

Understanding the Bible Beginner's Edition

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By Kelly McDonald, Jr.

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Introduction

What is the Bible? The Bible is the history of God's interactions with mankind. It details how the Creator of all things plans to use you in His awesome plan. This powerful book will guide your New Life as a believer in Jesus Christ.

In the Bible, you will learn the daily lifestyle of a Christian. In it, you will find countless promises for your life because you are God's child. These promises will help you to endure tough times. Before coming to know Christ, you struggled through tough times without guidance. Now, you have the ultimate guide for life.

The Bible was written by over two-dozen authors from a variety of backgrounds. Some books are authored by common people such as shepherds. Others are authored by kings. Every book is inspired by God. This means His Spirit inspired the authors to write in a way to convey God's will to all mankind. This powerful, living Word has guidance and understanding for everyone no matter your background or current situation. It has application for your past, present, and future.

In this booklet, you will learn some important tips for helping you understand the Bible. The very first step is to pray and seek God. You can pray something simple such as, "God, I ask that you open up the Bible to my understanding that I may know you more." Don't just try to learn His book with human understanding. God is the author and He wants to help you understand it. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5, NET).

In this booklet, I am passing on to you study practices that God has shown me over the years. They will help you better understand the Bible. This is the beginner's edition to understanding the Bible.

Chapter 1

Overview of the Bible

It is amazing to think that God, who has authority over everything, is actually interested in using you and me! It is quite humbling that the Great Creator God even cares about us. The Bible is how we will learn about God. We learn what He likes and dislikes. We learn how He views our behavior and daily living as a believer.

I usually recommend an easy to read version of the Bible such as the English Standard Version (ESV). There are also Bible apps for your phone that you can download to read. If you pick up an older version like the King James, you may not find some parts difficult to understand—other people find delight in these translations.

The Bible has 66 separate sections called books. Each of these separate books has verses, which are numbered. These help you when you are trying to go back to a specific place in the Bible. The Bible is divided into nine major parts. I have listed every book of the Bible below as well as the different parts it is divided into:

- 1) **The Torah** – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
- 2) **The Historical Books** – Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther
- 3) **The Wisdom Books** – Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon
- 4) **The Major Prophets** – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel
- 5) **The Minor Prophets** – Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi
- 6) **Gospels** – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts
- 7) **Letters of Paul** – Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon
- 8) **General Letters** – Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1

John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude
9) Final Prophecy - Revelation

In the front part of most Bibles, you will see a page that looks similar to this:

the old testament	
Genesis	3
Exodus	53
Leviticus	92
Numbers	121
Deuteronomy	162
Joshua	199
Judges	222
Ruth	245
1 Samuel	249
2 Samuel	279
1 Kings	306
2 Kings	336
1 Chronicles	365
2 Chronicles	397
Ezra	430
Nehemiah	441
Esther	456
Job	467
Psalms	499
Proverbs	583
Ecclesiastes	613
Song of Songs	622
Isaiah	631
Jeremiah	695
Lamentations	756
Ezekiel	763
Daniel	813
Hosea	828
Joel	838
Amos	842
Obadiah	850
Jonah	852
Micah	854
Nahum	860
Habakkuk	863
Zephaniah	866
Haggai	870
Zechariah	872
Malachi	881

the new testament	
Matthew	889
Mark	922
Luke	943
John	977
Acts	1003
Romans	1037
1 Corinthians	1052
2 Corinthians	1065
Galatians	1074
Ephesians	1079
Philippians	1084
Colossians	1088
1 Thessalonians	1092
2 Thessalonians	1095
1 Timothy	1097
2 Timothy	1101
Titus	1104
Philemon	1106
Hebrews	1107
James	1118
1 Peter	1122
2 Peter	1126
1 John	1129
2 John	1133
3 John	1134
Jude	1135
Revelation	1137

This page in your Bible will show you what page number you can find the beginning of each book of the Bible. Some people call the first two-thirds of the Bible the “Old Testament” and the last

one-third “The New Testament.” These are labels added by people. The Bible is one testament of one God redeeming one creation through one plan. However, believers routinely use these two terms to help us identify different areas of the Bible. Sometimes I refer to them as Old Testament and New Testament only because this is a common way to refer to them. People are familiar with these labels.

