah 28:13a*

Journey #1 is for those that have recently received the Good News of Jesus Christ and now belong to His family and are ready to start their journey learning about Him. It is a journey that can also be taken by those that became a Christian some time ago but have yet to form a habit of reading the Word of God daily.

Isaiah 28 explains that we are wise to learn the Word of God one line at a time. Just as mountain climbers begin their sport hiking in milder terrain, the Bible Traveler needs to start with a couple of simple strolls through short passages of the Bible. This will offer those necessary stepping stones to growing our faith that will prepare him for future understanding and tougher roads and climbs.

The first and most pivotal step of our life as Christians needs to begin with the person of Jesus Christ. Getting to know Him is the number one priority for every Christian. As we know Him better, we will find it easier to follow Him and His teachings. The Gospels are written with that specific goal in mind, to learn more about our Savior so that we can learn to emulate Him.

To get to know the One we have chosen to follow for the rest of our lives, I recommend that every new Believer in Christ or late starter starts their love of reading the Holy Scriptures in the...

Gospel of John

Reading the Gospel of John from Chapter 1 through 21 will help you to look into the words, actions and heart of the Savior. As you grasp the principles in this Gospel, your love for Him will deepen and you will begin to understand the depth of His love for you and for His people.

This first journey is a simple one and is actually made up of 2 smaller journeys that can be easily traversed in only 21 days and 6 weeks, respectively.

PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

Before you begin your journey, be sure to be well equipped. It is important for every traveler to stay hydrated, so be sure to also invite the Holy Spirit to teach you all that the Lord wants you to know for today.

*** But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. ** John 4:14*

A MINI ROAD MAP FOR YOUR READING

Bible references are written with three important details....

- 1. The name of the book where it is located*
- 2. The chapter of that book*
- 3. The numbered verse within the same chapter.*

Example: John 3:16

- 1. Book=Gospel of John*
- 2. Chapter=3*
- 3. Verse=16*

Once you have read Part 1 of Journey #1, (reading through the Gospel of John in 21 days), the next step is...

to read the Gospel of John, one more time.

Go at a slower reading pace this time. Read only half of a chapter over a 6 week period of time, and keep an eye out for some key elements of your faith. This will help to solidify the decision you made to trust in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. As you find each of these principles in the Gospel of John, you can jot them down in a notebook or in the margins of your Bible so that you can remember where to find these important stepping stones of your faith and have them referenced easily. This will be the start of your own personal road map.

Some clues to look for that will help you walk on more solid ground...

Where does it say that Jesus is ...

The Son of God ?

The Bread of Life?

The Door?

The Living Water?

What other details can you find about Jesus in these 21 chapters of the Gospel of John?

THE FINAL STEP

IN YOUR JOURNEY THRU THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IS...

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

As you read through the Gospel of John for the second time, you can also mark in your Bible or write in a journal the words, verses or passages that impact you the most.

From these passages, I recommend that you choose a few to...

MEMORIZE.

You may want to look specifically for verses that help you understand your own salvation and its eternal value and how to share it with others.

Some examples of these would be—John 1:1, John 3:16, John 5:12

++The Reading Journeys are all in a PDF file separate from this file. They can be downloaded or printed, whichever works better for your personal reading time.

+May the Lord bless your journeys in His Word.+

Journey #1a

Read the Gospel of John in 3 weeks

1 Chapter/Day

Journey #1b

Read the Gospel of John in 6 weeks

1/2 Chapter/Day

CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING THE FIRST JOURNEY!!!

JOURNEY #2

The Church Age Journey

*** Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ***
1 Timothy 4:13

Journey # 2 is the next leg of your journey in search of wisdom.

For those that have completed Journey #1, this journey will take you a bit farther down the road towards understanding what the Lord has waiting for you. It will inspire you to be more committed to your decision to follow Christ.

It may also be a journey you are even more willing to take because you can see that reading the Bible on a regular basis helps strengthen you to face the difficulties of life and gives you a new perspective on everything you encounter from one day to another.

Once you have read through the Gospel of John a couple of times from Journey # 1, you can now move on to getting a broader picture of the Church Age and the Apostle Paul's teachings.

To do this, I recommend that you now read:

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament is composed of the Gospel of Matthew to the Book of Revelation.

In the New Testament, you will discover more details about how Jesus dealt with people and how He dealt with His own personal hardships. You will also start to learn what the New Testament Christians and the Apostles of Christ did to demonstrate their faith in Him.