Below, I have summarized what you will find in each 9 sections of the Bible:

In the **Torah**, you will learn about the early history of mankind. You will learn about the Creation of the world, the life and faith of our forefather Abraham, and the early history of the nation of Israel. You will also learn about practical instructions for human living which are commonly called the commandments of God.

In the **History Books**, you will learn much about the history of the nation of Israel. You will learn both the good things and the bad things they did as a nation. You will see both the rewards and punishments of God’s people as they either obeyed or disobeyed the daily lifestyle God set forth in the Torah.

In the **Wisdom Books**, you will learn practical lessons in how to treat other people. It will accentuate what you learn in the Torah. You will gain insight in viewing the world in a way that pleases God.

In the **Major and Minor Prophets**, you will learn about God’s appeal to humans to obey the commandments of God. They contain some details in the Bible that help us better understand God’s daily living. Furthermore, you will learn about prophecies that relate to specific nations on earth.

In the **Gospels**, you will learn about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, our Savior. He obeyed the daily living found in the Torah perfectly. His earthly life revealed the inward and outward standard that God expects of us.

Starting with the book of Acts, you will learn how Christ’s example was continued after His death and resurrection by the early believers. Through Jesus, the promises of the first part of the Bi-

ble, commonly called the Old Testament, come to pass. Acts will show us some of the trials and triumphs early believers faced as they spread the Word of God.

The **Letters of Paul** will explain specific situations and teachings in the early church as taught by the Apostle Paul. They show us how to handle problems in the church and they further elaborate on God's expectations for our lives. He gives a very deep insight on the commandments of God and how to deal with certain issues.

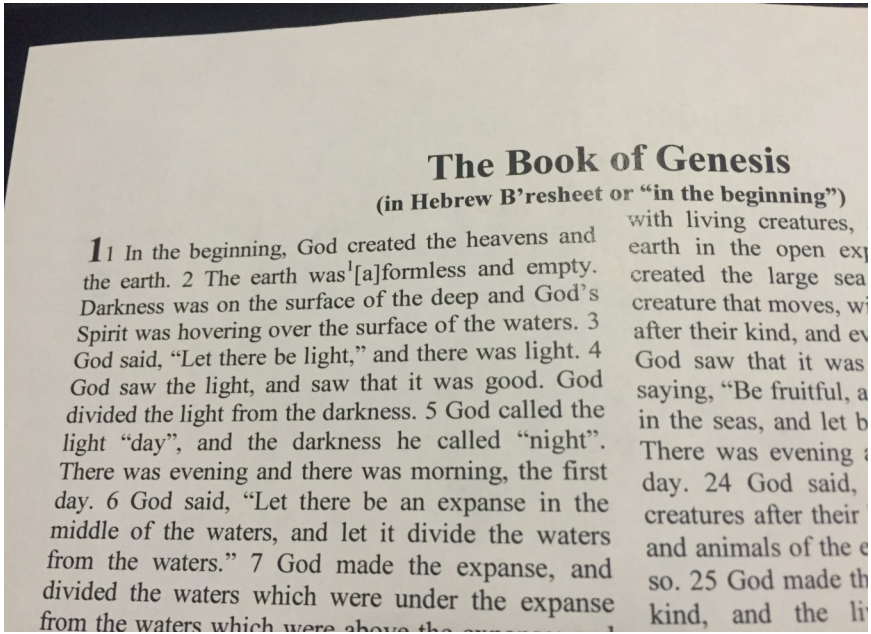
The **General Letters** are similar to Paul's letters in that they offer insight as to God's expectation for our lives and how to treat other people.

The **Final Prophecy** of the Bible is the book of Revelation. It can be viewed as a summary of other prophetic books. It gives us further detail as to future events that will happen on earth. The greatest portion of this book has yet to happen.

Chapter 2

Reading the Bible

This will be a brief chapter teaching you to read the Bible on a very basic level. If you open to the first book of the Bible, named Genesis, you will see something like the following:



When you get to the beginning of a new book of the Bible, you will see the name of the book at the top. In this case, you can see Genesis at the top. Let's look a little closer (picture on the next page)

11 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was¹[a]formless and empty. Darkness was on the surface of the deep and God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters. 3 God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw the light, and saw that it was good. God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day", and the darkness he called "night". There was evening and there was morning, the first

You will see a big number in bold on the left. In this case, that is a big **1**. This is the **CHAPTER** you are reading in. You will also see little numbers after this big **1**.

For instance, the very first part of Genesis Chapter 1 reads:

11 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was formless and empty. Darkness was on the surface of the deep and God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters.

The little **2** that you see beside the words "The earth was..." is the **VERSE** of that Chapter.

When people refer to the Bible, they will type something like this: Genesis 1:2. This is a short way of referring to Genesis Chapter 1 Verse 2. Sometimes, you might see Genesis 1:2-4. This is short hand referring to Genesis chapter 1 verses 2 through 4. This means reading at the beginning of verse 2 and continuing all the way through the end of verse 4.

You will see me quote the Bible in this manner throughout this booklet. Most Bible-related works quote them the same way.

Books of the Bible can also be abbreviated. For instance, Genesis is usually abbreviated by “Gen” Therefore, some people might type or write – “turn to Gen. 1:2-4.” This means the same thing as Genesis 1:2-4.

There is a full list of abbreviations for books of the Bible in the back of this booklet on pages 24-26.

Chapter 3

Read the Bible Every Day

The first step in your journey towards understanding the Bible is to establish a daily discipline of reading this blessed book. As a guideline, I usually recommend at least 30 minutes a day of reading through the Bible. This will really help you “download” the knowledge of God into your mind and spirit.

When people want to study the Bible deeper, they often ask: “Where should I start reading?” Some people think you should start with the first book of the New Testament, which is called Matthew. The New Testament is only about 33% or one-third of the Bible. Would you go to a movie and pay for a ticket only to get to watch the last part of the movie? Absolutely not!

You should start reading the Bible with the very first book, which is named Genesis. The Bible tells us that God declares the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). This means when we understand the first part of the Bible, then the rest will make a lot more sense to us. We live towards the end of the Bible story. Our times will be illuminated when we start at the beginning.

The goal is to understand the entire Bible. When we do so, the entire plan of God for humanity will make more sense. When parts of the story are missing then our understanding will be lacking.

One goal that many people set is to read every book of the Bible from Genesis all the way through the end of Revelation in a year (and then repeat). As of the writing of this booklet, I have read through the Bible multiple times (Praise God!). I have learned more about the Bible and God’s will for my life doing this than any other method of study. It sounds too simple, but it is effective; it works.

When do you start? There is no better time to start reading the Bible than right now. The first time you go through your Bible, you need to read it like a story book. Do not try to understand every single detail. Because the Bible is a detailed book, you might feel frustrated your first time through. Do not worry or fret.

Just read it like it is a story. That will make it easier. Let God piece together the general story line in your mind. Just absorb and take it all in. It is written in the Bible, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5).

To help with this, take time for prayer. Prayer is your request to God. Once you have prayed, just trust Him. Trust that your time reading the Bible will be effective. He is faithful, and He will help you do it. Feel free to pray something simple, such as “God, I ask that you help me to understand your Holy Word.” Or, you can pray something more in depth. Pray sincerely from your heart.