Remember, the Gospels and the entire New Testament is all about Jesus and His heart for His church. Look for Him in everything you read from the Gospel of Matthew to the Revelation of John.

Every journey offered in this booklet is an opportunity to discover new paths that will lead to greater understanding of who our Lord is and what He asks of us.

In the introduction section of this booklet, the traveler is encouraged to not walk alone on these new paths but to seek out a group of like-minded people that will join him/her on his/her journey. These fellow travelers will be there as a support and an encouragement for the more difficult turns that the journey may take.

It is also important to realize that there is 'someone' that is always with each traveler: The Lord Himself.

*** Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. ** Psalm 143:8*

The Lord joins each of His children on their individual journeys and is with each of them to guide them, care for their needs, and warn them about taking detours. There is no one that is more concerned that each one of us

arrives at our final destination with deeper faith and greater courage than the Lord Jesus Christ.

*** O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. ** Psalm 139:1-3*

As you, the traveler, join this second journey, the knowledge that the Lord will be at your side continuously will encourage you to finish this leg and to anticipate the next one.

Along Journey #2, keep your eyes open for some important landmarks.

- *Similarities between all four gospels and also ways that they are different.*
- *What did the first Christians do and how can we imitate them?*
- *Where were Christians first called Christians?*
- *What happened on the road to Damascus?*
- *Who was the apostle to the Gentiles?*
- *What did the church of Corinth do wrong?*
- *What churches suffered great persecution?*
- *Who is Timothy?*
- *What important message do we see in the Book of Revelation?*

Also, as you walk through the New Testament, watch for Jesus' responses to the people He dealt with in the gospels.

As you learn about Paul the Apostle, what principles of Christ does he emphasize? Which of them challenge you to be more like Christ?

The New Testament offers the traveler many ways to broaden their understanding of what it means to identify with Christ. Learning some of these principles will help the traveler to

decide if he/she will stay on the His path or veer off to easier ones.

*As we travel the road along each journey in this book, a beautiful picture will unfold: The picture of God's love for His people and His desire for them to live in peace and to live by faith, believing and trusting Him every day and in every situation. May you ** grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ** as you walk through the New Testament Journey.*

Journey #2

New Testament Reading Plan

2 Chapters/Day in 19 Weeks

Once you have completed both of the first 2 Journeys:

Gospel of John

Gospel of John again

Gospel of Matthew to Revelation

You can now move on to Journey #3 to learn about God's plan for His people since the beginning of the creation of time and the existence of man.

++The Reading Journeys are all in one separate PDF file. They can be downloaded or printed, whichever works better for your personal reading time.

+May the Lord bless your journeys in His Word.+

Congratulations on completing Journey #2!!!!

Journey #3

The Patriarchs

*** ...that the Lord thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk,
and the thing that we may do. ** Jeremiah 42:3*

In the same way that regular physical exercise is beneficial to our body's health, forming the habit of exercising our spiritual walk with the Lord daily by reading a portion of the Bible will also result in positive benefits to our heart and soul.

If you have completed Journeys # 1 and # 2...

Your recent travels in the Word of God, will now help you navigate a good portion of the

Old Testament

*** Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. ***

Psalm 119:105

This third journey in the Word of God will bring even more enlightenment and understanding to how the Lord moves among His people. To help equip you on this next journey, you need to know a few simple facts:

- *The first 5 books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch and were written by the Prophet Moses.*
- *These 5 books are the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and the Book of Deuteronomy.*
- *They will walk you through the 7 days of Creation, and the first appearance of sin in mankind and many sins thereafter.*
- *The history regarding the formation of the nation of Israel is mingled with the unfolding of the details of the Levitical Law throughout this journey.*
- *You will also get a glimpse of the chronology of the generations of leaders from Abraham to Joseph.*

This will be a bit heavier reading at times, that one can compare to climbing a small mountain. So, I have added a daily reading of the Psalms to keep you refreshed during the rocky uphill climb of reading God's laws and genealogies.

*Once you have read the Pentateuch (pen-ta-tuke),
you can continue to read the*

Old Testament

*from the story of Joshua as he conquers the Promised Land
to the Song of Solomon.*

In this second leg of Journey #3, I have also added a chapter from the New Testament to the reading schedule to help you keep Jesus' and Paul's teachings in mind.