A sample prayer I have used is as follows: “God I thank you for the blessing of the Bible. Lord, I ask that you would please write your Words on my heart and mind. Quicken your Words into my heart and mind whenever I need to know it, share it with someone else, or whatever other purpose you might have. Let me not go through your word, but let it go through me and manifest in my life. I thank you for the lives that have fought and died so I can have it in my hands. Help me to cherish it, honor it, and live its precious Words. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

When you read the Bible, always have a notebook handy. Your first time through the Bible certain Scriptures will stick out to you. They will really apply to your life. Write these verses down and date the entry. As time goes on, these entries will be precious to you. God will speak to you as you read the Bible. It is His message to all humanity, but it is also His message personally to you.

Your second time reading through the Bible, you will begin to make connections between different parts. Moreover, you will begin to see themes and patterns. Your third time will deepen these patterns. These get deeper and deeper each subsequent time you read through the Bible. Write down connections as you notice them. For instance, a serpent deceived mankind in Genesis chapter 3. In Revelation chapter 12, satan is called “the ancient serpent.” See the connection? We can see that the same deceiver in Genesis is still deceiving at the end in Revelation.

Also, write down the details that stick out in your mind and heart.

You will need them later on! This is usually God's way of preparing you for situations in the future. The Bible verses that stick out are usually things you will need for a trial in life, to encourage you, or to encourage someone else. Throughout the year, you will be amazed at how God will speak to you and encourage you as you read the Bible. No matter what part of the Bible you are reading at a given time of the year, you will find something fresh for your situation. He is full of love, compassion and guidance. He is infinitely wise!

Some people say that they cannot hear from God. When you read your Bible, then God will always speak to you. His Word is a spoken message to you and your situation.

When is the best time to read your Bible? The best time to read the Bible is when you first wake up; though some people may find it best to read at night. The devil will send distractions to cheat you out of your Bible reading time. We are in a spiritual warfare against our enemy, satan the devil. He is always trying to knock you off course. You fight the devil in this area by simply reading no matter what happens. There are ways to fight back!

If your guideline is 30 minutes every day, just make sure to get 30 minutes. You may have to get it in 10 minutes at a time throughout the day or 5 minutes at a time. In a war, there is always back and forth fighting. The same is true of spiritual warfare. The goal is that we keep fighting to read the allotted time. You will keep the devil off track if you fight back. This takes discipline, but it will change your life if you follow through and do it. I know it has completely transformed mine.

Lastly, you can also listen to the Bible. There are free apps and websites that will play the Bible in a specific version for you. <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/> is one resource available.

Some people drive a lot and these resources can really help them. This can help you catch up on your reading, but make sure to spend time reading as well. The two can work together to build your faith.

Chapter 4

Studying the Bible - Beginners

In addition to daily Bible reading, you want to schedule specific times either daily or during the week to study the Bible in a more focused manner. If you are really busy, then the Sabbath is a great time to do this.

A second Bible study method is to focus on a specific subject. There are different ways to do this. You can use a free online Bible search engine like www.biblegateway.com. When you get to this website, you can search a specific subject in different translations of the Bible. You just type in the word or words related to that subject. Let's choose a subject in the Bible: The Sabbath. In this instance, you would type the word "Sabbath" in the search bar. Once you do so, it will bring up a list of verses that contain the word Sabbath.

There are apps for your phone and tablet and even computer programs that serve this purpose. E-Sword is the most common program—it can be downloaded as a phone app and/or a computer program (I highly recommend it).

You can also buy a concordance. A concordance is a physical book that lists every verse in the Bible where a specific word or subject is discussed. In this instance, you would look up the word "Sabbath". The most common concordance is the Strong's Concordance, but there are others available. Talk to someone in your church leadership about a good tool to use for this purpose.

When you study a specific subject, you can always search for multiple words or phrases related to that subject. For the Sabbath, you would also want to search "Sabbath", but also "seventh day", or "seven day." These other two phrases will generate a few more verses on this subject than the word "Sabbath" alone (because the Sabbath is on the seventh day).