*Once you have completed your Old Testament reading through to the Book of Song of Solomon, I **do not** recommend that an inexperienced Bible traveler continue on at this point with the Prophetic Books unless you have several other biblical journeys and knowledge under your belt. There is a very good chance you will get lost and veer off the path.*

These Prophetic books are tough reading. They are a bit like climbing Mount Everest. You are going to need prior training to benefit from them. You can get this training and preparation from listening to sermons from your pastor, attending classes or Bible studies, and having a mentor to help you weave in and out of this difficult terrain.

My advice is to leave them for now and come back to them when you are ready to dig deeper and extend your understanding of the overall plan for mankind that the Lord lays out in the Bible.

If you were new at getting daily physical exercise, your doctor would recommend that you divide the time into several short routines instead of wearing yourself out with one long one. If at this point in your journey, you are having trouble covering all the ground laid out for each day, try splitting up your reading in smaller amounts throughout the day.

*To embark on Journey #3,
I have included 2 different reading schedules, offering both paths of learning mentioned earlier.*

*Journey #3A
The Pentateuch & Psalms 1-100
3 Chapters/Day*

*Journey #3B
Joshua to Song of Solomon & the New Testament
3 Chapters/Day*

Once you have read this shorter portion of the Old Testament

*I recommend that you
take a break
from the more challenging trails
and return once again to the refreshing oasis of the New Testament in
Journey #4.*

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+May the Lord bless your journeys in His Word.+

Congratulations on finishing Journey #3!!!

Journey #4

The Refreshing and Wise Journey

*** I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. ***
Proverbs 4:11

NEW TESTAMENT

While dipping our toes in the New Testament waters, The Proverbs of Solomon are added to this calendar. Whether you are a new Believer in Christ or a veteran Christian soldier, a weary traveler can always benefit from an added daily dose of wisdom.

It is important to note that the New Testament is where our faith lives today. It will refresh your soul and spirit and prepare you for the high altitude trails of the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament in Journey #5.

For now it is important to deepen your understanding of the importance of who Jesus Christ is and what is your role as His child in His church.

That said, the Old Testament is a beautiful compilation of God's Hand through history. To understand all of its implications and how it helps our faith today takes some time and some explaining. We will talk more about it in Journey #5.

Journey #4

New Testament and the Book of Proverbs

3 Chapters/Day

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personal reading time.

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Congratulations for completing Journey #4!!!

You are now ready for Journey #5.

Journey # 5

The Long Distance Journey

*** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,...** Hebrews 1:2*

Journey #5 is for those who are ready to dig deeper and want to start putting all the pieces together from Genesis to Revelation.

It is for those that have a good grasp of the gospel, the life of Jesus and the teachings of Paul the Apostle. If you have completed Journeys #1, #2, #3 and #4, you also have a general familiarity with much of the Old Testament and its characters.

Completing the previous four shorter Journeys has prepared you to take a long distance Journey.

You are ready to take on the challenge of:

READING THE BIBLE FROM COVER TO COVER

From page one of Genesis to the last page of Revelation.

*** When wisdom entereth into thine heart,
and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;
discretion shall preserve thee,
understanding shall keep thee:***

Proverbs 2:10,11

Why is it important to read the entire Bible?

The world and its cultures are full of ideas, opinions, and perspectives on what is right and wrong. Through the ages, priorities and principles have changed in every culture. Priorities like morality and education. Some cultures have focused on the rights of the people, others have taken the people's rights away so that the leaders can have total control over their nation. Some have granted the freedom to worship as the people choose and some have taken away that freedom. History teaches us that priorities and perspectives change over time.

Yet, since the beginning of time as we know it, the Lord's perspectives and purpose have never changed. He always seeks to reach the hearts of His creation. The Lord has used many ways and many people in His effort to connect with those He loves. As we read the Bible, we see the Lord's steadfast perspectives and priorities unfold through the characters depicted there.

In Genesis, we learn of the beauty and detail of the Lord as He creates our world and our universe for His glory and for our good. As we continue to read, we learn of the choices we all make that show our own priorities and our own heart: who we choose to worship, how we treat our family members and friends, our motives concerning abundance, and our respect for life are all reflected in the characters we read about.

Farther into the Old Testament, we read of kingdoms that rise to great power and kingdoms that fall due to pride and prosperity and self-worship, as the Lord's will unfolds.

Throughout the Old Testament we can see the victories and failures of God's people. We meet men and women who live to please God and others that live to please themselves.

The Lord speaks to each of us through these accounts, helping us to learn how to emulate the good and to do things better than those that rebelled against Him.

Then, right in the middle of the Bible...

We meet a man whose focus is the heart of God. A man who lives to please it and Him. We read of David, the son of Jesse and his dedication, worship and praise of the One who loves him unconditionally and Who is forever faithful in caring for David's every need.

After the death of David, we meet his descendants and their choices of following in David's footsteps or their running in the opposite direction, as far from David's example and His God, as they can get.

Lastly, we read of the difficult job that the prophets had of trying to communicate the messages, the warnings and the mercy that the Lord has for His people.

By the time we reach the Gospel of Matthew, we are either worn out by the judgments that the Lord promises to send upon those who have turned their back on Him, or we rejoice and take comfort in the mercy and long suffering that He showed to generations of rebellious people.

Entering the New Testament, we cross a bridge.

A beautiful bridge of hope and salvation. Something wonderful happens when we cross it. After thousands of years of trying to get the Lord's message to His creation through others, He Himself shows up to speak to His people personally.

*** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,... ** Hebrews 1:1,2*

*** who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person ** 1:3*

Emanuel: God with us.

God, in the flesh, enters our world, our culture, our opinions and our perspectives to teach us openly what His are and how to live by them.

Jesus comes with power to heal, compassion to help, and wisdom to lead.

He lives His Word right before us.

He, then, after His return to Heaven, preserves all of the wisdom from the Old and the New Testament in written form, so that we can learn from Him again and again.

Now, each of us can have a new perspective on all that life brings.

His perspective.

*** Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. ** Hebrews 2:1*

Now, from the Lord's perspective, we can go back through the Bible and see the courage of Abraham for stepping out and walking by faith, to search for the land that the Lord promised to Him.

We can take a new look at Ruth, a stranger in a strange land. A woman who left her family, her culture and her false beliefs, to serve her mother-in-law! She chooses to trust in the God that has rocked her world and makes her unexpectedly a part of His human bloodline.

We can see the nobility of Debora, staying true to her faith in her All Powerful God, even when ALL of the men of her country have lost their faith and courage.

We can read about the Prophets and their trials.

Instead of seeing their words as judgments against the Lord's people, we can see the Lord's heart as He warns them to listen before it is too late. Again and again, He cries out to them through the prophets in hopes that they will turn their heart to Him once more.

Through the warnings and visual demonstrations of the Lord's words by the prophets, we come to understand that when anyone, in old times or in modern times, listens to the warnings and turns back to God, He is there, ready to pour out His mercy and love on them.

**** But we see Jesus...** Hebrews 2:9**

Our Journeys through God's Word, from Genesis to Revelation, are journeys accompanied by the voice of the Father asking us to hear His Son speak to us.

It is about hearing His perspective on every one of our problems and needs.

It is about listening every day to what He has to teach us, from His point of view.

And it is about learning how to see everything in our lives and the lives of others from His perspective and then living in a way that reflects that new perspective.

When Paul tells Timothy...

**** Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... ****

1 Timothy 4:13

...He is not telling Timothy to fulfill a religious ritual or requirement. He is telling him, (and us), to see Jesus in every word that he reads, in every word that he shares with others and to every lesson he teaches.

We can all ask ourselves....

Have I heard the Lord's perspective today?

Have I asked Him to show me His perspective on today's troubles?

Have I been still enough to listen?

Have I heard and do I know what I need to do?

So, enjoy this Fifth Journey through the hills and valleys of Truth, and be attentive to His voice as the Lord walks beside you, whispering His love, His kindness and His RICH MERCY into your heart.

While walking on this fifth journey, continue to take notes in your journal on how each character of the Old and New Testament impact your faith.

If you have taken the other four Journeys that this booklet offers, you now have a good base of knowledge of the New Testament and some of the Old Testament. You are ready to take on the challenge of reading your Bible from the beginning to the end and to have the goal of doing it over a year's time.

Journey #5

Genesis to Revelation

3-5 Chapters/Day

*** But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) ** Ephesians 2:4,5*

++The Reading Journeys are all in one a PDF file, separate from this file. They can be downloaded or printed, whichever works better for your personal reading time.

May the Lord always bless you with understanding of His Word and enrich your days with His mercy and grace!