As you conduct these different searches, whether by electronic or physical concordance, write down a list of scriptures you find in a notebook. Feel free to use the same notebook you use for your daily Bible reading. As you study a subject in this manner, you

don't have to write down every word of a verse; you can just write the actual reference itself. This is called **compiling or listing**. As a short example, let's say you compiled the scriptures for Sabbath:

Genesis chapter 2 verses 1 through 3 (the abbreviated form of this is Gen 2:1-3)

Ex 16:23-29

Ex 20:8-11

Ex 23:12

Ex 31:13-17

This is the beginning of your list of verses pertaining to the Sabbath. Obviously, there are many more instances of the word Sabbath in the Bible. For the sake of space, I have listed the first five places in the Bible where the Sabbath is discussed. After you have compiled a list of verses, look up every one of them and write down specific things you learned. This is called **subject summary**. As an example:

Gen 2:1-3—God rested on the seventh day after creation. He blessed the day and made it holy.

Ex 16:23-29—God used the manna to show the Israelites which day was the Sabbath.

Ex 20:8-11—God said not to work on the Sabbath and for our family not to work; instead, we are to rest. This is one way the day is honored as holy. God reminded us of the first Sabbath in creation (Gen. 2:1-3).

Ex 23:12—God said that we and our household are to rest so we can be refreshed.

Ex 31:13-17—God said that the Sabbath is the sign to know who He is.

Deut 5:12-15—same as Exodus 20:8-11. No reference to Gen.

Let's say a verse simply says the same thing. Simply write "same as ____ (verse)". I have an example above with Deut. 5:12-15. In this first phase, you are simply compiling a list of scriptures and writing a brief description of what you learn from those verses. Look at all the different things we learned from just a few verses.

Psychology was one of my studies in college. I took a class called Educational Psychology. One of the things I learned was that

your brain retains information easier when you attach a piece of information to something you already know. This creates a **web of knowledge** that will hold up over time. Allow me to explain how this works.

Compiling a list of scriptures in the way I have presented above will help you create a web of knowledge. Your brain will connect one verse to another because the overall subject matter of those verses is the same (in this case, The Sabbath). This connection will happen even though there are different details in each verse about the Sabbath. This will assist you in remembering Bible verses.

As you apply this specific Bible study method, you will remember that there are multiple instances of the word Sabbath in Exodus. As you review these references over and over again, you will remember the chapters better. The more you study a subject in this manner, the deeper these memories become engrained. You will eventually be able to remember chapter and verse much easier. This will reinforce other verses on the Sabbath that you have studied and continue to study in the future. This is a simple way to explain how a web of knowledge is created.

The combination of prayer before you study the Bible and this specific Bible study method will bring a powerful “quickenings” of the Scripture to your mind. Prayer is the spiritual component and systematic study is the natural component. God will help you throughout the process.

Chapter 5

Context is Key

Context is a major key to understanding the meaning of any verse in the Bible. Context is simply reading a Bible verse in comparison to the verses around it and other verses in the Bible. This helps you to understand the correct meaning of the verse. We want to interpret the Bible correctly so that we apply the Bible properly to our own lives and accurately share it. There are **five basic types of context** in the Bible. I have listed them below with specific examples and incorrect conclusions we can come to if we do not understand context:

- 1) **Within Verse**
- 2) **In Surrounding Verses**
- 3) **In Chapter**
- 4) **In Book or Letter**
- 5) **In the Entire Bible**

1) Within Verse — This context is simply reading the entire content of a specific verse. It would be easy to quote half a verse, but the entire verse can reveal the complete truth to us.

Example: The first part of Romans 8:1 reads, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...” I have often heard the first part of this verse quoted to justify the belief that a Christian can live any way they desire after they are saved. However, the second half of the verse reads, “who don’t walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (WEB). The full context teaches us that we stay out of condemnation if we do not live after the desires of our flesh.

2) In Surrounding Verses—This is reading the verses surrounding a specific verse.

Example: “ 8 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 it is not from works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9, NET).

Some people use these verses to say that once you are saved, there are no works required of Christians. The very next verse gives us fuller understanding. Ephesians 2:10 reads: “For we are his creative work, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we can do them” (NET).

Now, we have a fuller picture of salvation and the Christian lifestyle. Works do not save us, but there are good works that will manifest in a believer’s life because we have faith in Christ. They are the fruit or evidence that we are saved (John 15:1-16, Col. 1:10, Tit. 3:14).

3) In Chapter – Sometimes a specific verse references something earlier or later in the same chapter.

In Matthew 10:18, Jesus said that, “And you will be brought before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them and to the Gentiles” (NET). In this verse, to whom are the “them” that Jesus is referring? In Matthew 10:6, Jesus commissioned the 12 Apostles to minister to the lost sheep of Israel. Thus, verse 6 explains the “them” in verse 18. The apostles were sent to the lost sheep of Israel and would testify before them. The entire chapter bears witness to the context.

4) In Book – There are some verses and words that have a context throughout a book or letter. Sometimes you just read the chapter before a verse or the chapter after a verse. Sometimes you have to read the entire book to understand that one verse. A great example is Paul’s explanation of the Law in the book of Romans.

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (**Romans 10:4**, NKJV).

Some people think that this verse means that Paul is trying to say that the law has terminated or ended. However, a look at other verses reveals the true meaning. Keep in mind that the English word **end** can also mean **goal**.

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law” (**Romans 3:31**, NKJV).

“5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the

things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (**Romans 8:5-8**, NKJV).

Romans 10:4 taken by itself could easily be misunderstood. After we read other verses in Romans, it becomes clear that he is not saying that the Law is terminated or ended. Romans 3:31 and 8:6-8 help us to clarify the meaning. Our faith in Christ does not nullify or cancel the law. The Spirit of God leads us into obedience to the law. The goal of the law is to point us to Christ and His perfect example—He obeyed the commandments of God.

The Bible is inspired; God is connecting these verses for us. This is a great example of **In Book** context. It is reading other chapters within a book of the Bible to ascertain the correct interpretation.

Don’t let chapter endings and beginnings keep you from connecting them together. Too many times, people separate the verses in one chapter from another. As you can see from the example above, we can miss out on valuable insight if we do this. For instance, Jeremiah 30:4-6 discusses a prophetic time period called “the Time of Jacob’s Trouble.” This prophecy continues the entire length of Jeremiah Chapters 30 and 31. Learn to connect chapters together and look at the book as a complete work. You can also look at how verses connect to each other within surrounding chapters.

5) In Bible – We can also look at a single verse and compare it to other verses found in different parts of the Bible.

Example: Some people think that the Sabbath was only given to the nation of Israel. He certainly revealed it to them, but the whole Bible reinforces the fact that it is for all humanity. We can see that God gave it to all humanity in the very beginning. As the Bible progresses, this is reinforced.

“1 The heavens and the earth were completed with everything that was in them. 2 By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work

that he had been doing. 3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation” (**Genesis 2:1-3**, NET).

“8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (**Exodus 20:8-11**, NKJV).

“Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast; who keeps the Sabbath without profaning it and keeps his hand from doing any evil” (**Isaiah 56:2**, WEB).

“As for foreigners who become followers of the Lord and serve him, who love the name of the Lord and want to be his servants—all who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it, and who are faithful to my covenant⁷ I will bring them to my holy mountain; I will make them happy in the temple where people pray to me. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my temple will be known as a temple where all nations may pray” (**Isaiah 56:6-7**, NET).

“27 And he said unto them, **The sabbath was made for man**, and not man for the sabbath: 28 so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath” (**Mark 2:27-28**, ASV; emphasis mine).

We can see that comparing different parts of the Bible allows us to get a fuller picture of what God is doing.

These five **basic contexts** are simple tips that will help you clarify the meaning of specific verses in the Bible. You will also gain greater insight into the themes of the Bible by applying these types of contexts.

Final Tips

In this section, I want to share some final tips about studying the Bible. First of all, when you listen to a sermon or teaching on the Bible, be sure to take notes. You can use the same notebook you use for your daily study of the Bible or you can have a separate one for sermon/teaching notes. God will speak to you through the message. You never want to forget these precious moments.

When you take notes, be sure to use the abbreviations listed in the back of this booklet. For instance, if the preacher turns to I Chronicles 23:4, write: I Chr 23:4. This will help you take better, more accurate notes. You will also be able to keep up better.

Lastly, I encourage you to read the Bible like it is God's personal letter to you. Soak in every single Word; it applies to every part of your life. Learn to apply it as you read it.

I hope you enjoyed this booklet. I know these study tips have been tremendous in helping me understand the Bible over the years. I am imparting them to you through this booklet.

The God who authored the book will help you understand it. He will guide you in when and how to use them. You will be equipped to really fight this world and the devil. It will help you reach the fullness of the stature of Christ (Ephesians 3:19-20).

Common Abbreviations for Books of the Bible

In this section we are going to list the names of the books of the Bible in the order that they appear and common abbreviations you may find for them.

First Part of the Bible, called the Old Testament

Name of the Book	Common Abbreviation(s)
Genesis	Gen
Exodus	Ex
Leviticus	Lev
Numbers	Num
Deuteronomy	Deut
Joshua	Josh or Jos
Judges	Jud or Judg
Ruth	Ru
I Samuel	1 Sam
II Samuel	2 Sam
I Kings	1 Ki, Kin or Kings
II Kings	2 Ki, Kin or Kings
I Chronicles	1Chron or 1 Chr
II Chronicles	2 Chron or 2 Chr
Ezra	Ezra
Nehemiah	Neh
Esther	Es, Est or Esth
Job	Job
Psalms	Ps
Proverbs	Pro or Prov
Ecclesiastes	Ecc or Eccl
Song of Solomon	SoS or Song

Old Testament (Continued)

Name of the Book	Common Abbreviation(s)
Isaiah	Is or Isa
Jeremiah	Jer
Lamentations	Lam
Ezekiel	Ez
Daniel	Dan
Hosea	Hos
Joel	Joel
Amos	Am
Obadiah	Ob
Jonah	Jon
Micah	Mic
Nahum	Nah
Habakkuk	Hab
Zephaniah	Zeph
Haggai	Hag
Zechariah	Zech
Malachi	Mal

*Please note, when some people quote a book of the Bible that has a series, such as Kings or Chronicles, they will use Roman numerals. EX: Instead of 1 Kings 2:1-4, they would use I Kings 2:1-4. EX 2: Instead of 2 Chronicles 8:1-4, they would use II Chronicles 8:1-4.

Second Part of the Bible, called the New Testament

Name of the Book	Common Abbreviation(s)
Matthew	Mat, Matt or Matth
Mark	Mk
Luke	Lk
John	Jn
Acts (of the Apostles)	Acts
Romans	Rom
I Corinthians	1 Cor
II Corinthians	2 Cor
Galatians	Gal
Ephesians	Eph
Philippians	Phil
Colossians	Col
I Thessalonians	1 Thess
II Thessalonians	2 Thess
I Timothy	1 Tim
II Timothy	2 Tim
Titus	Tit
Philemon	Phil, Philm
Hebrews	Heb
James	Jam
I Peter	1 Pet
II Peter	2 Pet
I John	1 Jn
II John	2 Jn
III John	3 Jn
Jude	Jd
Revelation	Rev

The Bible is God's instruction book and love letter to mankind. In it, we learn how He plans to use you in His great plan for all mankind. This booklet will help you understand the Bible on a very basic level. It will give you practical tips to help you get the most understanding out of your Bible. These simple tips will transform your view of the Bible and your walk with God.



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